



Check against Delivery

Somalia: End attacks on and killings of journalists. Oral intervention at the UN Human Rights Council 20th Session (18 June – 6 July 2012)

4 July 2012

Item 10: Technical assistance and capacity-building
General Debate
*Oral statement*¹

Mr. President,

In September 2011, the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia accepted Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations that the Somali authorities take measures to address impunity for human rights abuses, war crimes and other crimes under international law, including by investigating the killings of journalists and bringing those responsible to justice.

The London and Istanbul II conferences in 2012 condemned human rights abuses against civilians, including journalists, and called on the Somali authorities to end the culture of impunity.

Yet no steps have been taken to implement these recommendations. Abuses against civilians remain widespread and, far from improving, the situation for journalists has dramatically deteriorated since the UPR examination.

Perpetrators of attacks on journalists in Somalia effectively enjoy impunity. Nothing dissuades them or others from committing further human rights violations or abuses. Persons other than journalists have also been subject to unlawful targeted killings, and no one has been held accountable for those killings.

The Human Rights Council must call on the Transitional Federal Government as well as the authorities in Somaliland and Puntland to pursue prompt, thorough and impartial investigations into all human rights violations and abuses, including attacks on journalists. It must insist that perpetrators be brought to justice in fair trials conducted in full conformity with international standards, without recourse to the death penalty.

Increased human rights monitoring and the adoption of effective measures to adequately investigate and document human rights violations and abuses is vital.

We urge States to increase rapidly the resources available for human rights monitoring, documenting and reporting by the UN Human Rights Unit working on Somalia. We also urge States to provide technical and financial assistance to Somalia to re-establish the rule of law, rebuild the justice system and urgently address impunity. –

Finally, Mr. President,

Amnesty International urges the Human Rights Council, its member and observer states to support the establishment of an international Commission of Inquiry or similar mechanism to investigate the human rights violations and abuses, war crimes and other violations of international law committed in Somalia, including attacks on and killings of journalists.

Thank you Mr. President.

¹ See Amnesty International written statement “Somalia: Protect Journalists from Attack” UN index A/HRC/20/NGO/108 and AI index: AFR 52/005/2012 available at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AFR52/005/2012/en>