

27th Session of the Human Rights Council

Panel discussion on SOUTH SUDAN

24th September 2014

Statement by the Czech Republic

Mr. President, Distinguished Panellists,

The Czech Republic supports the statement delivered by the European Union.

The human rights situation in South Sudan remains of serious concern. We thank the High Commissioner for Human Rights for his recent report, prepared in cooperation with UNMISS (the United Nations Mission in South Sudan). We also commend the leading role of IGAD in mediation efforts and the work of the African Union Commission of Inquiry which should contribute to thorough investigations of all human rights violations.

We condemn the massive human rights violations and abuses and serious violations of international humanitarian law committed by parties to the conflict, some of which according to the May UNMISS report may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity. According to the High Commissioner's report, the scale and severity of violations and abuses declined in comparison to the period of first months of the conflict. However, UNMISS has continued to receive reports of killings and wounding of civilians and conflict-related sexual violence.

We urge all parties to end the violence and comply with all agreements signed under the auspices of IGAD. We call on the government to ensure prompt, credible and independent investigations into allegations of violations of international humanitarian and human rights law and recommend seeking international assistance in this regard.

We are persuaded that the human rights situation merits establishment of a special procedure with a mandate to monitor and report on the situation in South Sudan to the Human Rights Council.

Regrettably, the conflict manifested itself also in restrictions on freedom of expression, recognized by the Transitional Constitution, in harassment and censorship of the media and civil society, in further worsening of the administration of justice.

Distinguished panellists, what are your recommendations to the Government of South Sudan regarding the increasing restrictions on civil society which could also have major consequences for aid operations?

Thank you.