Human Rights Council, 35th Session
14th June 2017
Agenda Item 4 - ID
Statement delivered by Elsa Chyrum
Contact: derek.brett@ifor.org (main representative in Geneva)

Thank you.

The International Fellowship of Reconciliation and Human Rights Concern – Eritrea thank the Special Rapporteur for her report.

Mr Chairperson,

After five years of the Special Rapporteur’s mandate, Eritrea is no closer to cooperating effectively with the HRC, and has not implemented any recommendations by the Special Rapporteur the COI, or even the UPR.

Eritrea has failed to implement its 1997 Constitution, or to formulate a new one. Independent civil society or human rights organisations are still non-existent.

The Government has not reformed its national service programme in line with international law. Eritreans continue to be subjected to an indefinite term that is arbitrarily extended and amounts to modern-day slavery. The rights of conscripts are not respected. Sexual exploitation and violence against female conscripts is rampant.

Cases of arbitrary arrest and detention continue to be reported, with people often being held incommunicado, without charge or trial. They are arrested for attempting to evade military service; for trying to flee the country; for practising their religion; and for suspected opposition to the government.

The use of torture by Eritrean officials continues. Enforced disappearances, rape, and murder have all occurred as part of a campaign to instil fear. The perpetrators of these crimes are immune from prosecution, and the judicial system is inadequate for the prosecution of crimes against humanity.

Individuals who manage to flee Eritrea but are returned, are subject to extrajudicial punishment, detained in inhumane conditions, and returned to military service, enslavement and forced labour.

Mr Chairperson,

We call on the Council to support in full the Special Rapporteur’s recommendations and to renew her mandate. The Eritrean people need justice and reparations.

Justice requires nothing less!

Thank you.