

*Human Rights Council – Special Session
Burundi, December 17, 2015*



Speaker: Albert Hengelaar

Thursday 17 December 2015

Mr. President,

On behalf of the World Evangelical Alliance, we want to express our deep concern about the ongoing tensions in Burundi. Beyond doubt these tensions show ethnic divisions and hold the real risk to escalate to the worst atrocities. The Council is wise to attend to the situation. It is reaching out to the suffering civilians but also supporting the integrity of a peaceful nation of Burundi with this session.

The most important background of the violence is the development of political and military forces in the country along ethnic lines. This faults the sovereign authority and people are forced to retreat in alternative loyalties for their security. A vicious circle is started that can only be tackled by responsible behavior of all politicians, the army and the government. They need to be taken to account as chiefly responsible for this.

For us as member based civil society organization, the situation in Burundi includes a disturbing feature. The president portrays himself in his office as a Christian and actively tries to demonstrate the symbols of leadership as they appear in our tradition. To him we want to say loud and clear that the use of these symbols but also the Christian commitment as such is completely incompatible with the brutalities that happen in Burundi today.

We call for the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on the situation in Burundi, complimentary to the strong continuation of regional efforts. As a future member of the council Burundi should appreciate this.

We thank you Mr. President.