



Human Rights Council – 33rd session
Item 10 – Interactive Dialogue on Burundi

Speaker: Albert Hengelaar

27 September 2016

Mr. Vice-President,

The World Evangelical Alliance thanks the United Nations Independent Investigation on Burundi for the extensive report to the council. We want to draw attention to two points that particularly worry us. Point 88 mentions the tendency towards a personality cult around the president. Section IV A explains the dominance and violent methods of the executive jeopardizing an independent judiciary. No government can expect sustainable peace in an environment where this all prevails.

The key to peace is real inclusiveness. The government of Burundi has the prime responsibility to seek that. The government has the means of the state. They are meant for peace and prosperity. Also for minorities. The government and certainly the president can know that rule is blessed only if it serves. The government should serve not only the majority but all citizens. That will bring inclusiveness and inclination to peace.

The High Commissioner on Human Rights earlier during this session of the Council has remarked: “efforts to duck or refuse legitimate scrutiny raise an obvious question: what, precisely, is the government hiding from us? “. This is an appropriate question to the Burundi government. If there is nothing to hide, why does the government refuse preventive action to protect all citizens? Chaos happened before, also in neighbouring countries. What reason is there to think it will not happen again? Is it a shame to get assistance to retain the diversity that is the oxygen of any sustainable society?

The World Evangelical Alliance has the following question for UNIIB:
How does it envisage that a real inclusive political dialogue across the population of Burundi starts where now a stalemate prevails?

This question is all the more relevant as Burundi is an elected member of the Human Rights Council.

Thank you Mr. Vice-President