

Joint oral statement by the Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and Refugees International to the 27th session of the UN Human Rights Council

Item 6: UPR outcome Democratic Republic of the Congo – Geneva 18 September 2014

Thank you, Mr. President,

Mr. President, Distinguished Members of the Council, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and Refugees International, we welcome the observations and recommendations made by Sierra Leone, Japan and Ghana with regard to the situation of the human rights of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Given the scale of internal displacement in DRC, however, we are disappointed to see that only minimal attention to the plight of these 2.6¹ million people was given in the discussions and the outcome document.

Millions have been displaced by conflicts in DRC in the last two decades; over 2 million in the last two years alone. While IDPs in DRC have shown tremendous resilience, displacement is a profound and life shattering event that many experience time and time again. The troubled Katanga province, for example, is experiencing a humanitarian crisis that is worsening by the day. An escalation in violence has meant that internal displacement figures have jumped from 64,100 IDPs in December 2011 to 500,300 in March this year - a staggering 682 per cent increase. IDPs in DRC often live in a dire situation: they lack access to basic services, including health services, have difficulties in finding food, water and shelter. They also face serious protection concerns. An estimated 48 women were raped every hour at some point in the conflict – with displaced women being at increased risk².

We welcome DRC's acceptance of the recommendation made by Ghana to "create the necessary conditions to abate the present situation of the millions of internally displaced persons" and hope this recommendation will be given priority in the government's implementation plan. In this regard, we would like to commend the government of the DRC for starting the ratification process of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, also known as Kampala Convention, in

¹ UN OCHA, "DR Congo: Humanitarian Snapshot", July 2014:

<http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/pdfpreview/f91400da5674e19391c5bf8dce2dfa09.jpg>

² Stony Brook Medicine, "If Numbers Could Scream: New Study Shows Rape in the Democratic Republic of Congo Widespread", May 2011:

<http://stonybrookmedicine.edu/newsroom/DRC#sthash.e9rrCNqo.dpuf><http://stonybrookmedicine.edu/newsroom/DRC>

July this year. It has indeed provided renewed momentum and commitment to the plight of IDPs in DRC.

We encourage the government to finalise the administrative steps to complete the ratification of the Kampala Convention, which are still pending. Further, we encourage the government to finalise the existing draft legislation on the protection and assistance of IDPs ensuring that it is in line with international standards. The government should deploy all efforts and resources needed to fully implement the legislation and fulfil its role as the primary responsible in preventing displacement, responding to the needs of IDPs and ensuring that the conditions are met for Congolese IDPs to find durable solutions to their plight.

Thank you.