

29th Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Lutheran World Federation
15 June, 2015
Oral Statement: Item-3 SR on the Rights of
Peaceful assembly and of association



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

Mr President,

We welcome the report of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association and would like to thank him for this evidence-based, comprehensive and timely report.

Mr. Special Rapporteur,

We share your concern at the current rising global demands for natural resources exploitation on the one hand and the deteriorating respect for right to peaceful assembly and association on the other. The curtailment of these rights carries far-reaching repercussions on the enjoyment of other human rights. Especially in the absence of binding international instrument on business and human rights, restrictions of people's right to peaceful assembly and association will only exacerbate their vulnerability and exposure to all kinds of human rights abuses. Therefore, we call upon this council:

- First, to create an environment where natural resource exploitation is fair, transparent and accountable, and benefits citizens, especially those in the vicinity of such projects, as indicated in the SR's report. Given the current context of increased resource competitions, the council should swiftly consider a binding instrument on human rights standards for businesses that can be credibly enforced through legal processes.
- Second, we urge the council to pay special attention to peripheral minorities and indigenous communities who are facing forced displacement and relocations from their lands and resources. In some places, on top of its economic benefits, natural resource exploitation is used by central authorities and dominant national groups to politically weaken minorities by depriving them of their livelihoods, culture and collective identities that are inextricably linked to their natural environments.
- Finally, we call upon the council to encourage, standby and support civil society organizations and networks such as the "Alternative Minding Indaba" in the Southern Africa region that are providing space for communities to demand accountability, transparency and good governance around natural resource exploitation.

I thank you Mr. President!