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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by Rencontre Africaine pour la defense des droits de l'homme, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[21 August 2014]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Prevent electoral and political violence in Africa

Taking part in the direction of public affairs is a fundamental right of all citizens. But this right is constantly violated in the majority of African states where electoral processes are sources of conflict leading to arbitrary arrests, abusive detentions intimidation of opponents, stifling of the press, disappearances, poisonings and murders. All these constitute flagrant violations of fundamental rights.

RADDHO organized a meeting at the 26th session of the Human Rights Council on the theme 'Human Rights and the Electoral Process in Africa' (24 June 2014). Eminent jurists, political scientists, sociologists, diplomats, human rights activists and the media participated and they identified the causes and profound origins of the disfunctionment of democratic processes and elections in Africa. The participants denounced flagrant violations of international, regional and national juridical instruments which have prevented citizens to freely chose their representatives.

Manipulations and dishonest modifications of the Constitution and electoral code, changing the limits concerning the length of presidential mandates, electoral fraud, bad faith of losers who refuse to admit defeat, as well as out-of-date devolution of the power of autocrats in several African states constitute factors of destabilisation of democratic institutions and this leads to tensions, crises and armed conflicts.

We should remember that between July 2014 and July 2016 half of the African countries will organize elections.

Concerning the problems spoken about, the speakers strongly recommend:

- an international conference on human security
- a second summit of Baule in the form of an International Conference on democracy in Africa
