

**Statement at 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the United Nations Human Rights Council**

**Item 10: Enhanced ID on OHCHR report on the DRC**

**Speaker: Salma El Hosseiny**

M. President,

ISHR commends the continued collaboration between the DRC and the joint human rights office and strongly encourage the DRC to fully implement the recommendations received through this report.

Indeed, despite a decrease in the number of human rights violations since February 2019, as noted by the joint office, defenders and other civil society actors are still being attacked, intimidated and threatened. Equally, the violent suppression of certain peaceful demonstrations is still ongoing. In that regard, ISHR notes that, regrettably, perpetrators of human rights violations committed during protests which took place between 2016 and 2018 are yet to be arrested and charged.

A high number of perpetrators who committed human rights violations during the election period are still enjoying impunity, therefore we call on the DRC to take all necessary legal actions to bring them to justice.

More recently, on 6 September 2019 18 defenders were tortured while in police custody. Indeed, they were detained and whipped by police at the station of the Police Inspector in Kinshasa. On 9 September defenders from the movement LUCHA were admitted to the hospital after being wounded by police officers in Kananga.

What actions does the joint office envisage to take to ensure that the bill on the protection and accountability of human rights defenders currently being reviewed by the National Assembly in the DRC, is in line with international standards and doesn't restrict the rights of civil society?

I thank you.