



**United Nations Human Rights Council
20th Regular Session, 10 to 28 September 2012
Agenda Item 6**

ICJ Oral Statement in the Adoption of the Outcome Document in the Universal Periodic Review of the Republic of South Africa

21 September 2012

Check against delivery

Madam President,

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) welcomes South Africa's acceptance of the Working Group's recommendations on the prevention and punishment of sexual and gender-based violence, and its pledge to ensure that its immigration laws and policies are consistent with its Constitution and human rights commitments. It is hoped that those recommendations will soon be acted upon to ensure that policing practices and immigration management contribute positively to the prevention and punishment of violence against women, children and non-nationals.

The ICJ also notes with satisfaction South Africa's commitment to "do all in its power to sign and ratify, before the end of 2012, all outstanding instruments in the area of international human rights and humanitarian law". It is our great expectation that this groundbreaking step will be made and followed by appropriate measures for a prompt and effective domestic implementation of those instruments.

The ICJ nevertheless wishes to express serious concern that South Africa has not responded to several recommendations, including that it adopt a more integrated and effective approach to break the cycle of sexual and xenophobic violence, including through widespread social and economic reforms that address the root causes of violence and xenophobia (UPR recommendations 124.20, 124.22, 124.31 and 124.109) and that it strengthens police accountability and oversight mechanisms to ensure respect for human rights in policing actions (UPR recommendations 124.56, 124.67, 124.68, 124.69, 124.70, 124.77, 124.79, 124.80, 124.86 and 124.94). The recent tragedy at the Lonmin Mines in August 2012, where the repression of miners striking for an increase in wages resulted in human deaths, underscores the need for effective professional training and accountability of police officers, and also the imperative to fully implement economic and social rights, the denial of, which can generate violence.

The ICJ strongly urges South Africa to respond positively to all recommendations from the UPR Working Group and to adopt appropriate measures to implement them, including through updating this Council on progress made to that end.

I thank you.

Statement delivered by:
Mr Alex Conte, ICJ Representative to the UN (alex.conte@icj.org, +41 79 957 2733)
Further contact:
Mr Clement Mavungu, ICJ Africa Regional Programme (clement.mavungu@icj.org)