



Press Release by the Network of Eritrean Women (NEW)

Network of Eritrean Women (NEW) would like to thank the Commission of Inquiry on Eritrea in relation to the report of 8 June 2016, and for the work that it has undertaken over the past year. We have all known that crimes were being committed but the Commission of Inquiry for the first time gave opportunity for Eritreans to document what was happening to them.

The result of this documentation and the testimony of Eritreans has now conclusively vindicated the Eritrean government of its involvement in Crimes against humanity and NEW recommended that the regime be referred to the International Criminal Court the Hague. This is by no means a small feat and is the first step in getting justice for all Eritrean people and ensuring that the voice of the voiceless has been heard.

Whilst the commission has faced challenges in gathering information from victims of rape and sexual violence, today's report clearly puts these violations as what constitutes crimes against humanity. As the report has clearly stated that sexual violence in Eritrea is not only committed on women but also on men although this is even more under-reported.

Network of Eritrean Women would like to see professional help been given to all those who have been victims of sexual violence so they are empowered to rebuild their lives and contribute in the process of change and attain democratic Eritrea. Whilst the violations faced by Eritrean Women are part of the wider societal problem, women are further marginalised by society due to cultural norms. Therefore, for lasting peace in Eritrea, it is important to engage with Eritrean Women in all peace building and nation building processes. Only if Eritrean women participate at all levels will Eritrea develop as a nation and move towards the rule of law, respect of human rights and democratisation.