

**Oral statement**

**Human rights council – 39<sup>th</sup> session**

Item 2 – General Debate

11 September 2018

*Speaker: Sandra Epal Ratjen*

Mr President, Madam High Commissioner

Franciscans International congratulates you, Madam High Commissioner, on your appointment and encourages you to keep a strong stand for all human rights.

We are extremely concerned by the situation in three of the countries in which we work.

In the DRC, the conditions for the organization of free, credible, and peaceful elections are not met. We are also worried about the grave human rights violations and increasing violence in several provinces. We join other civil society voices and call on this Council to establish a mechanism to monitor and report on the human rights situation in the country as a whole.

In the Philippines, the cases of extrajudicial killings linked to the policy on war on drugs, the impunity, the attacks against human rights defenders, indigenous peoples and members of churches continue to take place, despite the national and international outcry. We call on the Council to establish an independent international investigation, and on the Office to monitor and report to the Council on the deteriorating situation in the country.

Finally, we are concerned by the lack of will of the government of Haiti to implement the recommendations made by various UN mechanisms. Considering the current political situation, it is paramount that your office and the Human Rights Council provide the necessary technical assistance. We also invite you to include in your upcoming reports and in the agenda of the Council a space to discuss the human rights situation in Haiti.

I thank you.