



**Oral statement**  
**UN Human Rights Council – 40<sup>th</sup> regular session**  
**Adoption of the UPR Report on Senegal**  
**14 March 2019**  
**Delivered by Lisa Majumdar**

Thank you, Mr. President.

The Senegalese Coalition of Human Rights Defenders (COSEDDH) and CIVICUS welcome the engagement taken by the government of Senegal in the UPR process, and welcome the acceptance of several recommendations on civic space during its review by the UPR Working Group in November 2018.

We now encourage the government of Senegal to take concrete measures to implement these recommendations.

Freedom of expression in Senegal is still limited by restrictive provisions in the 2017 Press Code and the Criminal Code. Despite several public declarations by President Macky Sall on the decriminalisation of press offenses, the 2017 Press Code continues to criminalise such offenses and even raised maximum prison sentences and fines. The Criminal Code provides prison sentences for defamation and insulting the president, which could be used against people for simply expressing dissenting opinions.

Article 27 of the Law on the Code on Electronic Communications, adopted by the National Assembly in November 2018, endangers the neutrality of the internet under the guise of 'reasonable measures of traffic management', which could have further grave implications for freedom of expression.

There have been several cases of arbitrary bans by administrative authorities, often invoking reasons of 'preservation of public order' to ban demonstrations by CSOs and opposition parties. And there have been cases where security forces have used excessive force against protests. In May 2018, security forces used live ammunition during clashes with students during a protest at the University Gaston Berger in Saint-Louis, killing one student, and injuring several others.

Recently, authorities have engaged in acts of intimidation against the social movement Y'en a Marre, investigating its funding and interrogating three of its international donors. In November 2018, authorities withdrew for five months the operating license of the NGO Lead Francophone.

Mr President, the Senegalese Coalition of Human Rights Defenders (COSEDDH) and CIVICUS encourage the government of Senegal to take proactive measures to resolve these concerns. We encourage the government to implement the recommendations to create and maintain an enabling environment for civil society in Senegal.

We thank you.