



# DEFEND DEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

**UN Human Rights Council – 47<sup>th</sup> regular session**  
**Item 2: Interactive Dialogue on the oral update by the**  
**Special Rapporteur on Eritrea**  
**Oral statement**

*Delivered by: Nicolas Agostini*

Madam President, Mr. Special Rapporteur,

We thank you for your presentation and welcome your report, which provides a comprehensive overview of Eritrea's human rights situation. We deplore that Eritrea, a Council member, continues to refuse to cooperate with your mandate and to implement most of the recommendations it received during its last Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

Violations continue with no sign of abating. The Special Rapporteur's assessment in light of the benchmarks for progress is clear. It points, first and foremost, to a lack of political will — not a lack of capacity — as the main cause for these violations.

Dr. Babiker: What immediate action can the Eritrean government take to register progress against Benchmarks 1 (rule of law and justice) and 3 (civic space)?

Madam President,

After armed conflict erupted in Ethiopia's Tigray region, Eritrean Defence Forces entered Ethiopian territory. Reports of egregious violations and abuses they committed have emerged, including against Tigrayan civilians and Eritrean refugees, some of whom have been killed or forcibly returned to Eritrea.

We urge this Council to ensure that the High Commissioner formally reports on Tigray, and that a public debate on the situation, with all its dimensions, takes place at the earliest opportunity.

Madam President,

Both the violations Eritrean forces commit abroad and the violations Eritrean authorities commit at home call for a multilateral response. As a consequence, we urge the Council to adopt a resolution extending the vital mandate of the Special Rapporteur.

Thank you for your attention.