



# DEFEND DEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

## UN Human Rights Council – 48<sup>th</sup> regular session

### Item 2: Enhanced interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner's oral update on the situation of human rights in the Tigray region of Ethiopia

#### Oral statement

*Delivered by: Nicolas Agostini*

Madam President, Madam High Commissioner,

We thank you for your presentation, which provides an overview of the [dire](#) situation in Tigray. The armed conflict in the region is complex. Multiple actors, including [Eritrean](#) Defence Forces, are involved. Egregious violations and abuses against civilians and Eritrean refugees, including sexual violence, have been documented. All perpetrators of grave violations must be held to account.

The conflict has spilled over to neighbouring regions, namely Afar and Amhara. Violence, increasingly along ethnic lines and carried out by militias, is mounting and threatens to spread across the entire country.

The absolute priority is the cessation of hostilities by all parties and de-escalation of tensions.

Madam President,

At the last session, by ensuring reporting and debates on Tigray, the UN Human Rights Council took an important [step](#). Council action is legitimate both in itself and as a complement to national and regional efforts, as well as the joint OHCHR/Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) [investigation](#).

We urge the Ethiopian authorities to continue cooperating with the joint investigation and to accept and engage with any findings, as well as to implement other expert recommendations (including by OHCHR and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) Commission of Inquiry) to improve the situation.

When ready, the findings of the joint investigation should be made public. All parties to the conflict must own the report and its recommendations, including on accountability. This is the only path to ending the violations and preventing their recurrence.

Thank you for your attention.