



# DEFEND DEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

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

**Item 10: Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on the oral update of the High Commissioner on technical assistance and capacity-building for South Sudan**

**Oral statement**

*Delivered by: Nicolas Agostini*

Madam President,

In the statement we delivered during the item 4 debate on South Sudan, we stressed that the country **needs** continued international attention. We also stressed the need for the Council to renew the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan at its next session, in March 2022.

This year, despite the South Sudanese government's claim that it only needs technical assistance and capacity-building, many states read the report of the Commission and listened to other independent human rights actors reporting on the country. They concluded that a high level of scrutiny was still **needed**.

We note that a second resolution was adopted—hence today's debate.

The provision of technical assistance and capacity-building is an essential part of the Council's work. Used under the right circumstances, it can go a long way toward helping the concerned countries fulfil their human rights obligations.

However, a government does not need technical assistance to know that its forces should not deliberately target and starve civilians. A government does not need technical assistance to know that its forces should not sexually assault women and girls. A government does not need technical assistance to know that it should not harass human rights defenders.

It needs political will.

Next March, only one resolution on South Sudan should be presented. Technical assistance and capacity-building can be provided through an item 4 resolution renewing the mandate of an investigative mechanism such as the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, which already includes technical cooperation elements.

Thank you for your attention.