



DEFEND DEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

UN Human Rights Council – 49th regular session

Item 4: General debate

Oral statement

Delivered by: Estella Kabachwezi

WE STAND WITH UKRAINE

Mr. President,

Three years after the joint statement delivered on behalf of 39 states, the human rights situation in **Cameroon** has not improved. Grave violations and abuses, committed by both government forces and non-state armed groups, continue with impunity. The government continues to arbitrarily detain activists.

We reiterate our [call](#) on states to collectively address the situation, including, in the absence of progress, through a resolution establishing an investigative mechanism. In this regard, last December, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights [called](#) on the government to authorize a Fact-Finding Mission into the country.

Beyond addressing the situation in the North-West and South-West regions, the Council should address violations committed in the Far North and in the rest of Cameroon against opposition, independent, and civil society actors.

Mr. President,

As **Zimbabwe** prepares for by-elections in March 2022 and a general election in 2023, we are concerned over mounting politically motivated violence and a crackdown on political opposition. On 27 February 2022, at least one person was killed and ten injured in skirmishes at an opposition party rally in Kwekwe, central Zimbabwe.

Civil society has expressed concerns over the lack of independence of government institutions and their capture by the ruling ZANU-PF. The opposition has accused the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission of manipulating the voters roll, after the Commission created additional polling stations and moved voters without their consent. This is a receipt for disaster.

Lastly, we urge **Burundi** to seize the opportunity of the appointment of a Special Rapporteur to cooperate with the Council's mechanisms. A first step could be to invite the Special Rapporteur for an initial stocktaking visit.

Thank you for your attention.