



# DEFEND DEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

**UN Human Rights Council – 50<sup>th</sup> regular session**

**Item 4: Interactive dialogue with the International Commission of  
Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia**

**Oral statement**

*Delivered by: Estella Kabachwezi*

Mr. President, Members of the Commission,

We welcome your update to the Council. We call on all actors in Ethiopia to cooperate with you. More than ever, the international community needs independent, impartial reporting on developments in Ethiopia.

The protection of civilians and the cessation of hostilities remain priorities. We reiterate our call for unimpeded humanitarian access to all regions in need. All parties must refrain from attacking civilians and civilian objects. This is particularly important as the humanitarian crisis continues in Tigray, attacks on civilians intensify in Amhara and Afar, and civilians have been targeted in Oromia. We condemn violations, including those that may amount to crimes under international law, by all parties.

We are concerned about the recent mass arrest of more than 4,500 people, mainly in the Amhara region and Addis Ababa. We remain concerned about the targeting of human rights defenders, journalists, and social media users.

Mr. President,

We welcome recent positive steps, including domestic investigations and prosecutions. The lists of soldiers of federal and affiliated forces who have been convicted to prison terms for criminal acts should be made public.

Accountability efforts at all levels are important, and all judicial, quasi-judicial, and investigative and accountability mechanisms have a role to play. These include domestic institutions and processes, the joint OHCHR/Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) investigation, and the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE), which should be given time and space to carry out its mandate.

Thank you for your attention.