



# DEFENDDEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

UN Human Rights Council – 51<sup>st</sup> regular session

Item 4: General Debate

Oral statement

*Delivered by: Nicolas Agostini*

Mr. President,

We express **solidarity** with the victims of Russia's aggression against Ukraine and of Chinese repression, including in Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and Tibet. We join civil society partners who call for Human Rights Council action on Russia and China and urge African states to prioritise human rights principles and objective criteria over political considerations and to support Council initiatives on these two countries.

We also express our utmost concern over repression of dissenting voices in **Egypt** and **Guinea**, and over ongoing violations and abuses by state and non-state actors in the **Greater Sahel**, including **Mali**.

Mr. President,

In a **new report**, DefendDefenders and AfricanDefenders comprehensively analyse the voting behaviour of African states at the Council. "*Between Principles and Pragmatism*" is an evidence-based analysis of patterns of votes for the African Group, covering all votes on resolutions that took place since the Council's creation, in 2006. We conclude that while African states are the number one supporters of thematic resolutions, regarding country-specific resolutions, their political weight remains below their objective weight (the number of seats they occupy). This is particularly true for initiatives presented under item 4, which African states fail to support.

Monsieur le Président,

Nous apprécions l'ouverture du Représentant permanent du **Cameroun**, S. E. M. Salomon Eheth, à tenir avec nous un dialogue régulier sur la situation des droits humains dans son pays. Nous condamnons fermement les crimes commis par les groupes séparatistes au cours de ces derniers mois, y compris des attaques contre des enfants et des destructions d'écoles. Nous souhaitons dans le même temps que le gouvernement camerounais mette en œuvre les nombreuses recommandations appelant à la libération des prisonniers politiques et exhortons les autorités à protéger les défenseurs des droits humains en toute circonstance.

Je vous remercie pour votre attention.



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*[Statement delivered in English and French]*

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Mr. President,

We appreciate the openness of the Permanent Representative of **Cameroon**, H.E. Mr. Salomon Eheth, to hold a regular dialogue with us on the human rights situation in his country. We strongly condemn the crimes committed by separatist groups in recent months, including attacks on children and destruction of schools. At the same time, we hope that the Cameroonian government will implement the numerous recommendations calling for the release of political prisoners and we urge the authorities to protect human rights defenders in all circumstances.

I thank you for your attention.