



DEFEND DEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

UN Human Rights Council – 51st regular session

Item 10: Enhanced interactive dialogue on the High Commissioner's oral update on South Sudan

Oral statement

Delivered by: Nicolas Agostini

Mr. President, Madam Acting High Commissioner,

We welcome your update but reiterate that without political will to address gross, widespread, and systematic human rights violations and generalised impunity in South Sudan, all the technical assistance in the world will be futile and ineffective.

As the transitional period has been extended for two years, we ask: Will this additional time be used to adopt an inclusive election law, put in place an independent electoral commission, conduct a national census, and adopt a permanent Constitution? Or will it be used to buy more time, make more empty promises, and further delay the implementation of the Revitalised Peace Agreement, including the operationalisation of transitional justice institutions like the Hybrid Court?

Mr. President,

Last week, the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan warned about escalating violence that proliferates at a local level all over the country, threatening the peace process.

Violence continues in Tonj (Northern Bahr el Ghazal), Magwi, Nimule and Kapoeta (Eastern Equatoria), Malakal (Upper Nile), and parts of Jonglei. Extrajudicial killings continue to be reported in Bentiu (Unity State), as well as arbitrary arrests and detentions of protesters in Rumbek, Malakal, Bor, and Juba.

Ahead of the Council's 52nd session, we urge states to maintain a high level of attention to the country through investigations, collection and preservation of evidence, monitoring, reporting, technical cooperation, and advice on transitional justice. The mandate of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan should be extended in full for a further year—and until the end of the transitional period.

Thank you for your attention.