



DEFEND DEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

UN Human Rights Council – 55th regular session

**Item 2: Enhanced interactive dialogue on the report of the Commission on
Human Rights in South Sudan**

Oral statement

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Mr. President, dear Commissioners,

Once again, we thank you for, and highlight the importance of, your report, which should be read together with relevant conference room [papers](#) and statements. We also draw the Council's attention to ongoing reporting by the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), whose mandate should be renewed by the Security Council next month.

We cannot overstate the gravity of the situation and risk factors of further violations in South Sudan. In a [letter](#) released last week, over 90 NGOs urged a full extension of the Commission's mandate. "As South Sudan is preparing for its first-ever national elections," they wrote, "significant concerns exist not only about the country's human rights situation but also about the absence of key conditions for the holding of free, fair, secure, and credible elections and about the absence of an enabling environment for civil society."

International scrutiny remains vital. The continuation of the Commission's mandate is the best means to safeguard prospects for future accountability, including through the Hybrid Court for South Sudan, whose establishment continues to be paralysed almost a decade after the initial peace agreement.

The Commission's mandate should continue until the reasons that led the Council to establish this vital mechanism have been addressed in a meaningful manner.

Thank you.