



# DEFENDDEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

## UN Human Rights Council – 57<sup>th</sup> regular session

### Item 4: General debate

#### Oral statement

*Delivered by: Hassan Shire*

Mr. President,

DefendDefenders delivered a statement during the debate on **Sudan**, a situation that requires the Council's utmost attention. The Sudanese crisis fulfils the criteria outlined in operative paragraph 3 of UN General Assembly resolution 60/251, which mandates the Human Rights Council to "address situations of violations of human rights, including gross and systematic violations." The essence of this provision is captured by the Council's agenda item 4, and this is where Sudan should be considered.

Mr. President,

Once again, we take the opportunity of this general debate to demand an independent, impartial, thorough and effective investigation into the assassination of human rights lawyer Thulani Maseko in **Eswatini**. The fact that no perpetrators have been brought to justice shows state inaction in response to this cowardly assassination. We also urge the authorities to desist from harassing Thulani's wife, Tanele, as well as human rights defenders and lawyers.

We also reiterate our deepest concerns over the human rights situation in **Burkina Faso, Mali**, and the **Greater Sahel**. The Sahel should be a matter of priority concern for regional actors and for this Council.

Human rights defenders are fleeing **Ethiopia**, a clear sign of the extreme climate of fear that independent actors face. Plans to amend the 2019 CSO Proclamation, as well as threats directed at civil society and the national human rights institution (EHRC), are extremely worrying.

In **Tanzania**, the current trends should be reversed as the country will soon enter an election period. Independent, impartial investigations must be conducted into all cases of alleged extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and other violations, including against independent actors.

Thank you for your attention.