



# DEFEND DEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

UN Human Rights Council – 58<sup>th</sup> regular session

Item 10: Interactive dialogue on South Sudan

Oral statement

*Delivered by: Rita Kanya*

*[video statement]*

Mr. President,

We acknowledge South Sudan's cooperation with UN human rights mechanisms.

We **reiterate** that while no one opposes the provision of advisory services, technical assistance alone is not enough to address South Sudan's many challenges. What the country needs is, first and foremost, *political will* to improve its human rights record and end impunity.

We **call** on states to support draft resolution L.6, which seeks to extend the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan (CHRSS).

Mr. President,

Contrary to what we heard during the item 2 debate, on 28 February 2025, we stress:

- That South Sudan is *not* a “post-conflict” country, As we speak, fighting in **Upper Nile**, Western Equatoria and other states, as well as tensions in **Juba**, threaten to nullify the Revitalized Peace Agreement and bring South Sudan back into large-scale conflict.
- That the country's leadership has failed to implement the Revitalized Agreement, failed to make structural progress on human rights, and failed the South Sudanese people by showing flagrant disregard for their rights and dignity.
- That the country already receives technical assistance, including through both the CHRSS and OHCHR.

Bringing South Sudan's laws, policies and practices in line with international standards is the most urgent priority for technical assistance. We flag reform of the National Security Service (NSS) as a priority area for any future technical assistance. This includes repealing Sections 54 and 55 of the NSS Act, which empower the agency to target independent actors, with the potential to undermine prospects for free, fair, secure, and credible elections.

We draw the Council's attention to statements (**8 March**, **27 March** 2025) by the CHRSS. The Council should stand ready to **respond** to any developments, including through an urgent debate or special session.

Thank you.