



DEFEND DEFENDERS

East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project

UN Human Rights Council – 60th regular session

Item 10: Interactive dialogue with the Independent Expert on Somalia

Oral statement

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[Video statement – Check against delivery]

Mr. President, Madam Independent Expert,

We thank you for your report. We salute your work in support of the Somali people and government. This mandate is one of the longest standing. We acknowledge Somalia's cooperation with the Council and its mechanisms and the government's will to move on to another approach.

However, we stress the ongoing need for scrutiny, including through public reporting and debates. In this sense, the move away from a special procedure cannot be considered to be a "graduation" that reflects a clear improvement in the situation or in the government's service delivery to its population. We take note of the mandate's termination and resolution's bi-annualization, and thank Madam Dyfan and her predecessors for their work, in difficult conditions, with minimal support (with not even one full-time Human Rights Officer).

We are concerned about the widespread insecurity and ongoing grave violations in the country. We condemn abuses by terrorist group Al Shabaab, including attacks against human rights defenders and journalists, but also violations by authorities, including harassment of independent actors by the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA). We urge all actors to urgently address the appalling situation for women and girls.

Mr. President,

We call on OHCHR to transparently and comprehensively report on Somalia's human rights situation. This may include a call, if and when necessary, for the re-establishment of a multilaterally-mandated mechanism.

We stress the need to strengthen the National Independent Human Rights Commission.

Madam Dyfan:

How can we ensure that the mandate's legacy will be preserved? How can work on benchmarks and indicators continue?

Thank you.