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## ORAL STATEMENT

### Item 10: INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE HIGH COMMISSIONER ON HUMAN RIGHTS

#### **SOUTH SUDAN: SOUTH SUDAN NEEDS SCRUTINY, NOT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

UN Human Rights Council  
Fifty-seventh regular session  
9 September – 11 October 2024

Mr. President,

The current state of human rights in South Sudan requires greater scrutiny. In September the government again broke its promises with yet another extension of the transitional period. Clear benchmarks, including those required to protect human rights, remain outstanding.

For over a decade, we have reported on the oppression and silencing of government critics, human rights activists and journalists primarily by the National Security Service (NSS). Together with others, we have repeatedly called for the removal of the NSS's unconstitutional powers of arrest and detention. Yet in August, the President allowed a bill maintaining these powers to become law.

For over a decade, suspects of crimes under international law have been emboldened by the lack of judicial accountability and promoted to higher ranks by the government whilst survivors have been left without redress. Next year will mark a decade that the government and the African Union will have failed to meet their commitment to establish the Hybrid Court for South Sudan.

For years the central obstacle to improve human rights and investigate and prosecute suspects of crimes under international law has been the government's lack of political will. In this context, technical assistance processes like this one are by themselves futile.

As one survivor told us: "We are tired of not seeing any change."

Mr. President,

We urge states to go beyond supporting mere technical assistance and to take a comprehensive approach by extending and strengthening the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan when it comes up for renewal.

Thank you.