

FIDH and ACJPS oral statement before UN Human Rights Council- 39th Session

26 September 2018

UN Human Rights Council – 39th session-Geneva

Item 10 – Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on Sudan

Oral statement

Mr President,

FIDH and its member organisation, the African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) thank the Independent Expert for his report and share his concerns that serious human rights challenges are yet to be addressed by the Sudanese government.

Dissenting voices such as those who peacefully protested against high inflation and austerity measures in early 2018 were met with unlawful use of excessive force by government security forces. At least 200 individuals were arrested on January 16th and 17th by the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) – including human rights defenders and journalists arrested from their home or office and held incommunicado for more than 3 months; while media coverage were seized and journalists targeted for reporting on the protest.

We are also deeply concerned by the serious forms of violence perpetrated against women and urge Sudan to ratify the CEDAW convention. Sexual violence remains prevalent, including against internally displaced persons, owing to a volatile security context and the prevalence of entrenched impunity. The use of “public morality offences”, corporal punishment such as lashing and other forms of gender-based violence to silence women persist at an alarming scale.

The set of legislation restricting fundamental rights, including the National Security Act, the emergency laws in Darfur and the latest Cybercrime Act, must be reformed to meet international standards, as guaranteed under the 2005 Interim National Constitution and the ICCPR.

While the renewal of the mandate of the Independent Expert is the minimum the Human Rights Council can do to address human rights concerns in Sudan, its strengthening must be the priority. The situation on the ground warrants monitoring and regular public reporting to UN fora, and we urge States to take adequate actions not to neglect the serious human rights issues remaining.

As human rights defenders are prevented from reporting to UN human rights

mechanisms and targeted by the authorities for trying, the creation of any mechanism must take into account the difficulties and obstacles for human rights defenders and journalists to operate.

I thank you.