

Amnesty International

***Oral statement on the outcome on Tonga under the Universal
Periodic Review***

***13 June 2008
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Mr. President,

Amnesty International appreciates the positive participation by the Kingdom of Tonga in the UPR process. Through it, Tonga has potentially contributed substantially not only to the improvement of its own human rights situation, but also to making the UPR a truly universal mechanism. As the current Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Tonga's leadership role as the first Pacific Island Nation to participate in this process should be an inspiration for other Pacific Island countries that are coming up for review in the future.

Amnesty International encourages Tonga to implement the list of recommendations of the Working Group, particularly in relation to accession to the core UN human rights treaties (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women) and its reporting obligations under the treaties to which Tonga is already a party.

Amnesty International also encourages Tonga to continue to engage actively with civil society organisations in human rights work, including capacity-building and training initiatives and general discussion of proposed legislative reforms. We acknowledge the challenges that Tonga faced in preparing the national report for the UPR, and we hope that the experience acquired this time will allow for a more robust and comprehensive process of consultation when Tonga prepares its next UPR report and its reports to the UN human rights treaty bodies. To make best use of the outcome of the UPR review it will be important that Tonga ensures that the review's outcome is widely disseminated to all

stakeholders in the country. That will ensure greater understanding of the process, the importance of human rights and measures that can be taken to improve the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Tonga.

Thank you Mr. President.

MORE INFORMATION

See a representative from Amnesty International deliver this statement at the Human Rights Council. Watch the video on:
<rtsp://webcast.un.org/ondemand/conferences/unhrc/eighth/hrc080613am3-eng.rm?start=00:25:29&end=00:27:21>

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