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ORAL STATEMENT
ITEM 5: General Debate

**REPRISALS AND INTIMIDATION AGAINST THOSE WHO SEEK TO COOPERATE WITH THE
UN AND ITS MECHANISMS**

UN Human Rights Council
Thirty-sixth session
11-29 September 2017

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the report on Cooperation with the United Nations, its representatives and mechanisms in the field of human rights submitted by the Secretary General pursuant to resolutions 12/2 and 24/24 of this Council.

Amnesty International is alarmed by the cases of intimidation and reprisals documented in 29 countries against those who sought to cooperate with the UN and its mechanisms. These findings coincide with our organisation's own research about this concerning trend.

The report documents, for example, the "ongoing trend of harassment and intimidation against human rights defenders" in Bahrain, which is a major concern for Amnesty International. In a one week period in April 2017, Amnesty International documented the cases of at least 32 human rights defenders and political activists who were summoned for questioning by the Public Prosecution in Bahrain, six of whom had planned to travel to Geneva to participate in Bahrain's upcoming review under the UPR.

Mr. President,

In the words of the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights in his update yesterday, "it is frankly nothing short of abhorrent that, year after year, we are compelled to present cases of intimidation and reprisals carried out against people whose crime – in the eyes of their Governments – was to cooperate with UN institutions and mechanisms."

Amnesty International therefore urges the Council to establish a comprehensive system to document cases of intimidation and reprisals and tracking the response to these, as initiated by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights. This system should be accompanied by the necessary safeguards to protect the victims of this shameful conduct, but beyond that must be available publicly.

Thank you, Mr. President.