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Oral Statement

Item 6:

Universal Periodic Review - General Debate

UN Human Rights Council

52nd session

27 February – 4 April 2023

Mr President,

The Universal Periodic Review, now in its fourth cycle, is one of the great successes of the Human Rights Council. Its universal nature and full compliance rate afford opportunities to address the full spectrum of human rights concerns, whether warning of an impending full-scale crisis, or through building incremental steps towards progressive enjoyment of a right.

However, the UPR is not yet being used to its fullest potential. In many countries, there remains insufficient public awareness of the mechanism and its relevance to individuals and communities. Within our own organization, staff turnover between cycles results in a constant need to inform and support colleagues on the process.

Capacity-building therefore remains a key issue and we urge all those engaged in the UPR to scale up plans and available resources for capacity-building initiatives and to target these particularly at local community and grassroots organizations, including those working on the rights of women, children and youth, and communities historically discriminated against.

Mr President,

Amnesty International wishes to draw the attention of States to our recently completed set of capacity-building materials, aimed at enhancing civil society participation in the UPR with a particular focus on freedom of expression – an enabling right for effective advocacy for other rights. These tools, developed in partnership with UNESCO and in all six UN languages, now include a set of [training videos](#) to accompany the [written guidelines](#) and [Fact Sheet](#) on drafting



SMART recommendations, all available on our website.

Drawing on this model, we also developed a [tool](#) to aid the development of SMART recommendations relating to descent-based discrimination, a topic which we have previously urged States to devote more attention to in their UPR recommendations.¹

Thank you.

¹ Amnesty International, *Using the UPR to address violations against the over 260 million people across the globe discriminated against based on work and descent*, Oral Statement to the Human Rights Council: Item 6 General Debate, 18 March 2021, (Index Number: IOR 40/3771/2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ior40/3771/2021/en/>)