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## URGENT APPEAL TO THE EU TO REJECT ASSAULT ON INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

As the United Nations Security Council prepares to discuss proposals today (15.00 New York time) which would exempt UN peacekeepers from the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, Amnesty International is calling on European Union governments to reject them.

Amnesty International is deeply concerned by proposals made by the United Kingdom and the United States of America to introduce language into Security Council resolutions that would exempt United Nations peace-keepers from the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court and any national court other than a court of the contributing state, and possibly from the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

An open letter outlining Amnesty International's concerns has been circulated to all members of the UN Security Council, and all representatives in Brussels of EU member state governments.

The proposals take away the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court to decide these questions and as such violate the integrity of the Rome Statute and undermine the rule of law by in effect granting immunity to nationals of non-states parties to the Rome Statute responsible for the worst possible crimes.

The first paragraph of the proposed text embodying these proposals provides that the Security Council will automatically request the International Criminal Court to defer any investigation or prosecution involving current and former officials and personnel from a contributing state that is not a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court for acts arising out of UN established or authorized operations.

The Security Council would also decide in advance that for such acts, occurring during a 12 months deferral period, the contributing states shall have and retain jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute. The second paragraph would provide that the deferral and the decision would automatically be renewed for successive one-year periods, unless the Security Council decides otherwise.

Amnesty International urges the European Union to undertake all possible steps to ensure that the Security Council rejects this proposal or any proposal that would undermine the integrity of international justice.

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