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**PUBLIC STATEMENT
RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**The Russian Government should implement as a priority the recommendations of the UN
Committee on the Rights of the Child**

Amnesty International today urged the Russian Government to implement the recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child which examined the extent to which the rights of children were being respected in the Russian Federation.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has echoed Amnesty International's long-standing concerns about the widespread practice of torture and ill-treatment of juveniles in police custody and the harsh conditions of detention for juveniles who are awaiting trial sometimes for up to five years. It is now time the government took concrete steps to implement the Committee's recommendations to ensure that all allegations of torture and ill-treatment by law enforcement officials are promptly and impartially investigated, that the perpetrators are prosecuted and punished, and that the victims are compensated. Only by taking these steps can the government ensure that this cycle of impunity will be broken.

Amnesty International briefed the members of the Committee in advance about the organization's concerns regarding widespread and systematic human rights violations against children in the Russian Federation. Amnesty International also met the Russian Government delegation in Geneva to discuss the measures planned by the authorities to address these concerns.

The findings of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, outlined in 11 pages, confirmed Amnesty International's main concerns regarding human rights violations against children, including the practice of torture and ill-treatment of children in police custody; the use of child soldiers and the alleged summary executions, involuntary disappearances, arbitrary detention, and torture and ill-treatment of juveniles during the conflict in the Chechen Republic and the provisions for the death penalty and corporal punishment for children in the Chechen Shari'a Criminal Code.

The Committee expressed its concern about "allegations of a widespread practice of torture and ill-treatment, and conditions amounting to inhuman or degrading treatment, of children living in institutions in general, and in places of detention or imprisonment in particular - including acts committed by law enforcement officials". The Committee further recommended that the Russian Government should "take appropriate measures to bring to an end and prevent these practices and to duly investigate allegations and punish perpetrators of such acts".

The Russian Federation was also harshly criticized for not implementing the 1993 Committee's recommendations to establish a separate juvenile justice system, with separate juvenile courts and trained and qualified judicial and other justice officials. The Committee recommended that the deprivation of liberty should be a measure of 'last resort' and that the Russian Government should "take particular measures to implement, and as soon as possible, the

planned reform of the system of juvenile justice, including the adoption of comprehensive legislation on juvenile justice, the introduction of special juvenile courts with trained juvenile judges, revision of the code on criminal procedure so as to transfer the power to order arrests of juveniles from the Procurator to the juvenile courts, to limit terms of pre-trial detention and to expedite courts' procedures."

The Russian Federation was also criticized for serious violations of the rights of children during the armed conflict in the Chechen Republic, including the involvement of children in combat, the violations of the provisions of international humanitarian law and the treatment of internally displaced children.

Amnesty International urges the Russian Government to implement the Committee's recommendations to ensure that children and other civilians are protected during periods of conflict and in particular in the renewed conflict in the Chechen Republic. The Russian authorities should provide all necessary protection and assistance to the thousands of internally displaced children and children living in the area of conflict in Chechnya.

The Russian Federation was criticized for the continuing use of the outlawed practice of resident permit and registration (*"propiska"*), which leaves children of non-registered parents, such as internally displaced and refugees, without regular access to medical care, education and social services.

The Russian Government should immediately implement the Committee's recommendation to end the practice of discrimination against children without resident permits and their families. It is especially important now, following the rounding up of up to 20,000 non-Muscovites, mainly Chechens and other people from the Caucasus, by the police two weeks ago, more than half of whom were refused official registration and a resident permit. Officials in Moscow claimed that some 10,000 non-Muscovites who lacked resident permits and were refused registration, were deported from the city.

The Committee also recommended revision of the provisions for the death penalty and corporal punishment for children by the courts in the Chechen Republic.

Amnesty International is calling on the President and the Government of the Russian Federation to adopt without delay a comprehensive action plan for the implementation of all recommendations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

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