

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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Guyana: Amnesty International welcomes commitment to continue to consider recommendations to abolish the death penalty and to end discrimination based on sexual orientation

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Guyana

Amnesty International welcomes Guyana's commitment to expedite implementation of the Law against Sexual Offences, and to ensure coordinated implementation of the National Domestic Violence Policy.¹

The organization also notes Guyana's support of recommendations to investigate allegations of human rights violations committed by the security forces, including torture, extrajudicial killings and the use of excessive force² and to improve the training of the security forces.³ It regrets that Guyana did not commit to establish an independent inquiry into torture, enforced disappearances and killings allegedly committed by "death squads" between 2002 and 2006, and to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.⁴

Amnesty International is disappointed that Guyana rejected recommendations by many states to establish a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty.⁵ It is nonetheless encouraging that there have been no executions for more than 10 years, and that an amendment to the Criminal Law (Offences) Act removing the mandatory death sentence for murder was tabled in the National Assembly. The organization welcomes the government's commitment, announced in the Addendum, to continue consideration of the issue of the death penalty over the next two years and to report its findings to this Council.⁶

Amnesty International urges Guyana to remove legislation that discriminates against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and to repeal laws that criminalize sexual activity between consenting adults of the same sex.⁷ The organization welcomes Guyana's commitment, announced in the Addendum, to hold consultations, over the next two year period, on the issue of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.⁸ Such consultations should be broad, inclusive and well-prepared and the findings should be reported to this Council.

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Guyana on 23 September 2010 during its 15th session. Prior to the adoption of the report of the review Amnesty International delivered the oral statement above. Amnesty International also contributed to the information basis of the review through its submission on Guyana: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AMR35/001/2009/en>

¹ A/HRC/15/14, paragraphs 68.14 and 68.15.

² *Ibid*, paragraph 68.19 and paragraphs 69.6, 69.19, 69.20, 69.21, and 69.22.

³ *Ibid*, paragraphs 69.4, 69.5, and 69.6.

⁴ *Ibid*, paragraphs 70.44, 70.45, and 70.46 and A/HRC/15/14/Add.1, paragraphs 58-63.

⁵ *Ibid*, paragraph 70.23-70.35 and A/HRC/15/14/Add.1, paragraphs

⁶ A/HRC/15/14/Add.1, paragraph 34.

⁷ A/HRC/15/14, paragraphs 70.48-70.53 and A/HRC/15/14/Add.1, paragraphs 66-68.

⁸ A/HRC/15/14/Add.1, paragraph 69.

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