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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

ORAL STATEMENT

Item 4: Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of
HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

UN Human Rights Council

Thirty-fourth session
27 February-24 March 2017

Amnesty International welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It also welcomes the report of the group of independent experts on accountability.

The Special Rapporteur notes concerns which Amnesty International has also raised, including political prison camps, abductions and separated families, the right to food, and the exploitation of overseas workers. In particular, he highlights the lack of access to information, which was also addressed in our report *Connection Denied*.¹

The DPRK continues to deny the existence of political prison camps, despite evidence confirming this from the UN Commission of Inquiry, civil society and INGOs. This is a significant challenge to all efforts to address the grave human rights violations taking place within these facilities and other places of detention, including forced labour, deliberate starvation, and torture and other ill-treatment.

In line with the recommendation of the group of experts, Amnesty International calls on the Human Rights Council to urge the UN and the international community to respond in a coordinated and unified manner to ensure the enjoyment of all human rights in the DPRK.

Amnesty International also calls on the Human Rights Council to urge the government of the DPRK to:

- Close down all political prison camps, and unconditionally release all prisoners of conscience.
- Ensure full access for humanitarian workers to those in need, including persons in detention facilities and prisons.
- Introduce an official moratorium on executions, as a first step towards abolition of the death penalty.
- Grant prompt and unrestricted access to all UN Special Procedures and independent human rights monitors.

¹ Amnesty International, *North Korea: Connection Denied* (Index: ASA24/3373/2016)

- Ensure that everybody in the DPRK is able to communicate with family members and others without interference, unless this is compliant with international human rights law.

Thank you Mr. President