Madame President,

Amnesty International welcomes Andorra’s cooperation with the UPR and its acceptance of 60 of the total 104 recommendations. However, we regret that many other recommendations have only been noted including those referring to the ratification of important human rights treaties. Regretfully, Andorra is not intending to ratify the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance while ratification of the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture will be only assessed during the next four years.

We regret that the recommendation about ending acts of intimidation against human rights defenders has only been noted. In this regard, we are extremely concerned that the president of the organisation Associacio Stop Violencies, Vanessa Mendoza Cortés, faces defamation charges after speaking about women’s rights, including their right to safe abortion, before the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 2019.

As a result, she faces heavy penalties, including a potential sentence of up to four year’s imprisonment and fines of up to 30,000 euros.

The use of defamation laws against Vanessa Mendoza Cortés violates her right to freedom of expression and is a disturbing attempt to criminalise her legitimate work to defend the rights of women and girls. We call for all charges against her to be dropped.

Further, Andorra should take relevant steps to decriminalise defamation and bring the law in line with international human rights standards as recommended during the UPR review.

Madame President,

Regretfully, Andorra hasn’t accepted recommendations to decriminalise abortion. Andorra is one of the few remaining states in the world with a draconian total ban on abortion still in place.

Andorra’s ban on abortion violates its duty to respect and protect women and girl’s rights
including their rights to life, health, privacy, and freedom from torture and other ill-treatment. Compelling women and girls living in Andorra to travel to other countries to seek the healthcare they need and have a right to is punitive, cruel and discriminatory.

We call on the authorities to urgently decriminalize abortion in all circumstances and fulfil the right to access safe and legal abortion services in Andorra.

Thank you