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ORAL STATEMENT
Item 2: General Debate

UN Human Rights Council
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24 February – 20 March 2020

Madam President,

Amnesty International is alarmed by the widespread and grave nature of human rights violations and crimes under international law observed in a number of states in the context of recent protests and welcomes the attention by the High Commissioner and her office to this subject. It is unlawful for security forces to open fire on unarmed protestors who pose no imminent risk, as has happened in countries like **Iran**, where more than 300 people were killed in nationwide protests in November 2019. Our organization has documented extensive use of arbitrary detention and enforced disappearances in **Iraq**, where those participating in protests have been abducted and shot, seemingly at random, perhaps to send the message that anyone choosing to exercise their rights in this regard are in danger, and where at least 600 have been killed since October 2019. This Council's action is needed given the widespread and grave nature of such violations, the likelihood of future crimes, including for the thousands currently unlawfully detained for exercising their fundamental freedoms; and the lack of meaningful accountability for violations to date.

Also, in the context of protests, we welcome the OHCHR report on Chile, which concludes that "the actions of the police and the army have not adhered to international human rights norms and standards relating to management of assemblies and to the use of force".¹ Amnesty International's own investigation also found that the Chilean police and military used excessive and unnecessary force in the context of protests resulting in at least four killings and over 400 cases of severe eye trauma, mainly as a result of indiscriminate use of shotguns and tear gas. We urge Chile to continue its constructive engagement with the Office, and with this Council on progress made on the implementation of the recommendations.

¹ OHCHR, Report of the Mission to Chile 30 October – 22 November 2019, paragraph 22, available at https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/CL/Report_Chile_2019_EN.pdf.

Madam President,

We thank the High Commissioner for her update on the human rights situation in **Nicaragua** and urge this Council to follow up on her clear recommendation to ensure continued and enhanced monitoring and reporting on the situation, “notably as a contribution to ensuring accountability,”² given continued crimes under international law on the ground and Nicaragua’s refusal to cooperate with regional and international human rights mechanisms.

Amnesty International thanks the High Commissioner for repeating yet again in her report to this Session of the Council her clear call to establish an international and independent investigative mechanism for Libya.³ The crimes under international law and human rights violations in documented her report by all parties to the conflict -- to each other, and to civilians, including migrants -- are chilling. So is her conclusion that there has been impunity, both for crimes relating to the conflict and directed at migrants. Our organization agrees with her wholeheartedly – this Session of the Council is the window of opportunity to establish such a mechanism. Amnesty International urges the Libyan delegation, especially as a member of the Council, and other delegations, to respond credibly to the growing and unmistakable calls for the establishment of such a mechanism.

Thank you.

² OHCHR, Situation of human rights in Nicaragua: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 3 September 2019, UN Doc. A/HRC/42/18, para 67.

³ OHCHR, Situation of human rights in Libya, and the effectiveness of technical assistance and capacity-building measures received by the Government of Libya: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 23 January 2020, UN Doc. A/HRC/43/75, paras 83 & 86(3), available at <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/43/75>.