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UN Human Rights Council
Twenty-sixth Session
10 – 27 June 2014

Annual full-day discussion on women's rights
Oral intervention in panel discussion on women's human rights and the sustainable development agenda

Delivered by Francesca Anderson – **Video link:** <http://goo.gl/jj0vx2> (statement at 1:39:32)

Thank you Mr. President.

Lessons from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) highlight the consequences of neglecting human rights.

To strengthen delivery of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, Amnesty International urges UN Member States to ensure that:

1. All goals, targets and indicators in the post-2015 framework are consistent with human rights standards and must not fall below states' legally binding human rights obligations.
2. Accountability must be embedded throughout all goals, including by ensuring robust human rights targets and indicators on access to justice, the right to information and by ensuring that implementing laws and policies, at both the national and international levels, are consistent with human rights standards. Participation of diverse stakeholders is also key to ensuring accountability.

Mr. President,

Gender equality and empowerment are widely recognized as essential to poverty reduction and development in key documents such as the Cairo Programme of Action (1994), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), and the Millennium Declaration (2000). Gender equality is a fundamental human right.

At the 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March States agreed for "gender equality, the empowerment of women and human rights of women and girls to be reflected as a stand-alone goal and to be integrated through targets and indicators into all goals of any new development framework".¹

It is fundamental that States address gender equality overall, in order to ensure transformative change for women and girls. In order to achieve gender equality and women and girls' empowerment, it is also essential that there be efficient accountability mechanisms when their human rights are violated both in times of peace and post conflict.

Amnesty International urges inclusion of a stand-alone goal on gender equality, to include:

- Target 1: Prevent and respond to all forms of gender-based violence, especially against women and girls.

¹ Commission on the Status of Women, *Agreed Conclusions: Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls*, UN Doc. E/CN.6/2014/L.7, 58th session, 25 March 2014.

- Target 2: Guarantee sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.
- Target 3: Significantly increase the representation of women in public life.

Gender equality should also be mainstreamed across all other goals and targets.

We ask the following questions of the panellists:

What can be done to increase States' will to strengthen the delivery of human rights and empowerment of women and girls?

We would welcome your thoughts about the importance of efficient accountability mechanisms to gender equality and women and girls' empowerment.

Finally, we refer you to Amnesty International briefing: 'Delivering a Just Future for All: Why Human Rights Matter to Sustainable Development'² that proposes realistic and measurable targets and indicators on how human rights can be embedded in development goals.

² AI Index: ACT 35/008/2014, available at <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ACT35/008/2014/en>