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Item 3:

Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Oral intervention in clustered interactive dialogue with Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants and Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers

Delivered by Francesca Anderson – **Video link:** <http://goo.gl/x3MHZV> (statement number 8)

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants on his mission to Qatar.¹

We share the Special Rapporteur's concerns with regard to the serious flaws in Qatar's laws which give rise to abuse of low-income migrant workers. Amnesty International has in the last year released two reports on the situation of migrant workers in Qatar, on abuse in the construction sector² and of women domestic workers³. In both sectors, our research has identified serious structural barriers to the effective protection of rights, including the skewed power relationship fostered by the sponsorship system, the existence of the exit permit, and the fact that domestic workers are excluded from the protections of the Labour Law. In addition, labour protections are not adequately enforced, with many employers flouting the rules with impunity.

We welcome the Special Rapporteur's clear recognition of the responsibilities of the governments of migrant workers' countries of origin for preventing abuses, and also of the role which businesses must play, consistent with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, to ensure that no workers are abused as a result of their operations.

We would like to ask Mr. Crépeau:

What is your assessment of the announcement by the Government of Qatar in May 2014 regarding proposed changes to the workings of the sponsorship system?

Mr. President,

Amnesty International urges the Government of Qatar to promptly implement the Special Rapporteur's recommendations, in particular by abolishing the "no objection" certificate (NOC) and "exit permit" provisions of the sponsorship system, by recognising the rights of association and self-organisation for all workers including migrants, and by adopting legislation on domestic workers that includes protection of labour rights.

Thank you, Mr. Crépeau. Thank you, Mr. President.

¹ A/HRC/26/35/Add.1

² "The Dark Side of Migration: Spotlight on Qatar's construction sector ahead of the World Cup", AI Index: MDE 22/010/2013, November 2013.

³ "My sleep is my break': Exploitation of migrant domestic workers in Qatar", AI Index: MDE 22/004/2014, April 2014.