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ORAL STATEMENT
Item 6:
Consideration of UPR reports: Zambia

UN Human Rights Council
53rd session
19 June to 14 July 2023

Mr President,

Amnesty International welcomes Zambia's engagement with the UPR and its support for 226 out of 250 recommendations.¹ We particularly welcome support for the recommendations to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, following Zambia's abolition of the death penalty in December 2022.²

The 2021 Cyber Security and Cyber Crimes Act has negative ramifications on the enjoyment of digital rights and undermines the right to freedom of expression.³ Although Zambia committed to amending the Act,⁴ no meaningful progress has been made with respect to this commitment.

Mr President,

We welcome Zambia's support for numerous recommendations to protect and promote the rights and welfare of persons with albinism, and on improving access to healthcare.⁵ However, persons with albinism continue to be subjected to violent attacks and mutilation due to superstitious misconceptions about albinism. We urge Zambia to protect persons with albinism from further attacks including by providing secure houses and visible police patrols and expediting prosecution of suspected perpetrators of such attacks as well as ensuring access of victims to justice and effective remedies.⁶

¹ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Zambia, UN Doc. A/HRC/52/14, 11 April 2023 and its Addendum, 7 June 2023, UN Doc. A/HRC/53/14/Add.1, paragraph 5

² Amnesty International, "Zambia: Amnesty International welcomes the abolishment of the death penalty", 24 December 2022, [amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/12/zambia-amnesty-international-welcomes-the-abolishment-of-the-death-penalty/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/12/zambia-amnesty-international-welcomes-the-abolishment-of-the-death-penalty/)

³ Amnesty International, *Zambia: New human rights culture vs entrenched impunity: Amnesty International submission to the 42nd session of the UPR Working Group*, (INDEX: AFR 63/5917/2022) [amnesty.org/en/documents/af63/5917/2022/en/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/af63/5917/2022/en/)

⁴ A/HRC/53/14, p 15, recommendations 127.88 - 127.92 (Germany, Ireland, Mexico, USA, Belgium) and 127.94, 127.96, 127.97 (Costa Rica, Uruguay, Denmark)

⁵ A/HRC/53/14, p 11, recommendations 127.32, 127.60, 127.65, (Angola, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Canada) 127.68 – 127.81 (Congo, Costa Rica, Iraq, Luxembourg, Mexico, Namibia, Nigeria, Paraguay, Cuba, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, South Africa, Israel, Dominican Republic)

⁶ Amnesty International, *Zambia: New human rights culture vs entrenched impunity: Amnesty International submission to the 42nd session of the UPR Working Group*, (previously cited).

Mr President,

We regret an official pronouncements that “the UPND government does not support gay rights as Zambia is a Christian nation”⁷ and that Zambia merely noted recommendations to decriminalise same-sex consensual sexual relations between adult persons.⁸ We urge the government to swiftly implement these recommendations to repeal laws that criminalize consensual same-sex conduct between adults and review all legislation, policies and programmes to foster equality and prevent discrimination on the basis of real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.⁹

Mr President,

Finally, we encourage Zambia to swiftly implement supported recommendations. We urge the government to submit a mid-term report on progress towards their implementation and to use an Item 6 General Debate to bring this to the attention of UN Member States.

Thank you.

⁷ Amnesty International, *Zambia: New human rights culture vs entrenched impunity: Amnesty International submission to the 42nd session of the UPR Working Group*, (previously cited).

⁸ A/HRC/53/14, p 23, recommendations 129.7 - 129.23 (Iceland, Finland, Latvia, Mexico, Spain, Israel, Israel, USA, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Sweden, Uruguay)

⁹ Amnesty International, *Zambia: New human rights culture vs entrenched impunity: Amnesty International submission to the 42nd session of the UPR Working Group*, (previously cited).