



ORAL STATEMENT

Item 3: ID with the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association

ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE TRADE IN LAW ENFORCEMENT EQUIPMENT

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

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur that examines the accountability gaps for crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations committed against protestors.

Mr. Rapporteur, we share your concern over the barriers to advance accountability for these abuses and we value your efforts to end impunity. The treatment of peaceful assembly as a perceived threat by states has often led to responses characterized by the unnecessary or excessive use of force. The report rightly emphasizes that the deployment of less lethal weapons during protests may amount to torture or other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.

As outlined in the report, investigating and achieving justice in cases involving the misuse of weapons like kinetic impact projectiles and tear gas has proven immensely challenging. The absence of reporting mechanisms for these weapons hinders the establishment of facts, determination of command chains, and identification of potential crimes and liabilities.

Mr. Rapporteur, in light of the rapid proliferation of such equipment and the significant harm inflicted upon the health and human rights of activists and protestors, do you consider that the establishment of an internationally binding normative framework on the trade in law enforcement equipment could contribute to human rights-based controls over the transfers of this type of equipment and, consequently, how would it, in your view, contribute to improving accountability?

I thank you.