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ORAL STATEMENT
Item 6
Consideration of UPR reports: Cuba

UN Human Rights Council
55th session
26 February – 5 April

Mr. President,

Amnesty International is deeply concerned about the ongoing human rights challenges in Cuba, particularly regarding freedom of expression and assembly.

Cuba's response to the protests on July 11 and 12, 2021 – including mass incarcerations, the use of arbitrary detentions, and the implementation of a new Penal Code that intensifies censorship – indicate a worrying disregard for fundamental freedoms.

Although Cuba accepted during the 2022 review the recommendation to "ensure that prisoners are treated with dignity and humanity" in line with the Minimum Standards for the Treatment of Prisoners, Amnesty International has received multiple reports since then of ongoing mistreatment in prisons, violations of the right to due process, and the use of incommunicado detention.

Mr. President,

Amnesty International urges Cuba to immediately and unconditionally release all individuals detained for exercising their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, including opposition leader José Daniel Ferrer García, artists Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara and Maykel Osorbo, and Yoruba priests and prisoners of conscience Loreto Hernández García and Donaida Pérez Paseiro.

Additionally, Amnesty International urges Cuban authorities to cease subjecting human rights activists and journalists to surveillance and arbitrary detention, including de facto house arrest. Cuba must also repeal articles of the new Penal Code that criminalize dissent and limit freedom of expression in line with recommendations it has received.

Finally, we insist that Cuba implement recommendations to abolish the death penalty and promptly ratify, without making any reservation, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Cuba should also accede to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and allow access for human rights organizations, as well as extend invitations to the United Nations human rights special procedures to visit the country.

Thank you.