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ORAL STATEMENT

Item 9

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance: follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

STATES MUST SUPPORT THE ELABORATION OF A DECLARATION ON THE RESPECT,
PROTECTION AND FULFILMENT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF PEOPLE OF AFRICAN
DESCENT

UN Human Rights Council
58th session
24 February – 4 April 2025

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. We fully support the elaboration of a draft UN declaration on the respect, protection and fulfilment of the human rights of people of African descent, an important opportunity to strengthen existing human rights standards and to advance the fight against systemic racism and inequality - which continue to disproportionately impact Africans and people of African descent across the globe.

It is vital that the declaration addresses the obligations of states to provide reparations for the historical injustices committed against people of African descent throughout centuries of colonialism, enslavement and the trade in enslaved Africans. The legacies of these injustices endure, manifesting in contemporary forms of racism and obstructing the full realisation of the rights of Africans and people of African descent today.

It is also important that the declaration recognises multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by people of African descent. Systemic racism and other systems of oppression are mutually reinforcing, racialization extends beyond race, skin colour, ethnicity and national origin, ascribing racial meaning to other grounds of discrimination such as gender, sexual orientation, religion and language.

Amnesty International calls on States to support and commit to the elaboration of this declaration and to ensure that such elaboration is done with the meaningful participation of civil society, in particular, individuals and communities of African descent.

Thank you.