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ITEM 3: General Debate under Item 3

## THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL MUST ACT TO ENSURE RESPECT OF INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE

UN Human Rights Council  
Thirty-sixth session  
11-29 September 2017

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the recent abolition of the death penalty in Mongolia. This sets a positive example of the human rights change that can be achieved when the authorities demonstrate the necessary political will. We also welcome steps taken by several other states to end this form of punishment. Guinea, for example, abolished the death penalty for ordinary crimes in October 2016.

However, Amnesty International is concerned about the way in which the death penalty is used in the minority of states that still resorts to it, and in particular wishes to draw the attention of the Council to the states that disregard their international obligations and impose death sentences for offences that took place when the sentenced persons were below 18 years of age.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, a State Party to the CRC, executed Alireza Tajiki on 10 August 2017. Alireza was 15 at the time of his arrest and Amnesty has received credible evidence that his conviction relied on forced “confessions” obtained under torture. As of August 2017, at least 92 people remain on death row in Iran for crimes that occurred when they were below 18 years of age.

Juvenile offenders are also at risk of execution in Saudi Arabia, another State Party to the CRC. For example, Abdulkareem al-Hawaj had his death sentence upheld in July for crimes committed when he was 16. Three others currently remain on death row in the Kingdom.

In recent years Amnesty International has also recorded the imposition of death sentences on individuals, who were below 18 years old when the crime was committed, in Bangladesh, Maldives, Nigeria, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea.

Amnesty International calls on all States that have not yet abolished the death penalty to:

- Immediately establish an official moratorium on executions, with a view to its full abolition;
- Fully respect their treaty obligations under CRC and ICCPR and under no circumstances impose the death sentence or carry out executions for crimes committed by persons below 18 years of age.

Thank you Mr. President.