

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement

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Nigeria: Amnesty International welcomes Commonwealth commitment to human rights

Abuja- Amnesty International's delegation attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) today welcomed the general commitments given to human rights objectives on democracy and development, particularly the commitment to promote "machinery to protect human rights" and greater partnership within the Commonwealth to achieve the objectives.

The Aso Rock Declaration adopted by the heads of government urges the Commonwealth Ministers and the Secretary-General to work on implementation and requested a progress report to the next CHOGM in Malta in 2005.

"These commitments must now be turned into an Action Plan for specific Commonwealth cooperation between governments, business and civil society," said delegation head Ced Simpson.

"Such an Action Plan should take account of specific recommendations made by civil society organizations at the Commonwealth Peoples Forum which preceded the CHOGM," Mr Simpson said, "including the call for all governments to ratify and implement international human rights treaties."