

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement

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61st session of the UN Commission on Human Rights: Amnesty International calls on Members to demonstrate unequivocal commitment to human rights

Amnesty International takes the opportunity of today's election of the officers of the Bureau of the 61st session of the Commission on Human Rights (the Commission) to urge governments to take careful account of the findings of the High Level Panel on Threats and Challenges about the Commission as they prepare for the upcoming session. Members of the Commission must act now to re-establish the credibility and professionalism of the Commission. Amnesty International calls upon Members of the Commission to end their use of double standards in dealing with human rights violations, to demonstrate a real commitment to human rights, and to enhance the human rights expertise of their delegations to the Commission.

Amnesty International urges the Members of the Commission represented on the Bureau, as well as the other Members of the Commission, to demonstrate unequivocal commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights by taking substantive measures both at the international and national levels.

Amnesty International calls upon the Members of the Commission to take the following measures at the international level:

- Ensure that protection and promotion of human rights in individual countries from all regions is a central function of the Commission;
- Establish objective and transparent criteria and procedures for the examination by the Commission of the human rights situation in individual countries. Such criteria and procedures should draw on the expertise of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and her Office and take into account the recommendations by the Special Procedures and the human rights treaty monitoring bodies as well as any country's failure to cooperate with the human rights mechanisms of the UN;
- Create an effective system of monitoring and evaluating governments' implementation of the determinations and recommendations of the Commission and its Special Procedures in order to increase governments' accountability for their respect for human rights ;
- Support adequate funding from the UN regular budget for the human rights program in order that the resolutions and decisions of the Commission can be implemented fully, and that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights can adequately support the activities of the Special Procedures and the treaty monitoring bodies.

At the national level, each State's measures should include:

- Extension of a standing invitation to the Special Procedures of the Commission and prompt implementation of their requests for visits;
- Full and prompt implementation of recommendations made by the Special Procedures;
- Full and timely response to urgent appeals and general letters of allegation from the Special Procedures;
- Ratification of the UN human rights treaties and the withdrawal of reservations;
- Full and effective national implementation of the human rights treaties to which the State is party, including through the development of a national action plan for implementation;
- Timely submission of periodic reports to the treaty monitoring bodies and full and prompt implementation of their recommendations;
- Prompt implementation of requests for interim measures made by the treaty monitoring bodies in connection with individual communications.

Amnesty International encourages governments to inform the Commission about their initiatives to promote and protect human rights at the national level in their statements delivered during the Commission's High-Level Segment.