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ORAL STATEMENT

ITEM 10: Interactive Dialogue with Independent Expert on Central African Republic

**URGENT ACTION NEEDED TO PROTECT CIVILIANS IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Thirty-sixth session

11 – 29 September 2017

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Central African Republic. We share her alarm over the escalation of human rights violations and abuses, and increasing sectarian violence committed by armed groups.

In August 2017, Amnesty International interviewed 30 people who fled violence in the Basse-Kotto prefecture in the Southeast of the country. The organization documented the situation of 47 people who had been killed by the UPC, and 20 women, most of whom had been gang-raped.

In the past 6 months, the violence has spread throughout Basse-Kotto prefecture, particularly affecting the towns of Alindao, Mingala, Nzangba, and Mobaye following the negotiated departure of the UPC from Bambari. The UPC moved its headquarters to Alindao in February 2017, and launched a crackdown on the civilian population there, which has resulted in hundreds of civilians being killed, injured and raped. Houses have been looted and burned and thousands have fled the area.

The UN peacekeeping force, the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), has been unable to prevent the violence and protect civilians. If no measures are taken to ensure it delivers on its mandate to protect civilians, the mission will lose its credibility with the population.

Ms. Keita Bocoum, what additional measures could be taken immediately to enhance MINUSCA's ability to prevent violence and protect civilians?

Thank you, Mr. President.