

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## PUBLIC STATEMENT

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### **Good practice in the Universal Periodic Review: Uruguay**

As High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein reminded the Human Rights Council during the opening statement at its 30<sup>th</sup> session, “[t]he recommendations of the UPR and other human rights mechanisms must be implemented” in order to turn words into action on the ground. Indeed this is the primary objective of the UPR.

As the UPR has moved into its second cycle the focus has increasingly shifted towards implementation and follow up. This is key if the mechanism is to fulfil its chief objective of improving the situation of human rights at the national level, as set out in resolution 5/1.<sup>1</sup>

To date, Amnesty International has made submissions for 117 country reviews in the second cycle. In each of these, the organization has undertaken an assessment of the State’s implementation of key recommendations accepted in the previous review. The picture is mixed. All too often Amnesty International has had to conclude that nothing or very little has been achieved by the State in response to recommendations, and invariably those are the reviews where recommendations are repeated from the first cycle. Sometimes recommendations may not be fully implementable in the course of the 4.5 years between reviews, sometimes there is a lack of political will or resources to prioritise the action necessary to deliver on the UPR recommendations.

However, there are also many examples of very positive developments in countries following their review, prompted by recommendations made during their UPR. One such example is Uruguay.

Throughout its UPR process, Uruguay has consulted with a wide range of stakeholders, including different ministries of the government, parliamentarians, the National Human Rights Commission, the UN country office and civil society. This has allowed for inclusive engagement with the review process, taking into account the human rights concerns of a range of actors at the national level and focusing efforts on the key human rights challenges in Uruguay.

Following the review process, Uruguay has combined recommendations accepted during its UPR with recommendations issued by UN treaty bodies and Special Procedures, and in doing so, has compiled a comprehensive list of human rights goals to be met in the period before its next review in 2018 and outlined implementation plans with relevant State bodies. Importantly, Uruguay has also set up a monitoring mechanism, with broad participation, to report on progress in the implementation of recommendations and voluntary commitments, including through a mid-term review in 2016.

Collaboration and sharing of good practice between States are two key elements of the UPR process and essential in using the mechanism to improve the human rights situation in countries worldwide. If there is to be significant progress in the global human rights situation in the third cycle of the UPR, all stakeholders, including States under Review, Reviewing

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<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Council, Resolution 5/1: Institution-building of the United Nations Human Rights Council, 2007.

States, and civil society, must increase efforts to ensure timely implementation of accepted human rights commitments.

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