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KENYA: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL WELCOMES GOVERNMENT'S ACCESSION TO CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE

The Government of Kenya's accession to the Convention against Torture -- without reservation -- is a positive step forward to improving the human rights situation in the country, Amnesty International said today.

The organization wrote to the Kenyan Government today welcoming its recent accession to the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Convention against Torture).

"The Kenyan Government should now take immediate steps to incorporate the provisions of the Convention against Torture into Kenyan national law," Amnesty International said.

While recognizing this important step, however, the organization still continues to have concerns about the use of torture in Kenya. Allegations of torture continue and while prosecutions and convictions of those found to be responsible have increased they are still very few.

Amnesty International now urges the Kenyan Government to take the next step towards protecting the rights of Kenyans not to be tortured, by making a declaration under Article 22 of the Convention against Torture which allows for individuals to report alleged violations of the Convention against Torture to the United Nations treaty monitoring body, the Committee against Torture.

Through the ratification of international human rights conventions, and the incorporation of their provisions into national law and practice, governments indicate a clear commitment to the abolition of torture. It is clear that full implementation of these international legal obligations is necessary to fulfil that commitment.

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