



## Tajikistan: Oral intervention at the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN Human Rights Council (25 February – 22 March 2013)

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Item 3: Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

Mr. President,

Amnesty International supports the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment following his visit to Tajikistan in May 2012.

Despite recent efforts, such as making torture a criminal offence, additional efforts must be made to ensure accountability for torture and ill-treatment. These should include the establishment of an independent criminal investigative mechanism outside the structures of the General Prosecutor's office and outside law enforcement bodies to promptly, thoroughly, independently and impartially investigate allegations of deaths, torture and other ill-treatment in custody by the security forces. Those found responsible must be brought to justice and must not be eligible for amnesties, as is currently the case. Victims, families and witnesses must be guaranteed protection from reprisals. The government should ensure that detainees and prisoners have unrestricted access to legal counsel and that civil society organizations are granted unimpeded access to all detention facilities for monitoring purposes.

Amnesty International is concerned about persistent allegations that individuals returned to Tajikistan from other countries pursuant to extradition requests have been held in incommunicado detention. We are also concerned about numerous allegations of abductions and rendition to Tajikistan involving Tajikistani security officials operating on the territory of other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Amnesty International further welcomes the emphasis that the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism has placed in his report on the right to truth and the obligation of accountability. States must ensure proper investigations whenever there is reason to believe violations have occurred. Individuals suspected of violations that constitute crimes under international or national law must be brought to justice. Victims of alleged human rights violations must have access to an effective remedy and reparations. Evidence of human rights violations must never be concealed from victims or society as a whole on grounds of national security or state secrets.

Thank you Mr. President.