

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## PUBLIC STATEMENT

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### **Amnesty International encourages an active role for the UN Special Procedures around the MDG Summit**

On the occasion of the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the United Nations (UN) Special Procedures, Amnesty International highlights the important role that these independent experts of the Human Rights Council can play in reviewing states' efforts towards achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and consistency with human rights standards.

As Heads of State are preparing to meet in September 2010 under the auspices of the UN General Assembly to review progress made on the MDGs and to chart a way forward to 2015, it is clear that insufficient attention is being paid to human rights in the context of this review and in action plans to accelerate achievement of the Goals.

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and many non-governmental organizations have been pointing to the importance of human rights in national and international efforts to achieve the Goals, including on the need to ensure non-discrimination, participation and accountability in all MDG efforts, and to take into account states' legal human rights obligations in all their efforts to meet the Goals. However, so far states have not given due attention to the underlying human rights violations that hinder progress on the MDGs and to ensuring that their MDG efforts are consistent with their existing human rights obligations. Any reference to human rights in the context of the review of overall MDG progress continues to be limited, and considerations in relation to states' human rights obligations – including in relation to economic, social and cultural rights – are largely absent in the assessment of outstanding obstacles to progress and in stated efforts to meet the goals by 2015.

Amnesty International considers it essential that the UN High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly in September on the MDGs includes a clear focus on human rights in order to identify the steps that states and international bodies need to take in order to address the obstacles and gaps to meaningful progress in all countries.

Amnesty International welcomes the work that has been done already by some mandate holders in this area, in drawing attention to the importance of ensuring consistency between efforts to address poverty and meet the MDGs and states' human rights obligations in relation to economic, social and cultural rights.

In view of the UN High Level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs, Amnesty International encourages relevant mandate holders to play an active and visible role in the discussions leading up to the Summit by sharing their findings and expertise on human rights concerns that are key to the MDGs, and ensuring that these are reflected in current discussions on review of progress, both nationally and internationally. For example, the wholly inadequate MDG target on slums demonstrates the need to integrate a cross-cutting human rights perspective into all policies and strategies in this area, in order to address the range of human rights violations that affect people living in slums.

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