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ORAL STATEMENT

Item 4: Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on High Commissioner report on Democratic People's Republic of Korea

UN Human Rights Council
60th session
8 September – 8 October 2025

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the High Commissioner's report on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

A decade after the conclusion of the Commission of Inquiry's work, many of its concerns remain unresolved. Political prison camps are still in operation, with detainees enduring inhumane and extremely harsh conditions. Reports of torture and other ill-treatment, arbitrary detention and enforced disappearances persist.

Despite greater visibility on the diplomatic stage, the DPRK remains, for the vast majority of its people, sealed off from the world. Borders are tightly controlled and permission to leave is granted only in the rarest cases. Severe restrictions on freedom of expression including access to information have left people cut off from the wider world; the internet is not available to the general population.

Amnesty International shares the High Commissioner's assessment that the DPRK's "extreme isolation" represents an "anomaly", underscoring the urgent need for engagement to end human rights violations, including the system of "intense repression" of fundamental freedoms. As the High Commissioner notes, this is essential to unlocking the potential of the DPRK's people, especially the younger generation.

Mr. President, the presentation of this report not only reinforces longstanding concerns and the need for ongoing attention to them by this Council. It should also reinvigorate efforts to identify a way forward. Sustained international engagement, credible processes for evidence-gathering and accountability, and a victim-centered approach are all essential. The OHCHR Seoul Office plays a vital role in this work, and it must receive the Council's full support. This Council must demonstrate solidarity with the people of the DPRK and not let international attention fade.

We urge the DPRK to uphold its international human rights obligations and to engage genuinely with UN mechanisms so that the rights and dignity of its people are upheld. The DPRK should, in that regard, grant full and unfettered access to UN human rights experts and mechanisms,

including the High Commissioner and the Special Rapporteur on the situation in the DPRK.

Thank you.