

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## Public Statement

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### **Ireland: Darfur features high in talks between Irene Khan and Minister Ahern**

(London) Amnesty International Secretary General Irene Khan today met Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dermot Ahern, to discuss the human rights crisis in Darfur. Ms Khan also raised the need to strengthen the UN's highest body on human rights, the recently established UN Human Rights Council.

Amnesty International briefed Minister Ahern on the latest waves of attacks against civilians in Darfur and Eastern Chad, including last week's attack by Janjawid militias in the Jebel Moon area which killed at least 67 men, women and children.

"As the Government of Sudan continues to refuse to accept a UN peacekeeping force in Darfur, Ireland's continued commitment to put an end to the suffering of Darfur people is admirable," Ms. Khan said. "Ireland's leadership to bring about an end to human rights abuses in Darfur is an example to the international community not to cease their diplomatic efforts."

Ms. Khan raised the need for the new UN Human Rights Council to develop itself as a strong and effective human rights mechanism, especially in these early days when the new Council is in the process of building its internal structure. As a member of the EU, Ms. Khan urged Ireland to ensure that the EU makes a strong case for retaining and strengthening the Special Procedures system as well as developing the new Universal Periodic Review mechanism to assist states to fulfil their human rights obligations and commitments.

Given Ireland's interest in the Middle East Peace process, Ms Khan called on the Government of Ireland to ensure that the human rights situation in Israel and the Palestinian Authority is addressed with the urgency and commitment it requires from the international community.