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News Flash

Macedonia: Ohrid Agreement - a starting point for the protection of human rights

Amnesty International considers that today's vote in the Macedonian Parliament - by a substantial majority - in favour of the Framework Agreement represents an opportunity to ensure greater respect for human rights in Macedonia through the establishment of the principle of non-discrimination and equal treatment of all under the law.

Amnesty International welcomes those provisions of the Framework Agreement which aim to redress the past human rights abuses and institutionalized discrimination which have contributed to the current situation, and the commitment made by all parties to ensure the safe return of internally displaced persons and refugees.

The organization particularly welcomes proposed constitutional amendments which guarantee the internationally recognized human rights of all citizens of Macedonia.

Amnesty International also welcomes measures proposed for human rights training - with the assistance of the international community - of members of the police force and other actors in the criminal justice system (particularly in the light of concerns addressed by Amnesty International and other human rights organizations, over the past 10 years, about many documented cases of ill-treatment and torture, and unfair trials of ethnic Albanians and other minorities).

The organization has a number of concerns about the implementation of the constitutional amendments included within the Framework Agreement, particularly with respect to the rights of the Roma and Egyptiani, Turkish, Serb and Vlach minorities.

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