

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Public Statement

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Amnesty International welcomes Action Plan of High Commissioner for Human Rights: Urges governments to support and commit resources

(New York / Geneva) Amnesty International welcomes the Plan of Action published on 27 May by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Plan is a thorough and thoughtful response to the United Nations Secretary-General's request¹ and provides a solid basis to strengthen her Office's ability to discharge its vital mandate.

Amnesty International fully endorses the High Commissioner's emphasis on implementation of human rights and on the related goals of protecting those at risk and empowering people to assert and claim their human rights. We welcome the strategies proposed, namely enhanced country engagement, strengthening the High Commissioner's capacity to provide independent human rights leadership and the development of partnerships including with non-governmental organizations. The High Commissioner's Plan is a comprehensive reflection of the many challenges facing the Office and outlines a carefully conceived approach to meeting them. The Plan is rightly ambitious at what the Secretary-General calls a "defining moment in history". Its implementation is crucial at a time that the United Nations must reinforce its ability to advance the inter-linked imperatives of development, security and human rights.

Amnesty International also welcomes the broad support that governments have expressed for strengthening the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights during recent discussions of the Secretary-General's report "In larger freedom ...". The Secretary-General singled out the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for being "woefully ill-equipped" to meet today's broad range of human rights challenges. The High Commissioner has provided governments with a clear vision for strengthening her Office. Amnesty International calls on all governments to welcome the Plan of Action and to match their stated commitment to human rights with concrete financial and other measures to give effect to her Plan. The High Commissioner's proposal to double her Office's overall resources over the next five to six years, in particular, must be welcomed and implemented.

¹ In the Secretary-General's report "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all," the Secretary-General asked the High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a plan of action for strengthening the ability of her Office to meet the broad range of human rights challenges facing the international community. A/59/2005, 21 March 2005, para. 145.