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Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Yemen: Amnesty International urges enhanced respect for human rights and abolition of the death penalty

Amnesty International welcomes Yemen's engagement with the Universal Periodic Review and its support for a number of important recommendations.

Among these are recommendations to promote and protect women's human rights, including prohibiting any practice of forced marriage of girls.¹ The organization urges Yemen to implement this recommendation without delay to ensure an end to early marriage and its harmful effects on young women and girls.

Amnesty International regrets Yemen's rejection of recommendations made by 11 states to establish a moratorium on all executions and to reduce the use of the death penalty with a view to its eventual abolition.² The organization strongly encourages the government to reconsider its position on these recommendations without delay. Yemen supported the recommendation to ensure compliance with its obligation under Article 37 (a) of the Convention of the Rights of the Child³ and the government should now commute all outstanding death sentences imposed on individuals convicted of having committed a capital offence while under the age of 18.

Finally, Amnesty International noted Yemen's support of recommendations to ensure the effective enforcement of human rights-related laws throughout its territory at all administrative and judiciary levels and to fulfil its international human rights commitments and obligations.⁴ In this regard, the organization calls for the government to immediately end violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the context of the conflict in the Sa'da region. The authorities must urgently investigate all allegations of serious violations by their forces, such as the reported bombing raid on Adi village, on 16 September 2009, in which some 80 civilians are reported to have been killed. The government must also release all prisoners of conscience detained for taking part in peaceful protests, including those held in connection with the demonstrations in southern Yemen.

Background

The 12th session of the UN Human Rights Council on 24 September 2009 adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Yemen. Prior to the adoption of the report of the review Amnesty International delivered the oral statement above.

¹ A/HRC/12/13, paragraph 91, recommendations 41 (Tunisia) and 63 (Israel). Other recommendations relevant to this issue include: recommendation 1 (Netherlands), 4 (Nigeria), 31 (UK), 32 (Libya), 33 (Canada), 45 (Germany).

² *Ibid*, paragraph 94, recommendation 1 (Portugal), 3 (Sweden, Italy, Netherlands), 4 (UK), 5 (Canada), 6 (Mexico), 7 (Hungary), 8 (Netherlands, Brazil), 11 (Austria).

³ *Ibid*, paragraph 91, recommendation 55 (Canada).

⁴ *Ibid*, paragraph 91, recommendations 13 (Italy) and 25 (Algeria).

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