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**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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Item 6:
Consideration of UPR reports

TURKMENISTAN

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes Turkmenistan's acceptance of recommendations to guarantee freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.¹ We also welcome improvements to national legislation, including the 2012 law on political parties and the 2013 law on media freedom.

Amnesty International is concerned, however, that there has been no genuine attempt to guarantee these rights in practice. Journalists, human rights defenders and other activists continue to be subjected to harassment, arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, and imprisonment after unfair trials. Turkmenistan has also failed to reform the registration process for non-governmental organizations and to allow them to work freely without harassment.

Two states called on Turkmenistan to provide information on the whereabouts of prisoners whose fate is unknown.² We are deeply disappointed that Turkmenistan rejected these recommendations. Relatives of the disappeared have told Amnesty International that they have had no news of their relatives for over ten years, and do not know if they are dead or alive.

Mr President,

¹ A/HRC/24/3, recommendations 112.59 (Czech Republic), 112.60 (Slovenia), 112.61 (Chile), 112.62 (Germany), 112.63 (Switzerland), 112.64 (Norway). Other recommendations were taken under considerations: 113.74-113.90 (United States of America, Canada, France, Poland).

² A/HRC/24/3, recommendations 114.2 (Germany), 114.4 (Canada).

We welcome Turkmenistan's acceptance of recommendations to investigate torture and to ratify OPCAT³ and note the inclusion of a definition of torture in the Criminal Code in August 2012. However, Amnesty International continues to receive reports that people suspected of criminal offences face torture and other ill-treatment in Turkmenistan. Complaints by victims are rarely if ever investigated, and impunity for the perpetrators prevails. There are also credible reports that practices, such as forced administration of medication, continue in prisons. We call on the authorities to carry out thorough, independent and impartial investigations into all complaints of torture or other ill-treatment and to hold those responsible to account.

Finally, Mr President,

We are concerned that Turkmenistan severely restricts access to the country for international monitors, and that it fails to fully cooperate with the UN human rights mechanisms. Amnesty International has requested access to the country several times; so far unsuccessfully. We welcome Turkmenistan's acceptance of recommendations to cooperate with the UN Special Procedures,⁴ and call on the authorities to issue such invitations and allow access to the country without delay.

Thank you, Mr. President.

³ A/HRC/24/3, recommendations 113.1-113.6 (Mexico, France, Switzerland, Costa Rica, Estonia, Montenegro, Romania); 113.58 (Czech Republic), 113.69 (United States of America).

⁴ A/HRC/24/3, recommendations 113.31-113.45 (State of Palestine, Slovakia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Iraq, Montenegro, France, Switzerland, Hungary, Spain, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia).