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ORAL STATEMENT

ITEM 10: INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE ON THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Urgent need to establish a commission of inquiry into human rights violations in Kasai region

UN Human Rights Council
Thirty-fifth session
6 – 23 June 2017

Mr. President,

The human rights situation in the Kasai region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) requires immediate action from this Council. Hundreds of extrajudicial executions and other serious violations of international human rights law have been committed by the Armed Forces of the DRC. Violence now affects at least five provinces, and an estimated 500 to 1,000 people have been killed and 1.3 million¹ have been forced to flee their homes.

Amnesty International is particularly concerned by the impact of this situation on children. According to UNICEF and other child protection agencies, over 2000 children have been recruited by Kamuena Nsapu, over 600 schools have been destroyed¹, 400 000 children are at risk of acute severe malnutrition², and dozens of have been victims of sexual violence. The UN Joint Human Rights Office has reported over 100 extra-judicial executions of children.

Despite promises made by the DRC government at the 34th session of this Council, Amnesty International research has found that the government has failed to launch credible and transparent national investigations into these human rights violations and abuses, and the 42 mass graves confirmed by the UN.

A research visit to Kinshasa at the end of May 2017 found that investigations had only been

¹ https://www.unicef.org/media/media_96397.html

² <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56829#.WUdsJ-uGPIU>

initiated in relation to two incidents. This does not respond to the large scale of violations documented by the UN Joint Human Rights Office.

Given the lack of credible investigations by Congolese authorities, Amnesty International urges the Human Rights Council to establish an international commission of inquiry, or similar investigative mechanism, into the situation in the Kasai region. A well-resourced, credible, impartial and international investigation is crucial to bring justice to the victims and end the spiral of violence.

Thank you, Mr. President.