

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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Action needed to address past human rights violations as well as recent killings of transsexuals

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Uruguay

Amnesty International acknowledges efforts by Uruguay to promote and protect human rights and welcomes its acceptance of a range of recommendations. It also welcomes Uruguay's rejection of the recommendation, proposed by Bangladesh, to protect a very narrow concept of "family",¹ which would have been incompatible with both national law² and international human rights standards.³

Amnesty International reiterates its call to Uruguay to overcome obstacles to ensuring justice, truth and reparation for the victims of past crimes, including by abolishing the 1986 Amnesty Law⁴ and by ensuring that amnesties, statute of limitations, non-retroactivity of the criminal law, or similar measures, are not applied to crimes under international law or to human rights violations committed during past military and civilian regimes (1973-1985). The organization welcomes recommendations to continue investigations into past human rights violations,⁵ and for the executive and judicial authorities to cooperate with investigations into cases of enforced disappearance.⁶

Many states raised the need for reform of the prison system.⁷ While the authorities have taken steps in recent years to tackle the deplorable conditions in detention, Amnesty International calls on Uruguay to urgently address overcrowding and poor conditions for inmates, while taking special measures to support women prisoners. The organization also welcomes recommendations to strengthen the National Preventive Mechanism, established under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and urges Uruguay to ensure that it has the required autonomy, funding and resources to carry out its mandate.⁸

Amnesty International is concerned about the lack of justice for recent killings of transsexual women in Uruguay. A large number of states raised concerns about gender-based violence⁹ and the government should now take all necessary measures to prevent and protect against all forms of discrimination, violence and harassment related to sexual orientation and gender identity, and to investigate these killings as hate crimes driven by transphobia.¹⁰

¹ A/HRC/26/7, paragraph 124.1 (Bangladesh)

² Law 19.075 on same sex marriage

³ A/HRC/RES/17/19 – Human Rights, sexual orientation and gender identity.

⁴ *Ley 15.848, de Caducidad de la Pretención Punitiva del Estado*

⁵ A/HRC/26/7, paragraph 123.71 (Argentina)

⁶ *Ibid*, paragraph 123.143 (Ghana)

⁷ *Ibid*, paragraphs 123.72-123.87 (France, Greece, Maldives, Morocco, Portugal, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, USA, Uzbekistan, Australia, Iran, Thailand, Hungary)

⁸ *Ibid*, paragraphs 123.17 (Serbia), 123.72 (France), 123.76 (Portugal), 123.79-123.83 (Sweden, Turkey, United States of America, Australia), 123.88 (Ireland)

⁹ *Ibid*, paragraph 123.96-123.100 (Ireland, Maldives, Norway, Paraguay, Tunisia), 123.102 (Senegal), 123.105-123.106 (Sri Lanka, Algeria).

¹⁰ *Ibid*, paragraph 123.9 (Norway), 123.67 (UK), 123.102 (Senegal)

Amnesty International encourages the government to take immediate measures to implement the recommendations arising from this review and to continue to work closely with civil society organizations in this regard.

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Uruguay on 19 June 2014 during its 26th session. Prior to the adoption of the review outcome, Amnesty International delivered the oral statement above.

Amnesty International had earlier submitted information on the situation of human rights in Uruguay: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AMR52/001/2013/en/df3e45f-caf0-41a7-bc95-3cce7bbc9442/amr520012013en.pdf>

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