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ORAL STATEMENT

Item 2 General Debate

UN Human Rights Council
Forty-First session
24 June – 12 July 2019

Mr. President,

Amnesty International shares the High Commissioner's concerns over the ongoing crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations in the **Philippines**, including the thousands of killings associated with the government's "war on drugs" that appear to meet the threshold of crimes against humanity. Given the failure of the Philippines to cooperate constructively with the Special Procedures to address the deteriorating human rights situation and its repeated threats and attacks against certain Special Rapporteurs, we join the High Commissioner in welcoming the recent Special Procedures statement calling for Council action. Our assessment has shown that the situation meets all of the objective criteria for Council action identified in a joint statement delivered by Ireland on behalf of 32 states at the 32nd session of the HRC. On this basis, we call on States at this Council to work together to take action and mandate an international investigation into the human rights situation in the Philippines as a matter of priority this session.

We also share the High Commissioner's concerns over the human rights crisis in **Sudan**. Since the beginning of June, there have been reports that security forces are using live ammunition on peaceful protesters. Bodies have been dumped in the River Nile. There are also clear signs that the internet and social media are being blocked. We call on the Sudanese authorities to guarantee people's right to peaceful assembly and to immediately lift the internet shutdown and any other blanket restrictions on access to the internet and social media to enable people to freely express their opinions. We call on this Council to convene an urgent debate to mandate an independent investigation, which should ideally be complementary and coordinated with efforts by the African Union.

Madame High Commissioner,

As your office applies the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights to digital technologies, we ask it to address the use of invasive digital surveillance tools to target human rights defenders for their work, as Amnesty has documented in [Egypt](#) and in relation to [Pegasus spyware](#), and the use of technologies by digital tourism companies, such as [AirBNB](#), to drive tourism to illegal Israeli settlements. We urge, in complement, that all states respect the mandates of this Council and the independence of your office in fully, swiftly, and finally

publishing the database of business activity in Israeli settlements.

Finally, we thank you for speaking against states' efforts to criminalise acts of basic human compassion with migrants and refugees. As our Secretary General has written, "it is a sad indictment of the times that our work on refugees and migrants ... does not just cover advocating for the rights of people on the move -- it now extends to campaigning for activists who are being targeted for helping refugees or migrants." Nonetheless, there are and will continue to be people who "refus[e] to acquiesce to their governments' efforts to criminalize compassion." "As long as governments [...] fail in their duty to protect the lives of migrants and refugees, there will always be people willing to help their fellow human beings in their hour of need – and at whatever the cost."

Thank you, Mr. President.