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ORAL STATEMENT
Item 6:
Consideration of UPR reports: Somalia

UN Human Rights Council
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Madam President

Amnesty International welcomes Somalia's engagement in the UPR process and its acceptance of 246 out of 273 recommendations.¹ The ongoing conflict between the government, its regional and international partners and Al-Shabaab continues to have devastating impact on the civilian population. We welcome Somalia's acceptance of recommendations² to intensify efforts to combat impunity and to finalize the establishment and operationalization of the Somalia National Human Rights Commission.

Amnesty International has documented how freedom of expression and media freedom has deteriorated dramatically since 2017.³ We welcome Somalia's acceptance of recommendations⁴ to operationalize the prosecutor for crimes against journalists and revise the problematic provisions in the new media law, the penal code, and all other laws that impede freedom of expression and media freedom.

Madam President

We welcome Somalia's acceptance of recommendations to strengthen its social programmes and policies on health.⁵ Amnesty International has documented how the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 exposed and exacerbated these pre-existing broader structural issues facing the country's healthcare system⁶. Now that Somalia is eligible for debt relief, we call on the federal government to allocate a sufficient portion of any debt relief proceeds and new grants to improving the

¹ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Somalia, 7 July 2021, UN Doc. A/HRC/48/11 and its addendum UN Doc. A/HRC/48/11/Add.1, 10 September 2021

² UN Doc. A/HRC/48/11, Recommendations 132.62-64 (Indonesia, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Lithuania Netherlands Niger South Africa United Kingdom of Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Burundi, Georgia, Malawi, Pakistan, Turkey, Rwanda), Recommendations 107-110 (Belgium, Botswana, Croatia)

³ Amnesty International, "We live in perpetual fear": *Violations and Abuses of Freedom of Expression in Somalia*, February 13, 2020, Index: AFR 52/1442/2020, www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr52/1442/2020/en/

⁴ UN Doc. A/HRC/48/11, Recommendation 132.121-143 (Estonia, Fiji, United States of America, Uruguay, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Czechia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Estonia, Ukraine, Australia, Austria, Belgium), Recommendation 132.145 (Chile)

⁵ UN Doc. A/HRC/48/11, Recommendation 132.155 (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), Recommendations 132.162-163 (Malaysia and Nicaragua),

⁶ Amnesty International, "We just watched COVID-19 patients die": *COVID-19 exposed Somalia's weak healthcare system but debt relief can transform it*, August 18, 2021, Index: AFR 52/4602/2021, www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr52/4602/2021/en/

right to health.

We welcome Somalia's acceptance of recommendations⁷ to enact laws and regulations that prohibit all forms of violence against women and girls. However, we remain concerned that despite similar commitments in its previous UPR, such laws have not been passed. Instead, the federal parliament has introduced the "Sexual Intercourse Related Crimes Bill" that contains disturbing provisions breaching international law and regional standards, including some provisions that may allow child marriages. We urge Somalia to immediately scrap the proposed "Sexual Intercourse Related Crimes Bill" and ensure that any law that is introduced prohibits all forms of violence against women and girls and is in conformity with international law and regional standards relating to rape and other forms of sexual violence.

We regret Somalia's rejection of the recommendations⁸ to abolish the death penalty and urge that this position be reconsidered.

Thank you.

⁷ UN Doc. A/HRC/48/11, Recommendation 132.202-203 (Croatia, Mexico), Recommendations 132. 213-214 (Lesotho, Czechia), Recommendations 132.218 (Mauritius), Recommendation 132.220 (Norway), Recommendation 132.223 (Republic of Korea), Recommendation 132.229 (Uganda), Recommendations 132.234-235 (Argentina, Austria).

⁸ UN Doc. A/HRC/48/11, Recommendations 132.36-40 (Finland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Australia, Austria)