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**UN Human Rights Council
Seventeenth session, 30 May – 17 June 2011**

**Item 6:
Consideration of UPR reports**

RWANDA

Mr President,

Amnesty International welcomes Rwanda's support of the vast majority of the recommendations made during the review, in particular all the recommendations to protect and respect freedom of expression, including by reviewing and revising existing legislation.

In this respect, we urge Rwanda to publicly announce a timeframe for revising the Genocide Ideology Law and the 2009 Media Law. We welcome Rwanda's commitment to review other related laws, and we strongly encourage it to amend the Sectarianism Law to bring it in line with international standards.

We are concerned that despite Rwanda's recognition of the shortcomings of the Genocide Ideology Law, the authorities continue to use it to prosecute government critics, including journalists. We urge Rwanda to ensure that legislative changes are accompanied by prompt reviews of past cases - including of opposition politicians and journalists convicted to lengthy prison sentences for merely expressing their opinions without advocating violence.

We also urge Rwanda to uphold its commitment to undertake credible investigations into reports of harassment of journalists and to prosecute where the evidence warrants. Rwanda could demonstrate this commitment by re-opening investigations into the killing of journalist Jean-Leonard Rugabage on 24 June 2010 and following all leads.

Mr President,

Abductions, enforced disappearances and incommunicado detention, rare in Rwanda in recent years, increased in 2010 as the authorities investigated a spate of grenade attacks. Amnesty International deeply regrets Rwanda's rejection of the recommendation to investigate cases of arbitrary arrest and detention, and enforced disappearances. Rwanda states that it intends to ratify the Convention on the Protection of Enforced Disappearances; yet remains unwilling to investigate such cases.

We urge Rwanda to determine the whereabouts and fate of any individual subjected to enforced disappearance. Anyone arbitrarily detained should be granted access to a lawyer and charged with a recognizable criminal offence or released. Those held incommunicado should be given access to relatives and lawyers. We also call on Rwanda to respond promptly to communications from human rights organizations and family members regarding such cases.

Finally, Mr President, we welcome Rwanda's acceptance of recommendations to issue a standing invitation to the UN Special Procedures and urge the government to act on this without delay.

Thank you, Mr President