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**UN Human Rights Council
Twenty-sixth session, 10 – 27 June 2014**

**Item 6:
Consideration of UPR reports**

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Mr. President,

Amnesty International is extremely concerned that human rights violations continue to be committed by the police. Since 2009 Amnesty International has documented numerous cases of unlawful killings, torture and ill-treatment, enforced disappearances and arbitrary detention, committed by the police. The previously announced comprehensive police reform has yet to take off.

Twelve states made recommendations to the Dominican Republic aimed at combatting such violations, including ensuring that all law enforcement operations are conducted in accordance with international human rights standards,¹ investigating all allegations of excessive use of force,² and expediting a comprehensive reform of the police, using a human rights based approach.³

We welcome that the Dominican Republic accepted most of these recommendations and urge their full implementation so as to ensure respect for human rights and improve the capacity of the National Police to provide the necessary protection against violence and crime.

Mr. President,

¹ A/HRC/26/15, paragraph 98.47 (Australia)

² *Ibid*, para 98.45-98.48 (Spain, Canada, Australia, France), para 98.50-98.53 (Switzerland, United States of America, Germany, Italy)

³ *Ibid*, paragraphs para 98.49-98.50 (Spain, Switzerland)

Several States expressed concern regarding the right to a nationality and the discrimination experienced in this regard by Dominicans of foreign descent, in particular of Haitian descent.⁴ Many made explicit reference to the serious human rights implications of ruling 168-13 by the Constitutional Court on 23 November 2013, which retroactively and arbitrarily deprives thousands Dominicans of Haitian descent, born between 1929 and 2010, of their Dominican nationality with the result of rendering them stateless.⁵

Since the review, the government has introduced legislation aimed at dealing with the consequences of that ruling. The bill, adopted by the Congress on 21 May, represents a first step in the right direction; however, it does not allow for the full and automatic restoration of Dominican nationality to those who were arbitrarily deprived of it. It obliges thousands of unregistered people born in the Dominican Republic to foreign parents to undergo a long and arduous procedure of naturalization, during which they remain stateless and thus denied a number of basic rights, including to education, employment, and health services. In addition, local activists have expressed concern at the risk of discrimination and arbitrariness by the civil registry officers in implementing the law.

While Amnesty International welcomes the support by the Dominican Republic of recommendations to introduce measures to prevent discrimination in the process of granting citizenship and civil status registration, we regret their rejection of recommendations to guarantee the right to a nationality and to adopt measures to identify, prevent and reduce statelessness. We urge the Dominican Republic to reconsider its position on these recommendations.

Thank you, Mr. President.

⁴ *Ibid*, paragraphs 98.45 (Norway), 98.50 (Slovenia), 98.52 (Switzerland), 98.54 (Trinidad and Tobago), 98.56-98.59 (Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay), 98.64-98.66 (Argentina, Australia, Belgium), 98.68 (Brazil), 98.79 (Germany), 98.83-98.85 (Ireland, Italy, Jamaica)

⁵ *Ibid*, 98.45 (Norway), 98.50 (Slovenia), 98.52 (Switzerland), 98.54 (Trinidad and Tobago), 98.58 (United States of America), 98.65 (Australia), 98.68 (Brazil), 98.83-98.85 (Ireland, Italy, Jamaica)