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**UN Human Rights Council
Thirty-ninth session, 10 – 28 September 2018**

**Item 6:
Consideration of UPR reports**

Burkina Faso

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes Burkina Faso's acceptance of a large number of recommendations, including to investigate allegations of human rights violations by all parties, both government officials¹ and self-defence groups,² to hold the perpetrators for such crimes to account, and to end impunity.³

We also welcome the adoption of the new Penal Code on 31 May 2018 which effectively strikes off the death penalty from the list of punishments for ordinary crimes. In line with this positive move, Amnesty International welcomes Burkina Faso's acceptance of recommendations to commute all death sentences,⁴ to abolish death penalty, and to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.⁵

¹ Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Burkina Faso, A/HRC/39/4, recommendations 125.30 (France), 125.34 (Ukraine), 125.48 (Austria), 125.51 (Canada).

² A/HRC/39/4, recommendations 125.37-125.43 (France, Ghana)

³ A/HRC/39/4, recommendations 126.18 (Spain), 125.32 (Netherlands)

⁴ A/HRC/39/4, recommendation 126.15 (Germany)

⁵ A/HRC/39/4, recommendations 126.1 (Chile, Costa Rica, Spain, Togo), 126.4-126.5 (Portugal, Australia); 126.11-126.16 (Iceland, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Ukraine, Germany, Namibia).

We welcome Burkina Faso's acceptance of a recommendation to ensure human rights defenders can operate freely and securely,⁶ and urge the government to refrain from using the fight against terrorism to muzzle defenders.

We regret, however, that despite the commitments expressed in the 2017 Act on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Naim Touré, an online activist, was sentenced to two months in prison on 3 July 2018 after posting a publication on his Facebook page.⁷

Mr President,

Amnesty International welcomes Burkina Faso's acceptance of 15 recommendations to end early and forced marriage and to provide better protection for the victims of such practices.⁸

The rates of early and forced marriage in Burkina Faso remain among the highest in the world. These practices impact on a range of human rights and can lead to early pregnancy and pregnancy-related complications, to the detriment of the health of young girls and women and their access to education.

The new Penal Code broadens the definition of marriage.⁹ Previously early and forced marriage were referred as "unions" and therefore not classified as forced marriages even if the person was coerced. The adoption of the new Code is a welcome first step, but requires effective implementation.

Thank you, Mr. President,

⁶ A/HRC/39/58 (Ireland).

⁷ He was charged for "provocation without any ensuing consequences"

⁸ 125.99 (Montenegro), 125.101 (Cabo Verde), 125.104 (Spain), 125.107 (Gabon), 125.109 (Rwanda), 125.113-125.117 (Central African Republic, Ukraine, Germany, Namibia, Argentina), 125.123-125.124 (Sweden, Tunisia), 123.148-123.150 (Netherlands, Namibia, Afghanistan)

⁹ Article 531-1