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**UN Human Rights Council
Twenty-second session, 25 February - 22 March 2013**

**Item 6:
Consideration of UPR reports**

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the support of the Republic of Korea of recommendations to address discrimination against migrant workers¹ and to guarantee the full enjoyment of the rights of migrant workers.² We note, however, that similar recommendations were accepted by the Republic of Korea in 2008. We regret their poor implementation and urge the government to take concrete measures, as a matter of priority, to respect, protect and promote the rights of all migrant workers -- documented as well as undocumented migrants -- and to adopt measures to eliminate restrictions on their labour mobility.³

Mr President,

Amnesty International is disappointed that the Republic of Korea rejected a number of key recommendations, including to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR and to establish a moratorium on executions as a step toward full abolition of the death penalty.⁴ We also regret the rejection of recommendations to introduce legislation to provide genuine alternative service to military service for conscientious objectors.⁵

Finally, Mr President,

¹ Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Republic of Korea, A/HRC/22/10, recommendation 124.31 (Morocco, Spain).

² A/HRC/22/10, recommendation 124.67 (Viet Nam, Nepal, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Thailand).

³ A/HRC/22/10, recommendation 124.65 (France).

⁴ A/HRC/22/10, recommendation 124.35 (Rwanda, Switzerland, Slovenia, Uruguay, Chile, Germany, United Kingdom, Belgium, Honduras, Uzbekistan Italy, Norway, Slovakia, Turkey, France, Spain, Australia).

⁵ A/HRC/22/10, recommendation 124.53 (France, Germany, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, USA, Australia).

We deplore the Republic of Korea's rejection of recommendations to abolish or amend the National Security Law in line with international standards.⁶ We are concerned that vaguely worded clauses in the National Security Law are mis-used to target individuals and groups perceived to oppose government policy, particularly in regard to North Korea. For example, Park Jeong-geun, a member of the Socialist Party in South Korea was charged with violating the National Security Law after satirically re-tweeting the message "long live Kim Jong-il" from North Korea's official twitter account. In November 2012, he received a 10 month suspended prison sentence. Kim Myeong-soo, an on-line bookseller, was sentenced to a six month suspended prison sentence for selling books with the "intention of endangering the security of the state", although the books he sold are widely available in other bookstores and libraries across the country. Amnesty International believes that the government's failure to accept these recommendations indicates a worrying lack of commitment to guaranteeing the right to freedom of expression. We therefore urge the Republic of Korea to reconsider its position, and to bring the National Security Law in line with international standards with immediate effect.

Thank you, Mr. President.

⁶ A/HRC/22/10, recommendations 124.55 (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), 124.56 (Australia, France), and 124.57 (Germany, Norway, Spain, USA, Democratic People's Republic of Korea).