

**AMNESTY  
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Item 6  
Universal Periodic Review  
Tonga

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the demonstrably committed engagement of Tonga with the UPR.

It is not equally easy for every UN member state to engage in the UPR process. Tonga's high-level engagement in its examination and today's outcome adoption is an example to other states, small and large, distant and near, developed or developing. Tonga is among the champions of the universality of the UPR.

Amnesty International also welcomes the substantive response of Tonga to the recommendations outstanding at the conclusion of its review. The substantive responses to the outstanding recommendations, even those not supported, provide a good basis for ongoing dialogue and cooperation.

Amnesty International regrets that Tonga has not supported recommendations aimed at the abolition of the death penalty. Contrary to what is asserted in Tonga's response, there is no evidence that the death penalty is a deterrent to crime. We encourage Tonga to remain abolitionist in practice and urge it to pursue further reflection aimed at the abolition of the death penalty.

Similarly we regret that Tonga has not supported recommendations to decriminalise consensual same-sex conduct among adults. We encourage Tonga to pursue the robust and comprehensive dialogue that it described in its response with a view to decriminalisation.

Amnesty International is pleased to see the support expressed by Tonga for ratification of the ICCPR, the Rome Statute and other treaties and its expressed readiness to examine ratification of the Optional Protocol to the ICESCR and other

instruments. We urge Tonga to proceed to the ratification of the CEDAW as soon as possible.

In conclusion, while there are some important outstanding measures to improve its human rights situation that Tonga has still to take, Amnesty International welcomes the commitment that it has shown in its positive engagement with the UPR. We encourage Tonga and its international partners to actively pursue the fruits of that engagement in the period leading into the Tonga's review in the third round.

Thank you Mr. President.