

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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**UN Human Rights Council
Thirty-first session, 29 February – 25 March 2016**

**Item 6:
Consideration of UPR reports**

Georgia

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes Georgia's engagement with the UPR.

Comentario [ML1]: Leave out when reading – saves 8 words

Amnesty International welcomes Georgia's acceptance of a recommendation to establish an independent and impartial institution to investigate and prosecute human rights abuses and violations committed by law enforcement and security forces,¹ as the current practice appears to lack independence and impartiality. According to the Public Defender's Office and local watchdogs, flawed investigations into allegations of torture and ill-treatment in prisons and by the police remain a major shortcoming in the legal system in Georgia.

While we are pleased to note that Georgia accepted recommendations to implement international fair trial standards² and to limit the application and length of pre-trial detention,³ we remain concerned at reports of political interference in the judiciary, including arrest of opposition party members in the lead up to elections and politically motivated prosecutions. In 2014, monitoring by the OSCE of criminal cases against senior officials identified a number of fair trial concerns, including lack of presumption of innocence and equality of arms between the parties in court. We urge Georgia to adhere fully to international fair trial standards and to ensure that prolonged detention or other custodial measures are used only when justified in law.

Mr. President,

¹ Human Rights Council, *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review- Georgia*, A/HRC/31/15, 13 January 2016, recommendation 118.31 (Belgium).

² A/HRC/31/15, recommendation 118.25 (Lithuania).

³ A/HRC/31/15, recommendation 118.11 (Denmark).

Georgia classified as “already implemented or in the process of being implemented” a recommendation to combat social stigmatization, hate speech, discrimination and violence motivated by sexual orientation or gender identity.⁴ We are concerned, however that violence and discrimination against LGBTI persons persist and that the authorities often fail to protect the victims of such crimes and to bring the perpetrators to justice. In light of this, we urge Georgia to take immediate and effective steps to ensure full respect for and protection of the rights of LGBTI persons.

Thank you, Mr. President,

⁴ A/HRC/WG.6/23/L.12, recommendation 117.9 (Uruguay).