



## **AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT**

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**Saint Lucia: Amnesty International welcomes commitment to consider ratification of core human rights treaties and urges Saint Lucia to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation and to abolish the death penalty**

***Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Saint Lucia***

Amnesty International welcomes Saint Lucia's declaration that in the very near future, it intends to sign and ratify a number of international human rights conventions,<sup>1</sup> as recommended by several States during the review.<sup>2</sup> The organization notes Saint Lucia's commitment, as expressed in the government's response to the review, to consider ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>3</sup>

While Amnesty International welcomes that there have been no executions in the last 15 years, it is disappointed that Saint Lucia declared itself, "at present", not in a position to move towards a formal moratorium on the use of the death penalty or its abolition.<sup>4</sup> The organization recalls that there is no convincing evidence that the death penalty has a deterrent effect on crime and that there are more effective measures that the government can take to protect the population in Saint Lucia from crime and violence, such as strengthening the capacities and resources of the police and the judiciary. Amnesty International urges Saint Lucia to consider again the recommendations made by many States regarding the death penalty, including to declare a formal moratorium on capital punishment with a view to abolishing it; to commute all death sentences to prison sentences; and to ratify

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<sup>1</sup> A/HRC/17/6, paragraph 12

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, paragraphs 89.1-89.27 (Brazil, Slovenia, Algeria, United Kingdom, Argentina, Mexico, Costa Rica, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Portugal, Trinidad and Tobago, Poland, France, Slovakia, Morocco, Maldives, Australia, Canada)

<sup>3</sup> A/HRC/17/6/Add.1.

<sup>4</sup> A/HRC/17/6, paragraph 38.

the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.<sup>5</sup>

While Amnesty International welcomes Saint Lucia's commitment to condemn acts of violence against persons because of their sexual orientation or gender identity,<sup>6</sup> the organization regrets its rejection of a range of recommendations to decriminalize sexual relations between consenting adults of the same sex and to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation.<sup>7</sup> Amnesty International believes that it is the duty of the state to confront the stigma surrounding homosexuality and that the removal of discriminatory laws is an important first step in this process.

Amnesty International welcomes Saint Lucia's support for a number of recommendations to combat violence against women and girls<sup>8</sup> and to change national laws to ensure that all persons under the age of 18 are provided with the same protection and guarantees.<sup>9</sup>

### **Background**

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Saint Lucia on 7 June 2011 during its 17th session. Prior to the adoption of the report of the review Amnesty International delivered the oral statement above.

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, paragraphs 89.64-89.71 (Spain, Slovakia, Italy, Portugal, Australia, Sweden, France)

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, paragraph 89.97 (USA) and Addendum page 7

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, paragraphs 89.35 (Canada) and 89.92-89.96 (Spain, France, Canada, Slovenia) and Addendum page

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, paragraphs 89.74-89.79 (Brazil, Hungary, Spain, Mexico, Argentina, Italy)

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, paragraph 89.91 (Turkey)