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**Promotion and protection of all human rights,
civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Amnesty International, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[16 February 2010]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Amnesty International's reaction to the report of the representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons on his mission to Serbia and Montenegro

Amnesty International welcomes the report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons on his follow-up mission to Serbia and Montenegro, including Kosovo, which was carried out between 28 June and 4 July 2009 (A/HRC/13/21/Add.1).

In light of the ongoing human rights violations in Serbia, including Kosovo, Amnesty International attaches particular importance to the following recommendations of the Representative to the Serbian government and Kosovo authorities:

To prioritize the introduction and implementation of legislative changes to ensure that Roma, Ashkalia and Egyptians in both Serbia and Kosovo are issued with personal identification and other documents, so as to end their legal invisibility;

To resolve the situation of Romani Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) exposed to toxic lead waste in northern Mitrovica/Mitrovicë; and

To avoid forced returns of members of minority communities to Kosovo, who remain at risk of internal displacement on their return, until robust measures are taken by the Kosovo authorities to address discrimination and provide returnees with real reintegration possibilities. With respect to this recommendation, Amnesty International emphasizes that action on this recommendation should include putting into effect the action plan for implementation of the *Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians*, adopted by the Kosovo government in December 2009.

Over the past year, there have been increasing numbers of forced evictions of members of the Romani community from unregistered settlements, particularly in Belgrade. This issue also raises significant concern and requires ongoing follow-up by the Representative.

A significant percentage of those evicted are IDPs from Kosovo: many of these people have been displaced in Serbia since 1999. However, non-governmental organizations also report that others include those who have either been returned to Serbia under an EU Readmission Agreement, or those forcibly returned to Kosovo under bilateral agreements with EU member states, and who have subsequently fled to Serbia because they have been unable to make a sustainable return to Kosovo.

Amnesty International encourages the government of Serbia to continue to implement the recommendations of the Representative, in particular ensuring that any further evictions which take place in Serbia are carried out in accordance with the *Basic Principles and Guidelines on Development-Based Evictions and Displacement*¹.

Amnesty International takes this opportunity to thank the Representative for his important contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights over the term of his mandate.

¹ *Basic Principles and Guidelines on Development-Based Evictions and Displacement*, Annex 1 of the Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, A/HRC/4/18.