

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

## News Flash

AI Index: ASA 11/011/2003 (Public)  
News Service No: 086  
9 April 2003

### **Afghanistan: Security of civilians must be the priority**

Amnesty International today called for an immediate investigation into the deaths of eleven civilians killed today in eastern Afghanistan, and urged that every measure be taken to avoid civilian deaths and casualties as US-led military action continues in that country.

"The safety of civilians must be made a priority and urgent measures taken to avoid the repetition of such tragedies," Amnesty International said.

According to a US military spokesman, four men and seven women were killed when a bomb hit their house on the outskirts of Shkin, Paktika province, in eastern Afghanistan, adding to the mounting civilian death toll caused by the US-led coalition bombing over the last year.

"US forces must take sufficient precautions to protect civilians in selecting military objectives and means of attack," Amnesty International said.

"Civilian casualties cannot be allowed -- neither in Afghanistan nor in Iraq -- to become an acceptable feature of war," the organization emphasized.

Public Document

\*\*\*\*\*

For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566  
Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW. web: <http://www.amnesty.org>

For latest human rights news view <http://news.amnesty.org>