

Media Advisory

2 June 2000

Fiji: Human rights cannot be suspended

Amnesty International today issued a public statement calling on any interim administration in Fiji to respect fundamental human rights.

The organization emphasized the important principle reflected in international and national law that certain human rights guarantees can never be suspended.

Fijian military and police officers will be aware from their peacekeeping experience overseas that no change of government or national emergency absolves the authorities of their responsibility to guarantee fundamental human rights such as prohibition of torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, as well as racial or other discrimination.

When issuing decrees and clarifying the law in Fiji, any interim [military or civilian] administration must protect basic human rights.

Amnesty International has called for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages held in the Fiji parliament complex, and for anyone responsible for human rights abuses in the context of the coup attempt to be brought to justice.

For a copy of the full 2 page statement or an interview with the Fiji Researcher, please contact Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 171 413 5566/5729 or mobile +44 (0)7778 472 173.
