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EXTERNAL

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FURTHER ALLEGATIONS OF ILL-TREATMENT IN SECONDIGLIANO PRISON (NAPLES)

In May 1993 Amnesty International published a report entitled Italy: an increase in alleged ill-treatment by prison guards (AI Index: EUR 30/04/93). It included an account of the allegations of ill-treatment emanating from Secondigliano Prison, Naples (see Appendix 1). From late 1992 onwards, lawyers, newspapers, parliamentary deputies and a parliamentary committee for prison affairs had reported receiving numerous such allegations from inmates of the prison. It was claimed that they were being subjected to "systematic beatings and gratuitous ill-treatment" by prison guards. Judicial investigations were opened into the alleged ill-treatment in early 1993 and in April 1993 five prison guards and their commandant were temporarily suspended from duty in connection with possible criminal charges, including abusing their authority, striking prisoners and committing perjury. By June 1993 over 100 prison guards were apparently under investigation in connection with the alleged ill-treatment.

In February 1994 it was reported that, as a result of the judicial investigations opened in early 1993, the five prison guards formerly attached to Secondigliano prison and their commandant had been committed for trial on various charges including abuse of authority, aggravated fraud, calumny, perjury and instigation of others to commit offences. In April 1994 it was reported that 108 Secondigliano prison guards were still under judicial investigation in connection with the alleged ill-treatment of some 300 inmates of the prison.

Amnesty International was concerned, therefore, by an open appeal published in the press on 8 February 1994 (see Appendix 2) in which Secondigliano inmates made further allegations of ill-treatment. In their appeal the prisoners expressed concern about the fate of a fellow-prisoner, Giacomo De Simone, whom they stated had been held in isolation since his appearance before the III Section of Naples Criminal Court on 12 January 1994 when he had complained of ill-treatment by prison guards.

The prisoners claimed that, after being removed from his normal cell located in section S.2 to section T.2, Giacomo De Simone had been repeatedly beaten by prison guards over the two-day period immediately preceding his court hearing. They also claimed that at the end of the two-day period he was placed in section S.4 and threatened with further ill-treatment if he reported his treatment to the judges when he appeared in court.

Amnesty International is seeking information from the Italian authorities on the steps taken to investigate these allegations and on the findings of any judicial or administrative investigation opened into them.

APPENDIX 1 - Extract on Secondigliano Prison from Italy: an increase in alleged ill-treatment by prison guards (AI Index: EUR 30/04/93)

APPENDIX 2 - Copy of an open appeal by Secondigliano prisoners published in the Italian daily newspaper, Il Mattino, on 8 February 1994

