

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Media Advisory

AI Index: EUR 45/016/2005 (Public)
News Service No: 153
3 June 2005

Embargo Date: 3 June 2005 00:01 GMT

UK: Take action for an independent inquiry into the Finucane case

Amnesty International is urging those members of the judiciary who may be approached by the UK authorities and asked to sit on an inquiry into the case of Patrick Finucane under the Inquiries Act 2005 to decline to do so. The organization is launching a world-wide appeal on its website www.amnesty.org encouraging members of the public to write to senior judges in the UK, as well as to the heads of the judiciary in countries with common law systems (Australia, Canada, India, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, Sri Lanka and USA) to inform them about Amnesty International's concerns regarding such an inquiry.

Amnesty International considers that any judge sitting on a Finucane inquiry held under the Inquiries Act 2005 would be presiding over a sham.

Patrick Finucane, a human rights lawyer, was shot dead in Belfast, Northern Ireland, by Loyalist paramilitaries. In the aftermath of his killing, evidence emerged that police and military intelligence agents had colluded with loyalist paramilitaries in his murder, as well as allegations of an official cover-up of such collusion. In April 2004 an independent report concluded that "only a public inquiry will suffice" in the Finucane case.

Amnesty International is calling on the UK authorities to establish immediately a truly independent public inquiry into the Finucane case:

"An inquiry under the Inquiries Act 2005 will be controlled by the executive which is empowered to block public scrutiny of state actions."

To take action, go to:

<http://web.amnesty.org/pages/gbr-030605-action-eng>

See also:

UK: Amnesty International urges judiciary not to partake in inquiry sham

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engeur450102005>

UK: The Inquiries Bill - the Wrong Answer <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engeur450082005>

UK: The government must withdraw the Inquiries Bill and act on its promise

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engeur450032005>

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>