

### **Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Amnesty International is wearing black for Kosovo**

Amnesty International members and supporters all over the world are *wearing black for Kosovo* on 19 September, uniting in a demonstration of dismay and outrage at the continuing human rights tragedy in Kosovo province.

Announcing its International Day of Action on Kosovo, the human rights organization underlined the need for concerted global action to halt the pattern of gross human rights violations in the province.

“Amnesty International members will be *wearing black for Kosovo* as an expression of our sorrow for the victims of human rights violations in Kosovo and our anger at the so far inadequate response of world leaders to the unfolding crisis in the province,” the organization said.

The program of the events includes vigils, demonstrations, public meetings and other activities in towns and cities worldwide.

Amnesty International’s Day of Action is also a display of solidarity for the Serbian *Women in Black* organization. *Women in Black*, which has been in the forefront of the peace movement in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, will be holding its own public protest outside the Serbian parliament in Belgrade this evening.

“Villages in Kosovo are still being burned to the ground and indiscriminate attacks continue on the civilian population by Serbian security forces. Hundreds of ethnic Albanian detainees face a daily risk of ill-treatment, torture or death in custody,” Amnesty International said. Some Serbs have also become victims of unlawful killings or abductions by armed ethnic Albanians.

“The sluggish response of the international community in the past few months has contributed to Kosovo’s tragedy. The perpetrators of gross human rights violations in the province have thrived through a summer of continuing impunity. With no prospect of a political solution in sight, and almost 300,000 displaced and refugees on the move or crowded into inadequate shelters, what will winter bring?”

Amnesty International appealed to the international community to introduce immediate, effective, independent human rights monitoring in the province and to provide durable protection for those displaced by the conflict.

The organization also repeated its call to the Yugoslav authorities to order a halt to indiscriminate security force actions, to investigate human rights violations thoroughly and to prosecute the perpetrators, and to guarantee the safety and well-being of ethnic Albanian detainees. Amnesty International also calls on the Kosovo Liberation Army to respect the Geneva Conventions.

“Those who would violate human rights in Kosovo need to be made to see that their crimes will be investigated and that they will be caught, prosecuted and punished,” Amnesty International

said. "That message, delivered urgently and emphatically by the international community, might yet forestall a greater tragedy."

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**Amnesty International has published in the last couple of months a series of reports providing detailed scrutiny of the long-standing patterns of abuses in Kosovo province. For copies of these reports or to speak to our country expert on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, please telephone Amnesty International Press Office on +44 171 413 5562 or +44 171 413 5566.**

*Amnesty International now has an ISDN line for studio-quality radio interviews from their offices in London. Please telephone for further details.*