

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

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## **World: Promotion of security undermining basic human rights**

*Human rights have been put at grave risk worldwide by governments' actions following the attacks on the USA on 11 September, Amnesty International said in a report published today, ahead of a meeting of the UN Security Council that will review the work of the Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee.*

*The Counter-Terrorism Committee was established by the Security Council following the 11 September attacks, to monitor the far-ranging steps the Council said they must take to combat terrorism. Today, it will start examining more than 100 reports from States about those measures.*

*Amnesty International's Secretary General, Irene Khan, wrote to the Security Council urging it to take concrete steps to ensure that governments do not violate the obligations and standards of international human rights law in the process, "otherwise there is a grave risk, already borne out in some countries that security considerations will prevail over human rights," the Secretary General said.*

*None of the six experts the Committee appointed to assist it in its monitoring task are experts in human rights. Amnesty International therefore calls upon the Security Council to request the Counter-Terrorism Committee to:*

*appoint an expert in international law, including human rights, to assist the Committee in monitoring the actions of states; and*

*provide specific guidance on how states can comply with international human rights standards in the context of implementing measures to combat "terrorism".*

*The organization added that "a number of States have introduced new laws that violate human rights standards while others have used existing measures to crack down on opposition".*

*The urgency of Amnesty International's concerns is demonstrated in the report published today. *Rights at Risk* describes human rights violations arising from "anti-terrorist" measures taken by countries around the world both before and after the attacks of 11 September. They include:*

- indefinite detention without charge or trial;*
- incommunicado detention, which facilitates torture;*
- unfair trials;*
- infringement of rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly.*

*"When the security of a State and the safety of its people are at risk," Amnesty International said, "it is vital that human rights standards and the rule of law are upheld. Respect for all human rights is the only way to ensure real security for all."*

**The following documents are available on request from Amnesty International's press office or by visiting our website:**

**Rights at Risk report**

<http://www.web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/recent/ACT300012002?OpenDocument>

**Report Summary:**

[http://web.amnesty.org/web/content.nsf/pages/gbrrightsatrisk\\_summary](http://web.amnesty.org/web/content.nsf/pages/gbrrightsatrisk_summary)

**Open letter to the members of the Security Council:**

[http://web.amnesty.org/web/content.nsf/pages/gbrrightsatrisk\\_openletter](http://web.amnesty.org/web/content.nsf/pages/gbrrightsatrisk_openletter)

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