

---

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 09/95

---

TO: PRESS OFFICERS  
FROM: IS PRESS OFFICE  
DATE: 11 JANUARY 1995

AI INDEX: NWS 11/09/95  
DISTR: SC/PO  
NO OF WORDS: 1229

NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - **CENTRAL AFRICA - RWANDA, BURUNDI AND PARTS OF ZAIRE** - FOR RESPONSE ONLY (The team will also be taking this news release on their mission), **SUDAN** (amended version, see corrections made below).

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING CORRECTIONS TO THE SUDAN NEWS RELEASE:  
(These corrections have been made by the legal Office)

- "**arbitrary**" has been inserted after 'torture and' in the 3rd line, 2nd paragraph.
- "**unlawfully**" has been inserted before 'detained' in the 2nd line, 5th paragraph.
- "**and impartial**" has been inserted after 'independent' in the 1st line of the 2nd bullet point (1st page).

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Sudan - 25 January - SEE NEWS SERVICES 275 AND 261

UN Commission on Human Rights - 31 January - SEE NEWS SERVICE 06/95

Turkey - 8 February - SEE NEWS SERVICE 261

Northern Iraq - 28 February - SEE NEWS SERVICE 266

## TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

News Service 09/95

AI INDEX AFR 47/WU 01/95  
11 JANUARY 1995

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SENDS RESEARCH TEAM TO CENTRAL AFRICA**

As serious human rights abuses continue to be reported in Africa, particularly in Rwanda, Burundi and parts of eastern Zaire, an Amnesty International team is being sent to the region.

The team will investigate reports of past and recent abuses, and will monitor effects being made to end political killings, "disappearances", torture and long-term arbitrary detention in the three countries concerned.

The team is due to arrive in Kigali, Rwanda in mid-January and will be based in the region for the next three months. Its three members are Matthew Ganda from Sierra Leone (the team's coordinator and spokesperson); Holo Makaia from Tanzania; and Jo Wells from the United Kingdom.

More information about the team's activities can be obtained from the Press Office of the International Secretariat at Amnesty International on: 44 71 413 5564 or fax: 44 71 413 5815/956 1157.

ENDS\

EMBARGOED UNTIL 25 JANUARY 1995  
AI INDEX AFR 54/WU 02/95

**SUDAN: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN ON RIGHTS ABUSES IN SUDAN**

**NAIROBI** – The United Nations (UN) should create an international civilian human rights monitoring team as a first step in breaking the cycle of abuses in both the government-controlled north and the war-torn south of Sudan, Amnesty International said today as it launched its first major campaign of 1995.

“Having international monitors on the ground would make it more difficult for government and opposition forces to get away with the killings, torture and arbitrary detentions that have fractured Sudanese society and deepened political hatreds over the past five years,” said Pierre Sané, Secretary General of Amnesty International, speaking at a press conference in Nairobi.

With the government blocking the UN’s human rights expert on Sudan from entering the country and with the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) peace process showing little progress, Mr Sané said that the need for the international community to intensify human rights monitoring has never been greater.

“Sudan’s future depends on greater respect for human rights being established throughout the country,” Mr Sané said. “The carnage in the war-torn south is only half the picture, because even in areas less affected by civil war, the brutal violation of human rights has also divided the population.”

In arguing for the UN to establish human rights monitors, he stressed that the human rights disaster in which thousands have been unlawfully detained and tens of thousands killed lies at the heart of the humanitarian emergency facing the country.

“The UN provides relief aid at vast expense to deal with the consequences of war and human rights abuse, but this is not enough,” said Mr Sané. “Solving Sudan’s serious human rights problems is a priority.”

The organization said such human rights monitors should:

- report human rights abuses to the authorities and the UN and follow up individual cases of abuse to make sure that action is taken
- provide an independent and impartial body where Sudanese can report human rights violations, without fear of reprisals
- work with the authorities on improving human rights policies and practices in the country

In its 132-page report on the human rights situation in Sudan since the 1989 coup, the organization shows that the military government led by President Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir and both the main armed opposition factions – the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) led by John Garang de Mabior and the South Sudan Independence Army (SSIA) led by Riek Machar Teny-Dhurgon – are guilty of committing gross abuses of human rights.

Since coming to power, the Sudanese government has made torture and the detention of suspected opponents in so-called “ghost houses” – the security forces’ secret detention centres – standard practice throughout the country as it crushes political opposition and attempts to mould society to its own version of a radical Islamist agenda.

Many suspected government opponents -- trade unionists, activists in banned political parties, students, journalists, southerners suspected of supporting armed opposition groups -- are arrested, tortured, held for short periods, released and then re-detained.

Despite government denials, Amnesty International has documented the torture of hundreds of people since 1989 both in the capital, Khartoum, and other towns, as well as in the southern war-zone. A judge trying Gaafar Yassin and four others on conspiracy charges in 1994 accepted medical evidence they had been beaten, burnt, whipped with plastic piping and made to stand barefoot on hot metal -- but still imposed prison sentences. This travesty of justice shows how repeated government purges have made the supposedly independent judiciary compliant to political manipulation.

Each time prisoners of conscience are arrested, if only for a brief period, Amnesty International fears for their safety, such as during the mass arrest of scores of trade unionists in the northern town of Atbara in October 1994. Amnesty also remains seriously concerned about the well-being of 12 southern civil servants and others detained last month in Juba, the main town in the south. Their whereabouts are still unknown.

In the war zones of the south and the Nuba Mountains, government forces, the SPLA and the SSIA (formerly known as SPLA-United) have all been responsible for the killing and "disappearance" of thousands of civilians creating a humanitarian catastrophe of famine and the mass movement of millions of people. All parties to the conflict have driven villagers from their land, and looted and destroyed crops and property.

In June 1994, for example, an Amnesty International research team in southern Sudan interviewed survivors of a series of indiscriminate killings by troops of the government's Popular Defence Force (PDF) militia along a railway line linking north and south Sudan. A scorched-earth campaign by government forces in the area has involved hundreds of political killings, rape, the abduction of children and the displacement of thousands of civilians. There was further killing and looting by PDF last month.

Gross human rights abuses occur during interfactional fighting among the armed opposition. The SPLA, which ruthlessly suppresses internal dissent, has been responsible for hundreds of killings of Nuer civilians. Prisoners of conscience have been detained, tortured and killed. In August 1994, SPLA troops abducted at least 17 men -- among them Carlo Madut Deng, a doctor who had resigned from the SPLA -- from a refugee camp in northern Uganda. The men are believed to have been killed.

After the split in the opposition movement in 1991, the breakaway group, now called the SSIA, massacred thousands of Dinka civilians and displaced over 200,000 others. In October 1994, SSIA forces attacked and looted cattle camps around Akot, killing over 100 civilians.

ENDS\