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**ADDITION TO WEEKLY UPDATE SERVICE 17/91**

1. MDE 17/WU 02/91 INTERNAL (for response only)  
17 May 1991

**The following information should only be used in response to media enquiries.**

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**KUWAIT: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DELEGATE TO OBSERVE TRIALS IN KUWAIT**

An Amnesty International delegate will visit Kuwait from Sunday 19 May to observe the coming trials of alleged collaborators during the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

It is believed that initially some 200 prisoners will be tried in the Martial Law Court for various crimes related to "collaboration with the enemy". According to Kuwait's Attorney General, the state defines collaboration as "transferring important information to the enemy regarding the military or internal affairs of Kuwait, harbouring enemy soldiers or other such elements, undertaking any deeds to aid or abet the enemy, and espionage." The exact charges to be made against the prisoners or their identities is not yet known to Amnesty International.

The 200 prisoners are among between 600 and 900 whose detention has been acknowledged by Kuwait's authorities.

Most of the 200 are Palestinians and Iraqis but they include a small number of Kuwaitis, Sudanese, members of the "Bidun" community (stateless people residing in Kuwait) and other Arabs and non-Arabs.

It is believed that the remaining prisoners are to be charged with ordinary criminal offences such as theft and rape that took place in the context of the Iraqi occupation.

Amnesty International's delegate will assess to what extent the trials are being held in accordance with internationally recognized standards of fair trial.

In line with normal Amnesty International policy, the delegate will report his findings and assessment to the organization's governing body.

2. AMR 29/WU 01/91 EXTERNAL  
16 May 1991

**EL SALVADOR: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE EXTENSION OF  
THE DEATH PENALTY**

Amnesty International is calling on the government of El Salvador to prevent the ratification of a proposed constitutional reform which would extend the use of the death penalty in the country.

On 30 April the outgoing Legislative Assembly approved a motion presented by members of the ruling ARENA party to amend the 1983 constitution to include the death penalty for murder, patricide, and cases of robbery, kidnapping, rape and arson resulting in murder. The reform will come into effect only if approved by the new Legislative Assembly, which took office on 1 May, and by the President. The death penalty had been abolished in El Salvador, except for certain crimes committed during international conflict.

In a 13 May letter to President Cristiani and Legislative Assembly president Dr Luis Angulo, Amnesty International said the proposed amendment would be a serious backward step, especially at a time when peace talks between the government and the opposition Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front had generated agreements intended to achieve greater respect for human rights.

"The move seriously undermines the commitment given by the government in the July 1990 Agreement on Human Rights to 'avoid any action or practice which involves an attack on the life ... of the individual,'" the organization said. The reform was also contrary to provisions of the American Convention on Human Rights, ratified by El Salvador, which forbids state parties to reintroduce or extend the use of the death penalty.

In its letter, Amnesty International welcomed El Salvador's vote in favour of the United Nations General Assembly's 1989 resolution adopting the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the first international treaty aimed at abolishing the death penalty. The organization urged the government to show its commitment to abolishing the death penalty by opposing any measure passing through the Legislative Assembly which would extend its use in the country and by ratifying the Second Optional Protocol.

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