

AI Index: NWS 11/22/93
Distr: SC/PO

No. of words: 2041

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TO: PRESS OFFICERS

FROM: PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS

DATE: 19 MARCH 1993

WEEKLY UPDATE SERVICE 22/93

Contained in this weekly update are external items on Egypt, Afghanistan, Germany and Rwanda.

NEWS INITIATIVES

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Chad - 21 April

Please Note

The document to go with this campaign has been sent out to sections dated February. Please inform your section campaign coordinators and anyone else who may receive it that it is EMBARGOED FOR 21 APRIL.

Chad Campaign, document, news release, Q&A and ENR. The news release should be with you by 2 April, the Q&A shortly afterward.

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

US Juvenile Death Penalty - NEXT WEEK

A weekly update item about executions of juveniles scheduled in both Texas and Missouri, will be sent out shortly, and will be embargoed for some time next week. The IS will be sending it to media.

Baltic States Death Penalty Action - 1 April

Weekly update enclosed in WU NWS 11/20/93, embargoed for 1 April to coincide with the action launch. The IS press office is not proactively sending this out to media, though it will be used in response to media enquiries. It is mainly to assist sections who are planning media initiatives to go with the action.

Morocco - 14 April

Document and weekly update item - more info soon.

Brazil - 7 May

Please note new embargo date. Document on prison massacre, including new forensic information. Weekly update item to go with it. Sections are also being asked to carry out campaign work in connection with this document.

Section Initiatives**French Section - European Press Officers' Meeting**

The second European Press Officers' meeting will take place in Paris this year. The date of this meeting is now fixed for 15 and 16 May as the majority of you asked for. It will be focused on two themes: Audiovisual work (production and TV experiences) and how to improve it; and the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna.

**2. MDE 12/WU 01/93 EXTERNAL
EMBARGOED FOR 22 MARCH 1993**

INTERNAL

Please note that the IS press office will be faxing this to international media, including agencies, on Monday 22 March.

EXTERNAL

EGYPT: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONCERNED BY POLICE KILLINGS

Amnesty International is concerned that the security forces in Egypt appear to be pursuing a "shoot to kill" policy, with at least 28 people shot dead by security forces in less than a month in the latest of the government's sweeping measures to crush militant Islamic groups.

Most victims have been alleged members or sympathizers of militant Islamic opposition groups, but have included several bystanders. They included the wife and child of one of the suspects who were reportedly killed in a shoot-out in Imbaba. In recent months there has been a dramatic escalation of violence in the course of which armed opposition groups have killed members of the Christian community, a writer known for his anti-fundamentalist views, a tourist and a number of policemen and officers.

Since the beginning of 1988 a pattern has emerged of leading figures and members of Islamic opposition groups being killed by members of the security forces. The circumstances of some of these deaths suggest that they may have been extrajudicial executions. Last year, seven alleged members of a militant Islamic group - two of whom were only 17-years-old - were shot dead in an apartment in Manqabad in August. According to reports, the bodies were in positions that showed some that some of them had not been in a position to offer armed resistance at the time they were killed. More recently, eight people were killed when police stormed a mosque in Aswan in early March 1993.

On 18 March, a senior Interior Ministry official was reported to have said that police have been instructed to "shoot to kill" militants who resist the security forces. Said Amnesty International: "If this is the case, such instructions clearly breach international standards relating to the use of lethal force. This looks like an official licence to kill with impunity."

Amnesty International is calling on the Egyptian authorities to conduct an urgent review of the use of lethal force by its law enforcement agents. The organization fears that, unless standing orders are brought into conformity with international standards, the spiral of violence is set to continue. Amnesty International has also called for prompt and impartial investigations into each killing and for the findings be made public.

The human rights situation in Egypt has suffered a serious deterioration in the last 12 months, characterized by mass arbitrary arrests, torture, long-term administrative detention, unfair political trials before military courts resulting in death sentences and killings by security forces. The government has adopted sweeping measures - often inconsistent with international human rights standards - in both law and practice to confront Islamic militant groups. Some Islamic militant groups have committed deliberate and arbitrary killings, which Amnesty International has also condemned.

3. ASA 11/WU 01/93 EXTERNAL
19 March 1993

AFGHANISTAN: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONCERNED BY WIDE-SCALE REPORTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Amnesty International is concerned by large-scale reports of torture, including rape, hostage-taking, extrajudicial executions and other deliberate and arbitrary killings in Afghanistan, particularly the capital Kabul.

These human rights abuses appear to be perpetrated by every group involved in the current civil war in the country. They include government troops, militias, Mujahideen groups aligned with the government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani and those opposed to it. Attacks are frequently directed at members of specific ethnic, religious or political groups and often occur in retaliation against earlier attacks by those groups. In some cases the victims have included children.

On 11 February, members of the Shi'a religious minority were attacked in Kabul's Afshar district, when the area was raided by government troops, militia and members of Ittehad-e-Islami group, which is presently allied with the government. They killed a number of civilian men in front of their families, and took women, children and old people prisoner. On the following day, they reportedly returned and raped several women, plundered their homes and set many homes on fire.

A young nurse who witnessed the incident said: "There were 12 of them. They broke down the door, then they made advances towards my sister and me. My father tried to stop them, but they hit him and then tortured him. They cut off one of his feet and both his hands in the courtyard. One of them threw my father's hands to a dog belonging to one of the commanders."

Another young woman said she had seen four of her neighbours having their throats cut with bayonets. Another woman reported that her husband and three daughters were killed by the attackers in front of her. Apparently the attacks on the Shi'a community were in retaliation for earlier killings of members of the Pashtun and Tajik population.

Amnesty International is concerned about the large scale of human rights abuses inflicted on the civilian population of Afghanistan. The organization is appealing to the government in Kabul and local authorities in the provinces to take all possible measures to protect all Afghan citizens - including members of ethnic and religious minorities who appear particularly at risk.

Amnesty International is also calling for firm safeguards against torture and extrajudicial executions throughout Afghanistan and for the immediate and unconditional release of anyone detained solely on account of their political or religious beliefs or ethnic origin.

The human rights organization also urges opposition Mujahideen groups, at least, to observe minimum humane standards and to refrain from deliberate and arbitrary killing and torture of civilians. Amnesty International is appealing to opposition Mujahideen groups to protect all prisoners from torture or ill-treatment and to immediately release any who may be held as hostages.

**4. EUR 23/WU 01/93 EXTERNAL FOR RESPONSE ONLY
19 March 1993**

GERMANY: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONCERNED BY REPORTS OF ILL-TREATMENT BY POLICE IN HAMBURG

Amnesty International expressed its concern to the Hamburg authorities on 9 March 1993 about reports that officers belonging to a special operations unit, so-called "E-Schicht", based at Police Station 16 in the St Pauli district of Hamburg, had ill-treated people in their custody.

In its letters Amnesty International referred to three cases in which the victims of ill-treatment had been awarded compensation for their injuries. One victim had been awarded substantial compensation by the Hamburg Ministry of the Interior in January 1991 for injuries he had received following a blow to the back of his head from a police baton the previous year. A second victim had alleged that in August 1989 officers at Station 16 had struck his face against the edge of a table with such force that he suffered a broken nose. In a third case the victim alleged that in July 1991 officers had punched, kicked and struck him with batons, as a result of which he was hospitalized for a week. The victims in these last two incidents were both awarded compensation by the Hamburg Regional Court in February this year. The court's decision was subject to appeal.

Amnesty International noted that in all three cases investigations into the allegations of ill-treatment had been carried out by the Hamburg judicial authorities, but that no charges had been brought against any of the officers concerned. The organization also noted that officers from Station 16 in St Pauli had been the subject of 80 investigations by the Hamburg judicial authorities over the period January 1988 - September 1991.

Amnesty International asked the authorities how many of these judicial investigations had been the result of complaints of ill-treatment and whether charges had been brought against any of the officers concerned. The organization also asked for information on the number of complaints of ill-treatment that had been made against officers from Station 16 since September 1991 and whether any of these had resulted in charges against any of the officers concerned.

5. AFR 47/WU 01/WU EXTERNAL
19 March 1993

RWANDA: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONCERNED BY CONTINUING POLITICAL KILLINGS

Amnesty International is concerned by a continuing escalation of killings of unarmed civilians and suspected government opponents, mostly members of the Tutsi ethnic group, by government forces and vigilante groups supporting them in Rwanda.

The organization is also concerned by reports of deliberate and arbitrary killings by combatants of the armed opposition, *Front Patriotique Rwandais* (FPR), in mid-February near Ruhengeri, in northwestern Rwanda - apparently in reprisal for militia and vigilante killings of Tutsi.

An International Commission of Inquiry, which has been investigating human rights violations in Rwanda since October 1990, published its findings on 8 March. The commission, which was composed of representatives of human rights organizations from outside Rwanda, implicated Rwanda's Head of State, President Juvénal Habyarimana, in the organization of several hundred political killings carried out by armed militias and vigilante gangs loyal to the President's party, the *Mouvement républicain nationale pour le développement et démocratie* (MRNDD), and the *Coalition pour la défense de la République* (CDR), an allied political party. The victims were opponents of the former ruling party and members of the Tutsi ethnic group. The commission visited Rwanda at the beginning of 1993 and had already revealed that it uncovered mass graves and evidence of extrajudicial executions in the country.

Amnesty International recently condemned a new wave of extrajudicial executions by the government's security forces, both in the capital, Kigali, and in the northwest. Since war broke out in Rwanda in 1990, more than 2,000 people, mostly of the Tutsi ethnic group have reportedly been killed by security forces.

The FPR's combatants are mainly of Tutsi origin and those they have reportedly killed, whose number is not known, were reportedly selected not only because they were members of the majority Hutu community, but specifically because they were suspected supporters of the MRNDD and the CDR.

Amnesty International is calling on the FPR to investigate responsibility for the Ruhengeri killings and to ensure that its combatants respect basic standards of international humanitarian law - in particular that no-one who has been taken prisoner or is *hors de combat* is tortured or killed.

The international human rights organization is urging the Rwanda Government to bring to justice those responsible for committing human rights violations. The government must take steps to prevent vigilante gangs and the security forces from killing members of the minority Tutsi ethnic group, other civilians and prisoners with impunity.