
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 61/94

TO: PRESS OFFICERS
FROM: IS PRESS OFFICE
DATE: 29 MARCH 1994

AI INDEX: NWS 11/61/94
DISTR: SC/PO

NO OF WORDS:835

NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - MOROCCO, SOUTH KOREA

PLEASE NOTE: We are currently planning our media strategy on the South African elections, including compiling a list of various national media (print, radio, TV) who will have correspondents in South Africa. Please could you check with the five largest media outlets in your country and see if they will be sending a reporter to cover the South African elections, then could you please pass on the address and telephone and fax numbers to us here in the IS press office, by this Thursday. Thank you.

NEWS INITIATIVES - INTERNAL

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Hong Kong - 21 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 36/94

Trade Unionists - 29 April - News release and focus article.

Saudi Arabia - 10 May - Report and news release on the treatment of Iraqi refugees in Saudi Arabia

Burundi - 16 May - SEE NEWS SERVICES 53/94 and 36/94

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

China - 29 March - SEE NEWS SERVICE 54/94

Turkey - 30 March - SEE NEWS SERVICES 46/94 AND 26/94

Switzerland CAT - 19 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 53/94

Israel & OT CAT - 25 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 53/94

FORTHCOMING NEWS INITIATIVES

Annual Report - 7 July - SEE NEWS SERVICE 51/94

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**AI INDEX: MDE 29/WU 02/1994
29 March 1994**

MOROCCO: AI VISIT TO DEVELOP MEMBERSHIP IN MOROCCO

The coordinator of the Middle East/Maghreb Membership Development team in Amnesty International's International Secretariat, is visiting Morocco for 10 days to promote the development of Amnesty International's membership in the country. During his visit he will meet Amnesty International members and supporters to discuss the possibility of setting up local groups working on human rights issues within the organization's mandate.

Amnesty International's delegate will be meeting representatives of human rights movements, trade unions and professional associations to discuss cooperation in fields such as human rights promotion. During the visit he will also meet Mr Omar Azziman, who was appointed as Morocco's first Human Rights Minister in November 1993.

During a previous Amnesty International visit to Morocco in May 1993, the Moroccan Human Rights Advisory Council, Conseil consultatif des droits de l'homme (CCDH), a government appointed human rights commission, told delegates that it welcomed Amnesty International's efforts to expand its membership in the country. In accordance with the organization's principles of impartiality and international solidarity, Amnesty International's members do not provide information on human rights violations in their own country, nor as members - take any action on individual cases in their country.

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AI INDEX: ASA 25/WU 03/1994

29 March 1994

SOUTH KOREA: ARRESTS OF LEFT-WING ACTIVISTS

Alleged left-wing activists have been rounded up and detained by the South Korean authorities, following the recent increase in tension on the Korean Peninsula. "Dozens of people were arrested in February and March under the National Security Law for alleged pro-North Korean activities, even though they were merely exercising their rights to freedom of expression and association" says Amnesty International.

Those detained include singers, artists, publishers, students and members of computer networks, many of whom are prisoners of conscience.

On 21 and 22 February, four members of a singing troupe, Heemangsae, were arrested for attempting to stage a musical which, the authorities allege, benefits or praises North Korea; and for disseminating information about the musical via a computer communication network. Six other members of the troupe were detained on 6 March after a peaceful demonstration in Seoul to protest against the earlier arrests. Four of these were later released but the troupe's two lead singers, Lee Yoon-jung and Lee Sang-yeop, are still in police custody.

Kim Young-son and Jin Sang-ho, both members of the study group Hyoncholdong (Modern Philosophy Society), were arrested on 9 and 13 March, apparently on suspicion of transmitting information about the group's activities via a computer network.

Lee Song-woo, a publisher, was arrested on 18 March on charges of publishing pro-North Korea material. Many of the alleged "pro-North Korea" books confiscated at Lee's home by the police were legally published and are sold in bookshops.

Political detainees in South Korea face lengthy interrogation and are routinely subjected to sleep deprivation. Most recent detainees were reportedly arrested without warrants, in some cases involving the use of force. Some were denied immediate and private meetings with their lawyers.

The South Korean Government says it needs the National Security Law, which punishes ill-defined "anti-state" activities, to counter the alleged threat from North Korea. Amnesty International considers that, in practice, the law is often used to detain people solely because they have leftist views or views considered to be similar to those of the North Korean Government. Amnesty International reiterates its call on the South Korean Government to release all prisoners of conscience and to end the use of the National Security law in its present form.

There is relatively little information available on the human rights situation in North Korea. Amnesty International published a report on North Korea in October 1993, the first detailed report on the country by any human rights organization in many years, and is continuing to document human rights violations there.

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