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# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 69/95

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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - **RWANDA** (Being sent to international media)

INTERNAL - **RWANDA** (Advisory of 5 April press briefing for 6 April action)

NOTE TO PRESS OFFICERS: The IS Press Office will hold a small briefing on Wednesday 5 April at 12:00 BST to brief international wire agencies and major print media about Rwanda and a recent research mission to Burundi. The embargo on the action still holds for 6 April. If press officers would like to notify their most important print media or national wire agency, please let us know and we will try to accommodate them in the briefing.

Several press officers have rang up and asked how they could combine the Rwanda and Burundi messages. To assist your section in combining the two press releases, if you choose to do so, we have a revised version of the Rwanda press release for 6 April that includes a more general regional message. Please note that in doing this, the 6th paragraph about the International Tribunal for Rwanda in the old version was dropped due to lack of space. It will be important to explain to journalists our position on the Tribunal, so please review this info before doing interviews.

PLEASE NOTE: The Urgent Action on Colombia: Fear for Safety - Relatives of victims of the Pueblo Bello Massacre; human rights workers and forensic scientists taking part in exhumation of bodies (31 March 1995, UA 39/95) will be sent to Colombian and other key Latin American media contacts. Part of the strategy is to get as much media as possible to attend the exhumation. It is an important case as paramilitary groups have enjoyed impunity for such a long time and that the exhumation may finally lead to progress being made in the investigations of those "disappeared". NGOs in receipt of the UA are being asked to inform any contacts to attend the exhumation. If you know of any journalists based in Colombia who may want to attend the exhumation, please refer to the Urgent Action for more information.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

RWANDA - 6 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 37/95, 64/95

SYRIA - 11 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 32/95

MONGOLIA - 18 APRIL - SEE NEWS SERVICE 67/95

ETHIOPIA - 19 APRIL - SEE NEWS SERVICE 59/95

TIBET - 9 MAY- SEE NEWS SERVICE 64/95

GERMANY - 16 MAY - SEE NEWS SERVICE 59/95

ROMANIA - 22 MAY - SEE NEWS SERVICE 66/95

#### **TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES**

JAPAN - 4 MAY - SEE NEWS SERVICE 64/95

ISRAEL AND OCCUPIED TERRITORIES - 11 May - SEE NEWS SERVICE 59/95

IRAN - 31 May - SEE NEWS SERVICE 59/95

#### **EVENTS AND MISSIONS**

The details below are for your information only, and there may or may not be media work involved. Can you please not publicize anything until further notice from the IS.

MISSION TO KENYA 16 March - 2 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 37/95

MISSION TO HAITI 18 March - 3 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 58/95

MISSION TO GUATEMALA 21 MARCH - 10 APR - SEE NEWS SERVICE 67/95

MISSION TO PARAGUAY & URUGUAY 22 MARCH - 12 APRIL - SEE NEWS SERVICE 67/95

MISSION TO CHAD - 27 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 59/95

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL 6 APRIL 1995  
AI INDEX: AFR 47/WU 03/95

RWANDA AND BURUNDI: HORROR OF GENOCIDE HANGS OVER THE REGION ONE YEAR LATER

On the anniversary of the slaughter of up to one million Rwandese people, the horror of genocide still divides society in both Rwanda and Burundi and fuels further human rights violations, Amnesty International said today.

"Extremists among the Hutu and Tutsi communities are tearing apart people in both Rwanda and Burundi, setting up these societies for another round of killings in a cycle of violence and revenge," said Ms Gill Nevins, the human rights organization's acting director of research on Africa.

Nevins returned Monday 3 April from a two-week visit of both countries, where she met government ministers, United Nations officials and local human rights groups. She also visited Amnesty International's Rwanda-based **Central African Research Team**, which has spent the past three months investigating human rights violations -- including last year's massacres.

"In Burundi, I witnessed firsthand the violence that resulted in hundreds of people being killed and which paves the way for further reprisals," Nevins said. "Standing outside the office of a French military advisor stationed at a gendarmerie, our delegation heard the screams of someone being tortured. I wondered if he ever heard the screams as well."

Amnesty International also published a 15-page report today describing how the Rwandese judicial system -- shattered by conflict -- is not able to bring documented suspects to justice or ensure that those against whom there is insufficient evidence are released from detention.

"In Rwanda, the long wait for justice means evidence is being destroyed and offenders may escape prosecution," Nevins said. "Lengthy delay also means people take justice into their own hands and kill or "disappear" those suspected of genocide or other crimes against humanity."

The international community has failed Rwanda, breaking promises to help re-establish a judicial system that ensures fair trials and excludes the death penalty in all cases, Amnesty International said. Rwanda needs police and forensic experts, judges, prosecutors and defence lawyers to prevent those guilty of atrocities from evading justice and to protect its citizens from baseless accusations, according to the organization's report.

The Rwanda report also documents how people assumed to be guilty of genocide and other crimes against humanity are arbitrarily detained and ill-treated in overcrowded prisons. Still more are killed, "disappear" or are detained in secret jails where they are at risk of being tortured.

Reports earlier this year indicated that up to seven people were dying daily in Kigali prison, which was designed for 1,500 prisoners but currently holds about 5,000. Overcrowding occurs in other prisons, with over 23,000 detained by March 1995, and about 100 more arrested each day.

In March 1995, for example, 22 people died from suffocation after a group of more than 70 detainees were crowded into a single cell -- designed to hold only 10 prisoners -- at Muhima Gendarmerie brigade in Kigali.

Conditions are equally bad outside the official prisons. Josephine Mukanyangezi, a widow with two young children, was once a judge in Kigali. Arrested in September 1994 by army officers, Josephine Mukanyangezi and her children were detained in a pit latrine at a private house and forced to sit in battery acid. She remains detained without charge in Kigali prison.

The Rwandese judicial system clearly cannot cope: many judges and lawyers were killed between April and July 1994, and others have since been imprisoned or fled. Out of 800 magistrates in the country before the massacres, only 200 remain. There are only 12 prosecutors, and only 36 criminal investigators out of 360 previously employed by the government.

In this chaotic situation, government soldiers can take the law into their own hands. For example, the former president of the Kigali High Court "disappeared" in October 1994 when his duties as a magistrate brought him into conflict with military authorities. Just before being taken away by soldiers, Gratien Ruhorahoza had listed 80 prisoners he intended to release for lack of evidence. Ruhorahoza is not in any official prison but may be detained in a military camp, where he is at risk of torture or execution.

"Sources in Rwanda claim that government soldiers assassinated the Hutu Prefect of Butare, Pierre-Claver Rwandgabo, who dared speak out against the mass arrests," Amnesty International said. "Soldiers are rearresting or 'disappearing' prisoners who have been released by judicial officials because they were unlawfully held."

Outside Rwanda, former government supporters continue to kill and terrorize in the refugee camps of Tanzania and Zaire, killing dozens suspected of supporting the new Rwandese government, Amnesty International said. Yet many remain in the refugee camps, afraid of returning home.

"Many refugees are refusing to return to Rwanda because of these arbitrary arrests and 'disappearances', which take place despite official promises that they have nothing to fear," Amnesty International said.

Among those arrested after returning to Rwanda are dozens of former government soldiers and officials who had been recalled to join the new government. For example, Jean Mukuralinda, a former Butare High Court magistrate, was arbitrarily arrested when he returned at the invitation of the new minister of justice. Jean Mukuralinda remains in prison today.

Amnesty International welcomed the government's 1994 creation of a committee to screen detainees for release, pending judicial review of these cases. But the organization questions its impartiality and effectiveness: three committee members represent agencies carrying out most of the arrests, and only six detainees had been released by March 1995. ENDS\

INTERNAL - RWANDA: ADVISORY OF 5 APRIL PRESS BRIEFING FOR 6 APRIL ACTION

FACSIMILE COVER SHEET

Fax: (44) (71) 956 1157  
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TO: News Editors

FROM: Casey Kelso, Press Officer

DATE: 31 March 1995

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER SHEET: 1

If you do not receive all of the pages, or they are not fully legible, please call us as soon as possible on (44) (71) 413 5810.

NEWS ADVISORY: PRESS BRIEFING ON RWANDA AND BURUNDI

Amnesty International will hold a press briefing on **Wednesday 5 April at noon** on the human rights situation in Rwanda and Burundi. The briefing will be at the International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X. This is not a press conference, so the briefing is limited to a few journalists.

All coverage from the press briefing is embargoed until 0001 GMT 6 April.

An Amnesty International delegation has just returned from a two-week visit of Burundi and Rwanda, where they met government ministers, United Nations officials and local human rights groups, and conducted some research.

In addition, Amnesty International will launch a report partly researched by the organization's **Central African Research Team**, which has spent three months in the region investigating the human rights situation there.

The Amnesty International researchers will make the following points:

- The Rwandese judicial system has been shattered and cannot function properly, prompting people to take the law into their own hands and seek revenge against those suspected of genocide and other crimes against humanity e.g. arbitrary detentions, ill-treatment in overcrowded prisons, killings, "disappearances" or detentions in secret jails.
- In Burundi, recent violence by extremists in both the Tutsi and Hutu communities resulted in hundreds of killings, paving the way for further reprisals. French military equipment appears to be used for human rights violations, therefore French military advisors should not remain "silent witnesses" to torture.
- The international community should help both Rwanda and Burundi re-establish a judicial system that ensures justice for the victims of human rights violations and fair trials for all defendants, while excluding the death penalty as a punishment.