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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - MOROCCO

PLEASE NOTE: Rwanda: Mass murder by government supporters and troops in April and May 1994, AI INDEX: AFR 47/11/94 has been sent swiftair by the IS campaigns team to section campaign coordinators. If you need a copy urgently please contact me. Thanks - Dina

PLEASE NOTE: We will not be taking any action on new developments on the case of Taslima Nasrin in Bangladesh. (See UA 364/93 update, AI INDEX: ASA 13/03/94, sent out on 10 March 1994) If you need more information on this please call Paula.

PLEASE NOTE: Expect a news item early next week on Kurdistan (Northern Iraq) about human rights violations in the conflict.

NEWS INITIATIVES - INTERNAL

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

China - 1 June - SEE NEWS SERVICE 81/94

Turkey - 30 June - SEE NEWS SERVICE 104/94

Pakistan - 27 July - PLEASE NOTE NEW DATE. SEE NEWS SERVICE 81/94

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

Guatemala - 25 May - SEE NEWS SERVICE 99/94

MOROCCO - 30 MAY - SEE NEWS SERVICE 105/94 ** SEE ENCLOSED ITEM **

Austria - 7 June - SEE NEWS SERVICE 105/94

Denmark - 15 June - SEE NEWS SERVICE 105/94

Myanmar - 20 July - SEE NEWS SERVICE 99/94

FORTHCOMING NEWS INITIATIVES

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

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**News Service 112/94
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EMBARGOED FOR 30 MAY 1994**

MOROCCO: THE PATTERN OF POLITICAL IMPRISONMENT MUST END

One year after the Moroccan authorities said they would redress past human rights violations, no action has been taken to end the practice of political imprisonment, Amnesty International said.

"If human rights are to become a reality in Morocco, the authorities must take concrete steps to translate words into actions," the human rights organization said. "As long as the pattern of political imprisonment and the legacy of past injustices is allowed to go on, Moroccan protestations of a new respect for human rights remain shallow".

Since the dialogue between Amnesty International and the Moroccan authorities resumed, political imprisonment after unfair trials has continued in Morocco. In its report Morocco: The Pattern of Political Imprisonment Must End issued today, the organization documents how government critics and peaceful demonstrators, including human rights activists, trade unionists and others continue to be arrested and detained.

More than 130 prisoners of conscience and hundreds of political prisoners convicted in trials which were travesties of justice remain imprisoned in Morocco. "Many of these prisoners have already spent over 10 years in prison, yet they should never have been detained, not even for a single day", Amnesty International said. Habib Lakhmour, for example, has been imprisoned since the beginning of 1984 for taking part in a demonstration.

Amnesty International is calling on the Moroccan authorities to release all prisoners of conscience and all political prisoners unless they are promptly retried in keeping with international fair trial standards.

The organization was allowed to visit Morocco for the first time in over three years in May 1993, when delegates held talks with the Conseil Consultatif des Droits de l'Homme, CCDH, the consultative human rights council set up by King Hassan II in 1990.

Amnesty International has welcomed the steps taken by the Moroccan Government to improve the human rights situation over the past three years, including the release of prisoners of conscience and of hundreds of "disappeared" in 1991, the appointment of a Human Rights Minister in 1993 and the commutation of 193 death sentences earlier this year.

However, no action has been taken to address the specific cases of the hundreds of prisoners who are unjustly held and whose cases Amnesty International has previously raised with the CCDH, the Minister of Human Rights and other authorities in the Moroccan Government.