



amnesty international newsletter

Guatemala: 60 massacres in four months reported Security forces kill peasants, villagers in savage raids

Thousands of Guatemalan villagers and peasant farmers are reported to have been massacred and mutilated by security forces in the five months since General Efraín Ríos Montt came to power in Guatemala.

Testimony from *campesino* (peasant farmer) organizations, Indian groups and church bodies gives details of men being beheaded, women burnt alive and children bashed to death against rocks. The victims have been killed in large-scale operations apparently designed to clear the population from the areas of the countryside where guerrillas are believed to be active.

In an interview with a foreign journalist, members of a local government civil defence patrol from Baja Verapaz in east Guatemala have admitted carrying out atrocities on

orders from military commanders. In April 1982 they said they were told to seize and kill anyone they considered to be "involved". Children under 12 could be summarily executed if necessary.

A member of the patrol said he had seen people drowned and mutilated. Another patrol member said he had watched the punishment inflicted on a prisoner who had escaped and been recaptured. All his muscles were cut and gunpowder placed in his navel and set on fire. The victim's eye was put out and his skin peeled off. The soldiers joked that they were going to have a barbecue, he said.

In another incident, soldiers had given toys to local children as part of a "civilian action" program intended to win support for the government. After handing out the gifts, the troops took all the men at the gathering away to the village clinic. Later, only six



This young Kekchi woman, now in hiding, says she was hacked with machetes and raped by soldiers during an army attack on her hamlet in April this year. Her family was almost wiped out. Her testimony appears on the back page.

bloody ears were found there.

AI has received information on

Continued on back page

Viet Nam: 'Dangerous' monks banished

Two Buddhist monks are reported to have been banished to isolated villages in Viet Nam, following their arrest on 25 February 1982, because their presence in Ho Chi Minh City was judged "too dangerous for the security and well-being of the people".

Thich Huyen Quang and Thich Quang Do of the now dissolved, independent Unified Buddhist Church (UBC) had been detained briefly in October 1981 for "obstructing the work of the Department for the Campaign for the Unification of Vietnamese Buddhists". (This government-sponsored department is the only recognized organization

working closely with the authorities on behalf of the entire Buddhist community.)

The UBC, of which Thich Huyen Quang was acting chairman and Thich Quang Do, national executive secretary, was dissolved in November 1981. The monks were first arrested in April 1977 for "openly opposing the revolutionary government" and were adopted by AI as prisoners of conscience. Following their trial in December 1978 Thich Quang Do was acquitted and Thich Huyen Quang received a two-year suspended sentence.

Known for its peaceful opposition

to the Viet Nam war and its strong human rights stand during previous administrations, the UBC has continued to speak out in defence of human rights since the present government came to power in April 1975. It has urged that former South Vietnamese military and civilian personnel be released from "re-education".

Since the cessation of hostilities the new government has sought to bring all social and religious groups under the umbrella of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front. Some pagodas have been closed and UBC-run institutions have been taken over by the state.

Kenya

Mass arrests after coup bid

An estimated 3,000 people are now under arrest following the August coup attempt in Kenya. These include an estimated 2,000 air force personnel, out of a total air force strength of 2,500. The remainder are civilians, including some students, described by the government as "looters". Several hundred alleged looters have already appeared in court and been given sentences ranging from 18 months' to five years' imprisonment.

More than 200 people are believed to have died during the coup attempt made by a section of the Kenyan armed forces on 1 August 1982 in an effort to overthrow the government of President Daniel arap Moi. On 5 August 1982 President Moi stated that the attempted coup had been led by a group of junior officers from Embakasi air base.

In the weeks preceding the attempted coup, Kenya had been officially declared a one-party state, and seven people had been detained indefinitely without charge or trial. They include George Anyona, a

former member of parliament who was previously adopted as a prisoner of conscience by *AI*, John Khaminwa, a lawyer, and four university lecturers.

Wangodu Kariuki, a journalist arrested in May 1982, was sentenced to four and a half years' imprisonment on 9 July for possessing a seditious publication. At least three other people, including a university lecturer, face similar charges.

On 6 August 1982 security police arrested Koigi wa Wamwere, a member of parliament and former prisoner of conscience. He was later served with a detention order.

● *AI* is investigating the alleged "disappearance" in Kenya of two Sudanese nationals, David Dak Gash and Jonny Jock Rasson, who were reportedly arrested by Kenyan Police officers in March and April 1982. The Kenyan Government has made no reply to *AI's* inquiries and it is feared that they may have been returned forcibly to Sudan and detained secretly there □

Malawi

Chirwa treason trial opens

The treason trial of Orton Chirwa, Malawi's former Justice Minister and Attorney-General, and his wife Vera opened in Blantyre on 28 July 1982. Both pleaded not guilty to the charge which carries the death penalty.

They are alleged to have conspired between April 1977 and 24 December 1981 to overthrow the Malawi Government "by force or other unlawful means". These charges relate to their formation in exile of the Malawi Freedom Movement (MAFREMO) in opposition to the government of Life President Hastings Kamuzu Banda.

At the start of the trial, Orton Chirwa challenged the competence of the court to hear the case. The judges of the Southern Region Traditional Court, a panel of five chiefs headed by Chief Nazombe, dismissed this argument and then denied a request by Orton Chirwa for legal counsel. Legal representation is not permitted in the Traditional Court.

The government claims that Orton and Vera Chirwa were arrested in

Malawi on 24 December 1981. Unofficial sources, however, allege that they were abducted from Zambia by Malawi security agents. Their son, Fumbani Chirwa, who was with them at the time, did not appear in court and is presumed still to be detained without trial (see March 1982 *Newsletter*).

This is the second known treason trial in the Traditional Court. In the first, in 1977, the two defendants were sentenced to death. One is known to have been executed □

AMSTERDAM CONFERENCE

The July *Newsletter* carried the final statement of the International Conference on Extrajudicial Executions (held in Amsterdam 30 April-2 May 1982), but omitted the fourth recommendation. It reads:

"Military and police forces should ensure that their members are trained to uphold standards forbidding extrajudicial executions." □

Czechoslovakia

Satirical journal leads to jail in North Bohemia

Four people, including two signatories of the unofficial Czechoslovak human rights group Charter 77, were sentenced on 9 July 1982 to prison terms ranging from 15 months to three and a half years. The four men, brought before the district court in Chomutov in Northern Bohemia on charges of "breach of the peace", were: Ivan Jirous, a 38-year-old art historian and a Charter 77 signatory who worked as a mason at the time of his arrest; Frantisek Starek, a 30-year-old technician and a Charter 77 signatory; Milan Hybek, a 25-year-old university student and Milan Fric, a 25-year-old employee of the state fisheries.

The court found them guilty of publishing and distributing an unlicensed satirical journal, *Vokno* (The Window). An expert called by the prosecution stated that the defendants "propagated the culture of the 1960s which paved the way to counter-revolution". Ivan Jirous and Milan Hybek were also charged with "being in illegal possession of drugs" allegedly found during a search of their homes. However, *AI* believes this charge to be unfounded. Ivan Jirous was sentenced to three and a half years' imprisonment followed by two years' police surveillance; Frantisek Starek, two and a half years' imprisonment and two years' police surveillance; Milan Hybek, 18 months' and Milan Fric, 15 months' imprisonment. All four have been adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience.

Ivan Jirous has three previous convictions for "breach of the peace". He was sentenced in 1973, 1976 and 1978 and spent a total of three years and 10 months in prison. Frantisek Starek was sentenced in 1976 to eight months' imprisonment for the same offence; his sentence was halved on appeal and he was released. Both men were adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience at that time □

Prisoner releases and cases

The International Secretariat learned in July 1982 of the release of 97 prisoners under adoption or investigation; it took up 252 cases.

Campaign for Prisoners of the Month



Each of the people whose story is told below is a prisoner of conscience. Each has been arrested because of his or her religious or political beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin or language. None has used or advocated violence. Their continuing detention is a violation of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. International appeals can help to secure the release of these prisoners or to improve their detention conditions. In the interest of the prisoners, letters to the authorities should be worded carefully and courteously. You should stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. In no circumstances should communications be sent to the prisoner.

Dr Hussain SHAHRISTANI, Iraq

A 40-year-old nuclear physicist and Research Director of the Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission, he was arrested in December 1979. Sentenced to life imprisonment with confiscation of property.

Dr Hussain Shahrستاني was arrested at work by members of the security forces on 9 December 1979. His wife and three children were also taken into custody for two days before being released. He was detained incommunicado at Baghdad Security Headquarters, and in January 1980 was said to have been seen in Al Rashid military hospital, Baghdad, in poor physical condition as a result of torture.

Dr Shahrستاني is reported to have been tried *in camera* and sentenced to death by the Revolutionary Court in Baghdad between February and April 1980. This sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment with confiscation of property.

The exact reasons for Dr Shahrستاني's arrest and the charges against him are not known. A Somali national who shared a prison cell with him claims that the scientist believes he was arrested for refusing to develop a nuclear bomb with the reactor Iraq had bought from France. However, opposition sources claim that his arrest is also linked to Shi'i opposition in Iraq. There are reports that Dr Shahrستاني, who is a member of a leading Shi'i family from Kerbala in southern Iraq, was suspected of distributing leaflets for the *Al Da'wa Al Islamiya* Party (Islamic Call), a predominantly Shi'i group which has existed illegally since about 1956. On 31 March 1980 a new law, which can be applied retroactively, was passed making it a capital offence to be a member of, or affiliated with, this party.

Because of his international reputation as a scientist there has been much interest in Dr

Shahrستاني's case abroad and leading scientists and scientific institutions have made numerous approaches to the Iraqi authorities on his behalf. *AI* has received no reply from the Iraqi Government to its repeated inquiries about his fate.

Please write courteous letters appealing for his release to: President Saddam Hussain/President of the Republic of Iraq/ Baghdad/Iraq.

Zarko ALEKSIC, Yugoslavia

A lawyer and member of the Tuzla Bar Association. Tried in April 1980 and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for criticizing the Yugoslav Government.

Zarko Aleksic, a lawyer from Bosnia-Hercegovina and member of the Tuzla Bar Association, was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment with confiscation of his property on 8 April 1980. He was tried by the district court of Doboij on charges of "hostile propaganda". He was found guilty of expressing "Greater-Serb" views and criticizing Yugoslavia, its leaders, the policies of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the country's socialist self-management system. He was also found guilty of depicting conditions in Yugoslavia "maliciously and falsely".

In 1982 Zarko Aleksic was reported to be facing trial again for having engaged in "hostile propaganda" while in prison. *AI* does not know the outcome of this second trial.

AI has adopted Zarko Aleksic as a prisoner of conscience because he was sentenced solely on account of the views which he expressed.

Please send courteous letters appealing for the immediate release of Zarko Aleksic to: His Excellency Mr Petar Stambolic/Predsednik Predsednistva SFRJ/Bul. Lenjina 2/Beograd/Yugoslavia.

CHANG Hua-min, Taiwan

A 55-year-old historian and journalist, arrested in September 1979 and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment by the military court of the Taiwan Garrison Command for pro-communist propaganda.

Chang Hua-min was arrested on 4 September 1979 and sentenced in January 1980 by the military court of the Taiwan Garrison Command to 10 years' imprisonment for making pro-communist propaganda. He is presently being held in Green Island military prison.

Chang Hua-min was charged under the Statute for the Punishment of Sedition because he wrote an open letter to the authorities in early 1979 in which he argued in favour of joint talks between the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the People's Republic of China (PRC), which would eventually lead to the peaceful reunification of China.

Chang Hua-min was previously detained from 1966 to 1974 for alleged "seditious" writings, believed to include positive references to the economics in the PRC. After his release he taught journalism, contributed to various magazines and edited *Today's Local Assembly*, a publication on debates in the Provincial Assembly, which was later banned. He also published a two-volume book *An Essay on Chinese Culture* and helped opposition politicians in their electoral campaigns.

Chang Hua-min, who is adopted by *AI* as a prisoner of conscience for the second time, was born in Shansi province on the mainland and went to Taiwan in late 1949. He is not married and has no family in Taiwan.

Please send courteous letters appealing for the immediate release of Chang Hua-min to: His Excellency President Chiang Ching-kuo/Office of the President/Chiehshou Hall/Chungking S. Road/Taipei/Taiwan, Republic of China.

Amid continuing reports of human rights violations in Uganda, AI has launched a worldwide appeal to the country's President, Milton Obote, to act immediately to end the abuses and to set up an independent inquiry to investigate them.

Army killings, torture and political imprisonment

Human rights violations in Uganda

Three years after the overthrow of Idi Amin killings of unarmed civilians by the army have again become widespread in Uganda. Prisoners in military custody have been systematically tortured and a large number of the victims have died as a result. Other prisoners have "disappeared". In addition, hundreds of real or imagined opponents of the government have been detained, many indefinitely and without charge or trial.

This is the picture that emerges from reports coming out of the country—including accounts of mass arbitrary executions and the testimonies of former prisoners. The reports reinforce the findings of an AI mission to Uganda at the beginning of this year.

Bodies, some bullet-riddled, others decapitated or bearing the marks of sexual torture, have been recovered from Lake Victoria near Entebbe International Airport. Others have been found in mass graves.

Suspects killed

Most of the reports of killings of civilians by soldiers have been in connection with attempts by the Uganda army (Uganda National Liberation Army) to crush guerrilla opposition to the government of President Milton Obote who took office in December 1980. In many cases the civilians killed are people suspected of being guerrillas or guerrilla supporters but the victims include innocent and unarmed men, women and children who simply happened to be in an area of armed conflict and others arbitrarily arrested well away from any fighting.

Since the guerrilla attacks and military operations against them began in February 1981, AI has received numerous reports alleging the systematic torture and killing of prisoners arrested by the army on purported grounds of national security and detained illegally and in secret in military establishments. Systematic torture has been reported in Makindye, Kireka, Mbuya, Katabi and Bombo military barracks and other military detention centres.



The body of a victim of human rights violations in Uganda. . . Fred Mobulo, who died in Kampala Central Police Station in October 1981.

Former prisoners have described horrific conditions in two of the barracks. They tell of whippings with barbed wire, women prisoners being raped, people beaten and bayoneted to death, daily killings of prisoners and of corpses being loaded onto lorries which were driven to unknown destinations.

Reports have also been received of overcrowded cells, denial of medical treatment, and prisoners dying of starvation.

Hundreds of political prisoners are believed to be still held in Uganda; several are detained indefinitely without charge or trial and AI believes a number are prisoners of conscience.

It has appealed to President Obote and the government to initiate investigations into human rights abuses to ensure the protection of prisoners' human rights and to take firm measures to prevent further abuses. The government's responses have been few and unsatisfactory. As a result, AI sent a mission to Uganda in January 1982 to express its concerns directly to the government.

Since its mission AI has continued to receive reports during 1982 which it believes confirm the persistence of a pattern of severe violations of human rights.

The majority of arrests of political opponents in 1981 and 1982—ostensibly on the grounds of national security or for aiding guerrillas—have been carried out by the army and have led to people being detained and

interrogated in barracks or other military detention centres.

Most of the people arrested by the army have been unarmed civilians and most arrests had nothing to do with incidents of armed conflict. Those arrested were taken to army barracks where they were detained illegally, in many cases for weeks or months. Cases include arrests of individual political opponents of the government; or mass arrests. One such mass arrest occurred at Rubaga Cathedral on 23 February 1982, when at least 60 civilians, including children, were arrested some hours after an alleged guerrilla attack in the area. None of them were seen alive again—the bodies of several of them were later reportedly discovered in a forest. People arrested by the police are also alleged in some cases to have been placed in military custody.

Under Ugandan law the army has no authority to detain civilians. Nevertheless, AI estimates that hundreds of civilians are detained in military barracks at any one time. The total number of civilians detained illegally by the army at various times under President Obote's government is thought to be in the thousands.

Constitutional safeguards ignored

Most of the constitutional safeguards that exist for detainees have not been applied. Only a small proportion have been served with detention orders, often weeks or months after arrest. Access to legal representatives has usually been refused. A review tribunal was said to have been appointed by the government in early 1981—but by mid-1982 it had still not been convened.

The government did not publish the names of any detainees until May 1982 when a list of 237 detainees was published in the *Official Gazette*. AI expressed concern that many more than 237 people were reportedly detained without charge or trial in civil prisons and military barracks.

AI has received reports that the 24-hour limit established in the Criminal Procedure Code on holding an arrested person without charge in a

police station has often been ignored. People have allegedly been held for some months—particularly in the Central and Jinja Road Police Stations in Kampala—without appearing before a magistrate. Others have been charged with criminal offences such as treason or sedition, but *AI* believes that very few people have been brought to trial for any such alleged political or security offence.

AI has received numerous reports of the torture and killing of prisoners detained illegally and secretly in military establishments.

Systematic torture has been reported in Makindye and Kireka military barracks, where assaults on detainees with rifle butts, clubs and leather whips are said to be routine. *AI* has had reports of prisoners being slashed with bayonets, shot in the legs and subjected to sexual torture, including the rape of women prisoners. Torture of detainees has also been reported at Malire, Mbuya and Bombo military barracks, the military interrogation centre in Kampala and other places where interrogations have allegedly been carried out in secret by military or security officers.

More deaths reported

In mid-1982 *AI* received further reports of a number of deaths alleged to have occurred in military custody:

- The corpses of over 50 young men, bearing signs of sexual torture and mutilation, were reported to have been discovered in Lake Victoria near Entebbe in mid-May.

- In early June about 80 bullet-riddled bodies were reportedly discovered on wasteland north of Kampala. A young man alleged to be the sole survivor of a mass execution made his way back to Kampala where he reported that the bodies were those of detainees held in Makindye and Katabi military barracks who were taken away at night in lorries and executed.

The Ugandan Government denied all allegations of torture put to it during meetings with *AI*'s delegates in January 1982. Nevertheless, the evidence available to *AI* convincingly demonstrates that torture has been used systematically in several military barracks since early 1981, and that many victims have died as a result.

Prisoners held in military establishments are reported to be subjected to the harshest conditions. Detainees there are held incommunicado and without official acknowledgement.

TWO WEEKS IN MAKINDYE BARRACKS . . . A SURVIVOR'S STORY

A Kampala businessman held in Makindye military barracks for two weeks in early 1982 described in detail his experiences:

"I was arrested by soldiers who had found my Democratic Party membership card on me. They labelled me 'guerrilla'. I was transferred to Makindye Barracks, on the outskirts of Kampala. I was to remain there for over two weeks. During my period of detention I stayed successively in three cells which the inmates called: 'Quarter-Guard', 'Bone' and 'Go-Down'. Each of them was designed to hold 20 people. During my stay a total of more than 600 detainees were crammed into them.

"'Quarter-Guard' is a reception-cell for certain categories of prisoners on transfer from other prisons or barracks. When I arrived two prisoners were lying in a pool of blood. They had just been battered to death. According to my cell-mates, we were all in danger of ending up the same way.

"On 2 March, at about 7.00 pm, Flight-Captain James Kasinye was dragged out of the cell, beaten with iron bars just outside the cell door, then killed with four pistol shots by a lieutenant. Six prisoners were selected to carry his body and the other two corpses to the 'shop', where detainees murdered in prison are deposited. When they returned our companions told us that they had seen about 25

corpses there, including that of a child approximately five years of age. In our cell there was also a small room where two young women and a teenage girl were kept. After nightfall we heard them screaming and groaning for some hours. Next day one of them told us that about 10 soldiers had raped them.

"On 3 March there were mass arrests in Kampala. Lorries and military vehicles arrived at Makindye. They were full of civilians. Most of them were between 15 and 35 years old. They had been savagely beaten.

"On 4 March they made all the prisoners come out. They sorted us into three categories in order to re-allocate us to the three cells. In my cell there were about 200 starving prisoners. The same day they brought in fresh detainees. Most of them had been beaten and tortured, some even had limbs cut off. For example, a gardener, arrested during work, had his hand cut off. He died the next day. . . .

"On 5 March I was transferred to 'Go-Down' with other detainees. There were about 200 prisoners there. Most of them were wounded and their clothes bloodstained. They had been so horribly tortured that they were almost certain to die. 'Go-Down' is the worst cell in Makindye. During my stay there, between six and nine people died in the cell each day. . . ."

Testimonies received by *AI* state that detainees are denied adequate food, water and medical treatment: food and water are said to have been refused for days at a time.

Conditions are aggravated by severe overcrowding in cells and the lack of even minimum standards of hygiene. Mattresses and blankets are rarely provided; washing and toilet facilities are almost non-existent.

According to a detainee at Makindye military barracks: "The room where I was first put was a very filthy little room with fresh blood on the walls, urine on the floor, and human excrement. It produced a very nauseating kind of smell, and it was the kind of smell you associate with death and rot, and I have no doubt in

my mind that a number of people had just been killed in that room because the walls were spattered with fresh blood. In this room people were so tightly packed you just couldn't even move an inch. It was so hot in there you just couldn't believe it."

AI understands that no inquests or other formal investigations have been conducted into any deaths of prisoners in civil or military detention.

Many detainees have "disappeared" after arrest and detention. Tracing people believed to be held in military establishments is particularly difficult, as the detentions are not officially acknowledged and the detainees are outside the effective jurisdiction of the

Continued on page 7

Poland

Fewer than half internees are freed unconditionally

Despite a statement by General Wojciech Jaruzelski, in an address to the *Sejm* (parliament) on 21 July 1982, that most internees would be released and that martial law in Poland might be suspended before the end of the year, a government spokesman later made it clear that just under half would be unconditionally released.

Those freed at the end of July amounted to 913 people (including all women internees) out of a total official figure of 1,864; 314 others were granted leave (temporary release).

Those who remained interned included many of Solidarity's national leaders, officials and advisers. Among them are: Lech Walesa, Adam Michnik, Janusz Onyszkiewicz, Jacek Merkel, Jacek Kuron, Karol Modzelewski, Grzegorz Palka, Jozef Patyna, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Zdzislaw Rozwalak, Wacław Sikora, Antoni Tokarczuk, Andrzej Gwiazda, Marian Jurczyk, Piotr Baumgart, Stanisław Kocjan, Jerzy Zimowski, Przemysław Fenrych and Henryk

Wujec. Many of them have now been interned for over eight months.

In a letter to General Jaruzelski on 26 July, *AI* welcomed the announcement but said it believed that further steps were urgently needed to contribute to the effective implementation in Poland of internationally recognized human rights standards. *AI* said this could only be achieved by the unconditional release of the remaining internees and by an amnesty for all those imprisoned or charged for their non-violent political activities.

AI said it was seriously concerned by the growing number of people convicted and imprisoned for the peaceful exercise of their human rights, which had been reported to considerably exceed the number of those still interned. The organization pointed out that it regarded both internees and those imprisoned for the non-violent exercise of their human rights as prisoners of conscience and appealed for the unconditional release of all of them □

Israel

Concern about killings of unarmed demonstrators

In 13 separate incidents in the West Bank and Gaza between 20 March and 4 July, at least 14 Palestinians who were demonstrating against Israeli policies in the Occupied Territories and in Lebanon were shot dead, and about 100 others injured, by live ammunition fired by the Israeli Defence Forces.

AI wrote to Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin on 22 July expressing concern at the shooting and killing of unarmed demonstrators and at the repetitive nature of these killings which, it said, could not, on the basis

of available information, be attributed to self-defence or "panicky" reaction by troops.

As far as *AI* is aware, the Israeli Government has not made any statement condemning the killings. On the contrary, it has defended the use of live ammunition during these disturbances. *AI* urged the Government of Israel to take all necessary steps to prevent further loss of life during demonstrations, to initiate an inquiry into the incidents in which the Palestinians had been killed and to make public its findings □

Romania

Freedom for 11 jailed over smuggled Bibles

Eleven Romanian evangelical Christians sentenced in December 1981 and March 1982 to between five years three months' and six years' imprisonment were released in early August.

They had reportedly been charged with complicity in bringing contraband Bibles into Romania. *AI* had adopted the 11 as prisoners of conscience in the belief that they had been imprisoned as a result of their efforts to supply religious literature to Christian believers, not for financial gain but for reasons of conscience (see June 1982 *Newsletter*) □

Republic of Korea

Amnesty for 35 political prisoners

Thirty-five political prisoners are reported to have been released on 15 August 1982 under an amnesty granted to mark Liberation Day.

They include three people tried with the opposition leader Kim Dae-jung in August 1980: the poet Koh Eun-tae; a former National Assembly member, Kim Sang-hyon; and a former student, Lee Sok-pyo. A photographer arrested in March 1979, Chi Jung-kwan, is also reported to have been released. All four had been adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience. Their cases are described in the *AI* report, *Republic of Korea: Violations of Human Rights*, published in March 1981 □

Death penalty

AI has learned of 66 people being sentenced to death in 10 countries and of 46 executions in seven countries during July 1982.

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

AI's 15th International Council is being held in Rimini, Italy, from 9 to 12 September. Delegates and observers from more than 45 countries are attending, as well as representatives from other international organizations.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT 1982: This year's *AI Report* is being published on 27 October—two months earlier than in previous years. The report documents *AI*'s concerns in over 120 countries and provides a factual record of political imprisonment, torture and execution around the world. More than 80,000 copies are being published in five languages. Advance copies may be ordered now from: *AI Publications*, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, United Kingdom; £5.00 a copy.

Iran envoy denounces 'imperialist myth of human rights'

The Government of Iran has stated that divine laws must have priority over human laws such as international human rights standards. Appearing before the Human Rights Committee in Geneva, a representative of the Iranian Government said that if a conflict arose between laws coming from God and laws drawn up by people, it was not difficult to see which norms ought to prevail.

The Iranian statement came in reply to questions from members of the Human Rights Committee, a panel of 18 independent experts set up under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. States that have ratified the covenant must periodically report to the committee what measures they have taken to implement the covenant.

Iran ratified the covenant in 1975 under the government of the Shah. The present government indicated that it wished to submit a new report because it considered the one submitted before the revolution no longer valid.

In response to Iran's four-page report, the committee posed extensive questions about mass executions, torture and repression of members of the Baha'i religious faith. One member of the committee, who pointed out that

he himself was a Muslim, wanted to know which human rights were *not* being violated in Iran.

In his reply, the Iranian representative, Seyyed Hadi Khosroshahi, Iranian Ambassador to the Vatican, asked what gave the committee the right to ask all these questions and denounced the "imperialist myth of human rights".

Baha'i question

As for the "ridiculous Baha'i question", he said that there was authoritative evidence that members of the Baha'i faith had played a prominent role under the government of the Shah and that they had provided financial assistance to Israel.

(Baha'i headquarters are in Haifa, Israel. *AI* knows of no evidence to support the charges of "espionage" usually brought by the Iranian authorities against Baha'is who have been executed. *AI* believes that the reason for their execution has been their religious belief.)

The Iranian representative did not reply in detail to the questions which had been asked about executions and torture in his country. However, he expressed his government's readiness to continue the dialogue with the

committee and promised that a fuller supplementary report would be submitted as soon as the Iranian parliament had finished reviewing the country's legislation.

AI's concerns in Iran include the lack of fair trials for political prisoners, the detention of prisoners of conscience, the torture and ill-treatment of prisoners and executions.

More than 4,400 people are known to have been executed since the revolution of February 1979. However, many executions appear not to have been publicly reported and *AI* believes that the actual number is much higher.

In many cases people appear to have been executed without any form of trial. In cases where trials have taken place defendants have not been allowed any legal assistance and have had no right of appeal against sentence.

AI has received hundreds of reports of allegations of torture in Iranian prisons, in particular in Evin prison in Teheran. Methods of torture described include beating, kicking, whipping with cables, banging heads against walls, burning with cigarettes and with an iron, and mock executions □

Human rights violations in Uganda

Continued from page 5

police, the judiciary and the civil authorities. Families who have unsuccessfully tried all formal and informal possibilities of tracing prisoners thought to have been arrested by the army often conclude that they have been secretly killed or have otherwise died in custody: they base their conclusions on the notoriety of the atrocities widely known to have been committed in particular military establishments.

Many incidents have been reported since February 1981 in which unarmed civilians have been killed by the army for their purported support of the guerrillas. Concern about the general state of insecurity in many parts of the country, particularly around Kampala, was expressed by Uganda's religious leaders in an open letter to President Obote in September

1981. The letter described Uganda as "bleeding to death" and attributed much of the blame for killing and other abuses (including rape, looting, seizure of property and theft) to soldiers.

On 15 March 1982 over 2,000 people were arrested in one of a series of security operations in west Kampala by the army and police. Though most were freed within a day or two after interrogation at Kigo prison, some were taken to Katabi military barracks in Entebbe where 70 people were allegedly killed in custody and buried in a mass grave nearby. In similar security operations in other parts of Kampala on 10 and 28 April several thousand more people were arrested, many being taken to Nsambya police parade-ground and other places for screening. Some were

then reportedly transferred to Katabi military barracks where several were allegedly killed.

The government told *AI's* delegates in January 1982 that reports of atrocities by the army were false and that "occasional" abuses of military discipline were severely punished. According to the government, the arbitrary executions attributed in some quarters to the army were in fact carried out by "bandits or guerrillas wearing stolen army uniforms". Despite *AI's* appeals the government has not initiated any independent investigation into these or other reported killings by the army. Many more incidents have been reported than are mentioned above, in which the army would appear to be responsible for the deaths of unarmed civilians □

Turkey: Health fears for Kurdish prisoners

AI has asked permission to send a team to a Turkish military prison to check on reports that nearly 100 Kurdish prisoners are in poor health as a result of torture and harsh prison conditions.

The prisoners are among a large number of ethnic Kurds held at Diyarbakir Military Prison in eastern Turkey. Many are said to have been convicted of violent acts, but some are not charged with any form of violence.

AI has received the names of nearly 100 said to be in poor health. Four are said to have suffered especially. They include former Diyarbakir mayor Mehdi Zana; a lawyer, Mumtaz Kotan, and Pasa Uzun, former chairman of an ethnic Kurdish association.

In a letter to the Turkish ambassador in London, *AI* asked for permission to send a delegation including doctors to the prison. It also

asked for details and any medical reports which existed on the health of the named men.

The letter was sent on 27 May 1982. No answer has been received yet.

Mehdi Zana is one of the best-known leaders of the ethnic Kurds of eastern Turkey, the country's largest minority and estimated to number several million. His sister has said he underwent prolonged torture, and foreign observers who saw him on trial earlier this year said he was almost unrecognizable and appeared to be physically broken.

Forced confessions

AI has expressed concern in the past that some of the Kurds found guilty of violence were convicted after making confessions reported to have been extracted under torture. Others have been imprisoned for declaring

that they were Kurds.

Sociologist Ismail Besikci, who is not Kurdish, was sentenced in March 1982 to 10 years in prison for referring to the Kurds as a separate ethnic group. It was the third time he was imprisoned for expressing this view.

Turkish government policy has long held that the Kurds are not a distinct group. Since the military coup of September 1980, thousands of Kurds have been among those imprisoned. Some are accused of violence aimed at secession, but others have been charged with "separatism" or "Kurdish propaganda" for affirming the existence of a Kurdish minority.

● A fourth man named in *AI*'s news release was a lawyer, Huseyin Yildirim. *AI* has received reports that he was released from custody during July but has not been able to confirm them □

Guatemala

Continued from page 1

some 60 massacres in the period from March to June 1982. They involve the death of some 2,000 people in provinces throughout the country. Exact details on all the killings are hard to establish. *AI* believes that it knows of only a fraction of the massacres and that the real total of deaths is higher.

Many of the corpses bore the marks of torture. Some were found in mass graves. One grave in the village of Chuatalún contained 84 bodies of men, women and children. The corpses were being devoured by dogs and coyotes.

Guatemalan officials maintain that the dead are guerrillas who have died in clashes with government forces or that it is the guerrillas who are killing the local residents. Information collected by *AI*, however, repeatedly points to government responsibility for a program of massive extrajudicial executions, particularly in rural areas.

If you would like to help try to stop the killings, write to General Ríos Montt asking that they be halted and that full investigations be carried out to establish responsibility for them. Write to: General Efraín Ríos Montt/Presidente/Palacio Nacional/Ciudad de Guatemala/Guatemala □

Survivor's testimony

The young Kekchi woman whose photograph appears on the front page is 17 years old and comes from the hamlet of Chirrenquiché, Cobán, Alta Verapaz. She gave the following account of how she was attacked and raped by soldiers during an army raid on her hamlet in April 1982. Her young brother was also seized and wounded—the pair are all that remains of an entire family.

"The soldiers came; we went to the mountains; there we found tree trunks and stones where we hid. A group of soldiers came from behind, they came in behind us. They seized three of us; they took them to the mountains; they tied them up in the mountains and killed them with machetes and knives. There they died. Then they asked me which ones were the guerrillas, and I didn't tell them, so they slashed me with the machete; they raped me; they threw me on the ground and slashed my head with the machete, my breasts, my entire hand. When dawn came, I tried to get home. By then I could hardly walk. I came across a girl

from our village, and she was carrying some water. She gave me some and took me to her house.

"The army also seized my 13-year-old brother Ramos and dragged him away, and shot him in the foot and left him thrown on the ground. My brother and my parents and my other brothers and sisters had been in the house. The soldiers said 'They are guerrillas, and they must be killed'. My brother saw how they killed my parents; my mother, my brothers and sisters and my little one-year-old brother; the soldiers machine-gunned them to death when they arrived in the village. Only my brother, Ramos, and I are alive. Our friends are giving us injections and medicines. We can't go to the hospital at Cobán. I think they would kill us there."

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