

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

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AI Index: EUR 46/030/2004 (Public)
News Service No: 154
23 June 2004

Embargo Date: 23 June 2004 01:00 GMT

Russian Federation: Recommendations to the Russian government and Chechen armed opposition groups

"Disappearances", arbitrary detentions and extrajudicial executions and attacks by armed opposition groups continue to characterize the ongoing conflict in the Chechen Republic. Such abuses, many of which constitute war crimes, are overwhelmingly committed with impunity; the majority of investigations which are undertaken are at best inconclusive and very few perpetrators are ever identified and brought to justice. In its latest report *Russian Federation: Chechen Republic - "Normalization" in whose eyes?* (AI Index: EUR 46/027/2004) Amnesty International reports its findings from its research on the region in March/April 2004. The organization's findings belie claims of the Russian authorities that the situation in Chechnya is normalized. The report also raises concerns about the increase in violations in Ingushetia.

Following a review of its findings, the report makes recommendations to the Russian Federation aimed at ensuring respect for the rights of all people in Chechnya and Ingushetia.

Amnesty International also calls on the international community to intensify its scrutiny of the situation and put pressure on the Russian Federation to live up to its international human rights obligations.

The following is a list of recommendations to the government of the Russian Federation and Chechen armed groups:

Recommendations to the government of the Russian Federation:

- Condemn ongoing grave and systematic human rights abuses in the Chechen Republic and take immediate steps to end such violations, including extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detention, "disappearances" and torture, including rape and ill-treatment, in Chechnya;
- Take immediate steps to end human rights violations in the Republic of Ingushetia;
- Ensure that all past and current allegations of abuses of international human rights and international humanitarian law are promptly, independently and impartially investigated and perpetrators are brought to justice in independent, impartial courts established by law and in proceedings which meet international standards of fair trial;
- Stop attempts to forcibly return internally displaced people in Ingushetia to the Chechen Republic, and provide adequate protection and humanitarian assistance to them in accordance with relevant international standards;
- Protect all of those who have petitioned the European Court of Human Rights and initiate independent and thorough investigations, without delay, into all allegations of reprisals taken against any person in relation to applications filed with the European Court of Human Rights; make public the findings of any criminal investigations into such reprisals including the killing, torture and ill-treatment of applicants and their families; ensure that those responsible for any such reprisals

are brought to justice in fair proceedings;

Fully implement all recommendations made by the UN-treaty bodies and special mechanisms as well as those made by bodies and mechanisms of the Council of Europe;

Authorize without delay the publication of all reports of visits to the region by experts of the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT); publish a plan to implement the recommendations of the CPT and ensure periodic publication of measures taken to implement such recommendations;

Grant unrestricted access to Chechnya to independent media and human rights monitors, including from international organizations. Ensure a thorough and independent investigation is carried out into the attack which threatened the security of the Council of Europe's experts. Ensure that human rights defenders working in the area can carry out their legitimate activity in safety and without fear of harassment or intimidation. Make public the findings of any criminal investigations into the killings, as well as torture and ill-treatment of human rights defenders and activists.

Recommendations to Chechen armed opposition groups

Stop all direct and targeted attacks on civilians as well as indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks;

Ensure full compliance with and respect for international humanitarian law.

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