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BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALLS ON BOSNIAN SERB
AUTHORITIES TO PROTECT DETAINEES

In the wake of the capture of Srebrenica last week -- when thousands of men of military age were arbitrarily detained -- Amnesty International is calling on representatives of the Bosnian Serbs to ensure that these men are protected from ill-treatment and torture.

Amnesty International demands that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other international observers be given full and unrestricted access to the detainees.

"These men could be at risk of torture and ill-treatment," Amnesty International said today. "The Bosnian Serb *de facto* authorities should ensure that forces under their control comply with international human rights and humanitarian law standards and that all non-combatants are released and that no detainees are ill-treated."

Various sources have reported deliberate and arbitrary killings by members of the Bosnian Serb armed forces and the abduction of women refugees from vehicles transporting them out of the Srebrenica area.

Amnesty International is calling for immediate steps to be taken to establish their whereabouts and obtain their release.

BACKGROUND

On 11 July forces of the Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) entered the town of Srebrenica. Members of the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and some 2,500 refugees withdrew to the UNPROFOR compound at Potočari. A further 30,000 refugees gathered outside the compound.

The following day the BSA, continuing its advance, took control of Potočari. Men over 16 years of age were separated from women and children and taken to the nearby town of Bratunac where they are being held in a sports stadium, reportedly to be interrogated about alleged war crimes.

In the period immediately following the start of conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina in May 1992, non-Serb men were held for interrogation in detention camps at Omarska, Manjača and other locations in Bosnian Serb-held areas. Numerous confirmed reports of frequent beatings

and of deliberate and arbitrary killings that took place in these camps give cause for extreme concern for the safety of those detained in Bratunac or elsewhere.

The women, children, the elderly and the wounded who have been transported out of the area have been forced to cross into Bosnian Government-held territory on foot. Several reports indicate that despite guarantees of safety made by Bosnian Serb *de facto* authorities buses and lorries carrying the refugees have been stopped by Bosnian Serb soldiers and younger women have been abducted.

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