

EXTERNAL -- FOR RESPONSE

News Service: 019/00

AI INDEX: ACT 50/03/00
28 February 2000

**Amnesty International's reaction to Benetton's ongoing
campaign against the death penalty**

Benetton has launched a worldwide communications campaign featuring photographs of prisoners under sentence of death in the USA. Amnesty International has not been involved in the design of the campaign or in the decision to launch it.

As a human rights organization which opposes the death penalty in all cases, Amnesty International welcomes any serious discussion of the death penalty which could contribute to its worldwide abolition.

Amnesty International's concerns about the ongoing use of the death penalty in the USA include the execution of child offenders -- prisoners who were under 18 at the time of the crime -- and the disproportionate numbers of poor, black and other ethnic minorities who are executed.

As an organization which deals with victims of human rights violations on a daily basis, Amnesty International is keenly aware of the suffering of victims of violent crime and their relatives and would not wish to see anything done which unnecessarily exacerbates their anguish.

ENDS.../