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MEDIA ADVISORY

KOSOVO

Amnesty International urges KLA Leader to stop human rights abuses

Amnesty International today called on Hashim Thaçi, former political representative of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), to take a strong and visible stand against all killings, abductions, ill-treatment, house burnings and attempts at expulsion committed against members of ethnic minorities in Kosovo.

In its letter, the human rights organization is urging Mr Thaçi, one of the most prominent ethnic Albanian political figures, to use his position of moral authority and influence among the Albanians of Kosovo, to:

bring to an end human rights abuses against ethnic Serbs, Roma or members of other minority groups;

ensure that all individuals and organizations cooperate with KFOR, the police and the judicial system being set up under United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) supervision, to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice.

Amnesty International has campaigned for many years against the institutionalized human rights violations perpetrated by the Serbian police in Kosovo, and against the appalling level of human rights violations committed during the conflict, of which ethnic Albanians were overwhelmingly the victims. This suffering, however, cannot in any circumstances justify further human rights abuses.

The judicial system is the mechanism for achieving justice and Amnesty International will never cease to maintain pressure for suspects from the former Yugoslavia to be brought to justice both in the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and national courts.

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For more information call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 171 413 5566 or visit our website at <http://www.amnesty.org>