

## ALGERIA APPEAL CASE

### ALGERIA

Armed Islamist groups in Algeria have issued death threats to women who refuse to comply with the Islamic dress code. In retaliation, an anti-Islamist organization, the Organization of Free Algerian Youth, has begun issuing death threats to civilian Islamists. After Katia Bengana was killed in February 1994, they issued a statement threatening to kill 20 veiled women and 20 bearded Islamists for every woman killed for not wearing a veil.

Shortly afterwards, on 29 March, two veiled high-school students were shot dead at a bus stop in the suburbs of Algiers. In Algeria, it seems, women can be killed for wearing the hidjab, or killed for not wearing the hidjab.

Religious and political differences are being used by all sides as an excuse to abuse human rights. In all cases, at issue is a woman's right to express her own beliefs.

#### **Killed for not wearing a veil**

At the age of 16, Katia Bengana was killed as she walked home from school. She was shot because her head was uncovered.

Katia Bengana knew she was taking a risk by walking in the streets without wearing the *hidjab*, the Islamic veil, because she had already received death threats. Armed Islamist groups in Algeria have repeatedly issued ultimatums to women: wear the *hidjab* or risk death.

On 28 February 1994 Katia Bengana walked home from school with a friend who was veiled. The two young women were stopped by a gunman who signalled to Katia's friend to stand aside, and shot Katia dead.

Her grieving family have told how Katia refused to be intimidated by the threats and refused to wear the *hidjab*. Her father had asked her to wear the veil for her own safety - although he himself supported her choice not to wear it. But she refused. "She was adamant", says her sister. "Even if she had to die, she would not wear the veil."

Katia Bengana was not the only young woman who refused to wear the *hidjab* - but she was outspoken. She believed she should not have to wear the veil and said so publicly. She paid with her life for expressing that belief.

Armed Islamist opposition groups have killed hundreds of civilians in Algeria since 1992 and issued many death threats. In particular, women are threatened with death for "un-Islamic behaviour" or failing to comply with the Islamic dress code. Armed Islamist groups have forbidden women to go to mixed schools or travel on unsegregated public transport. In addition, hairdressers and beauticians have been told to close down or be killed.

Katia Bengana refused to comply with other people's ideas of who she should be and how she should dress. For that she died.

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Katia Bengana is one of the women whose cases we are highlighting in our campaign. Add your voice to ours. Write to representatives of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). Say you have heard about the killing of Katia Bengana. Urge the FIS to condemn the killing of any woman by armed Islamist groups, and to call on armed Islamist groups to stop killing and threatening women for not complying with the Islamic dress code or for what they may consider "un-Islamic behaviour". Send your letter to Anouar Haddam/ c/o American Muslim Council/ 1212 New York Avenue, Suite 400/ Washington DC/ 20005 USA.

## BRAZIL

## BRAZIL

Edméia da Silva Euzébio is not the only woman in Brazil to have been killed for her courage in seeking justice.

Women rural activists and lawyers defending rural workers have also been the target of threats and killings. Margarida Maria Alves, president of the rural workers union of Alagoa Grande in Paraíba, was shot dead in 1983 after negotiating sugar workers' pay and conditions. Twelve years later no one has been brought to justice for her killing.

In January 1993 a rural workers' lawyer, Márcia Maria Eugenio de Carvalho, was shot dead in Pernambuco. In October the same year Sister Cecília Petrina de Carvalho, a nun who works as a lawyer defending rural workers, was shot in the leg in an assassination attempt.

Women street educators are regularly harassed by military and civil police for their work with street children.

Women prosecutors have also become notable for their determination to bring to justice members of the police force and "death squads" involved in human rights violations. Some have received death threats as a result. Dra Stella Kuhlmann, a São Paulo military prosecutor who prosecutes military police for extrajudicial executions, received telephone death threats to herself and her family for a period of 18 months. Several plots to kill Dra Tania Sales Moreira, a Rio de Janeiro prosecutor who has obtained convictions against well-known "death squad" members, have come to light.

'We will never give up'

"We will never give up, ever. We have faith that we will find them. Our community has changed through this struggle to find the bodies. And we are strengthened by this."

With these words Edméia da Silva Euzébio described her search for her son Luis Henrique da Silva and his 10 friends who "disappeared" in July 1990. Edméia da Silva Euzébio paid for her determination with her life. In January 1993 she and a friend were shot dead as they walked down a street in Rio de Janeiro.

Henrique da Silva was just 17 when he and 10 of his friends "disappeared" from Magé in Rio de Janeiro state, where they had gone into hiding to escape the attention of local police. Some of them were accused of involvement in crime. They were being blackmailed by the police and could no longer afford to pay the corrupt officers.

Their flight was not enough to save them. According to a military police investigation, the 11 youngsters were abducted by a group of detectives and military police from Rio de Janeiro. Nothing has been heard of them since—and in the absence of their bodies no one has been prosecuted.

Edméia de Silva Euzébio, aged 47, was used to hearing stories about neighbours who grieved for their lost children, in the *favela* (shanty town) of Acari where she lived. Most took no action because they were afraid of the consequences. But when her son "disappeared", she and other mothers of the "disappeared" formed the Mothers of Acari.

The Mothers of Acari started a campaign to discover the truth about their children's fate, despite repeated death threats and harassment. Those threats were all too real. In January 1993, Edméia da Silva Euzébio testified in court about police involvement in the "disappearance" of her son. A few days later she was dead.

According to Tania Maria Sales de Moreira, a Rio de Janeiro state prosecutor: "The ["disappearances"] might have ended up like innumerable others: one more barbarous crime of unknown authorship and one more incomplete investigation filed away. However, the crazy determination of a group of women changed the course of this case."

The Mothers of Acari fight on, not just for their children but now also for Edméia da Silva Euzébio.

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Edméia da Silva Euzébio is one of the women whose cases we are highlighting in our campaign. Add your voice to ours. Write to the State Governor of Rio de Janeiro. Say you have heard of the killing of Edméia da Silva Euzébio and urge that the investigation into her murder and the "disappearance" of the Magé Eleven be continued and those found responsible brought to justice, and that the remaining Mothers of Acari be protected. Send your letters to: Exmo. Sr Governador do Estado de Rio de Janeiro/ Sr Marcelo Alencar/ Palácio Guanabara/ Rua Pinheiro Machado s.n/ 22.231 Rio de Janeiro/ RJ/ Brazil.

#### **EQUATORIAL GUINEA APPEAL**

##### **Equatorial Guinea**

Women in Equatorial Guinea, like men, are under threat of arbitrary arrest and detention for days, weeks or even months, with no reason given and no trial. Once behind bars they face terrible prison conditions; they will go hungry and will have no access to even the most basic medical care. In addition, most prisoners are forced to work as unpaid domestic slaves for government officials.

Women prisoners are also at risk of sexual abuse. In the past, there have been several reports of sexual abuse of women prisoners – in one case, women were reportedly forced to dance naked for the police, in other cases women prisoners were forced to sell sexual favours in exchange for food. Torture is routine behind the doors of Equatorial Guinea's police stations.

Internationally, María Teresa Akumu's case is not unique. Across the world, women are targeted because of their relationships with men wanted by the authorities. Wives, companions, children, sisters and mothers have been killed, tortured and imprisoned to get men to give themselves up, to confess or sometimes just in acts of rage when soldiers and police could not find their real targets.

**Women are punished because of whom they know, not because of anything they themselves have done.**

### **Guilty by association**

María Teresa Akumu is 18 years old. She will be 30 years old before she is due for release from prison. Every day, she is forced to work at the house of a government official. Every night, she is taken back to prison. She gets just a small amount of food for her labour.

María Teresa Akumu is a prisoner of conscience. She has been jailed not for anything she did, but because someone she knew was accused of committing a crime.

Her boyfriend, Antonio Ndong Ebang, allegedly planned a raid on the local military barracks. He was captured after a shoot-out with soldiers, but some of his followers got away. María Teresa Akumu was arrested and accused of sheltering several of them. The real reason for her arrest seems to have been her relationship with Antonio Ndong Ebang.

María Teresa Akumu was tortured and eventually brought to trial in July 1994. There, along with 16 men, she was charged with an attempt against the security of the state. She was convicted of giving shelter to the other so-called plotters, many of whom were apparently unaware of Antonio Ndong Ebang's plans.

The trial was blatantly unfair. Political trials in Equatorial Guinea are always heavily weighted against the accused, and in this case none of the defendants had any chance to reply to the charges. They all protested, to no avail, that they had been tortured and starved of food by the prison authorities.

Now María Teresa Akumu is in prison serving a 12-year sentence. Her boyfriend is dead, apparently killed outright by the military after they captured him. She has done nothing wrong, but is being punished solely because of her past relationships.

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María Teresa Akumu is one of the women whose cases we are highlighting in our campaign. Add your voice to ours. Write to the President of Equatorial Guinea. Say you have heard about María Teresa Akumu's imprisonment and call for her to be released immediately and unconditionally. Send your letters to General de Brigada Teodoro Obiang Nguema/ Presidente de la República/ Gabinete del Presidente/ Malabo/ Equatorial Guinea.

### **China**

**Women make up about one third of the political prisoners known to be held in Tibet, amounting to more than 140. Most of them are Tibetan nuns. In February 1994 unofficial sources reported that Drapchi prison, where Phuntsog Nyidron is imprisoned, held more than 250 political prisoners.**

The number of women political prisoners is reported to have increased dramatically, tripling in the past three years. In 1994 there were apparently 68 women prisoners in Drapchi, compared with 23 in 1991. All but two are nuns, arrested for staging pro-democracy demonstrations.

**Most imprisoned Tibetan nuns are serving sentences of two or three years of "re-education through labour". Many of them were reportedly tortured. Torture is widespread in prisons and detention centres run by the Chinese authorities.**

As well as routine torture and ill-treatment, such as beatings and solitary confinement, special methods of punishment have reportedly been used against women prisoners in Tibet.

Dogs have been set on naked women, electric cattle prods have been used to give shocks to the breasts, thighs and sexual organs. Many of the women tortured in this way are prisoners of conscience.

Women are also in prison for their beliefs throughout China. For example, Wu Xiuling and Xu Qinlan are among a group of 18 women serving sentences of "re-education through labour" in Shandong province for their peaceful religious activities in a protestant Christian community known as the Jesus Family.

### 17 years in prison for supporting independence

Phuntsog Nyidron is a Tibetan Buddhist nun. She is in prison because she supports Tibet's independence from China.

On 11 October 1989 Tibetans heard that the religious leader, the Dalai Lama, would receive the Nobel Peace Prize. Three days later Phuntsog Nyidron and five other nuns staged a peaceful demonstration in Lhasa, Tibet's capital city. They chanted some slogans and marched in a procession for a few minutes before the police arrested them.

For that simple act, all six nuns were interrogated, tortured, tried and imprisoned. Phuntsog Nyidron was sentenced to nine years in prison.

Phuntsog Nyidron's sentence has since been extended by another eight years, because she did not give up her beliefs, even in prison. In October 1993 she was one of 14 nuns, all prisoners of conscience, who had their sentences increased for composing and recording pro-independence songs in prison.

The songs were recorded on a tape-recorder smuggled into the prison. The tape was then circulated secretly in Tibet. On the tape the 14 nuns announce their names and dedicate a song or poem to their friends and supporters. "All of you outside who have done all that you can for us in prison, we are deeply grateful to you and we will never forget you," sings one nun. "We are beaten and treated brutally," sings another, "but this will never change the Tibetan people's perseverance."

Phuntsog Nyidron is now serving a total of 17 years in prison, the longest-known current sentence for a female political prisoner in Tibet.

The exact charges against the nuns are not known, but the Chinese authorities apparently considered the distribution of the tapes to be "spreading counter-revolutionary propaganda", an offence which normally carries a maximum of five years' imprisonment.

However, for ringleaders and those "whose crimes are monstrous" sentences can be more severe. Phuntsog Nyidron seems to have been considered a ringleader. For that she now faces imprisonment until at least 2006.

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Phuntsog Nyidron is one of the women whose cases we are highlighting in our campaign. Add your voice to ours. Write to the Premier of China, Li Peng. Say you have heard about Phuntsog Nyidron's imprisonment in Tibet as a prisoner of conscience and urge that she be released immediately and unconditionally. Send your letters to: Li Peng Zongli/ Guowuyuan/ 9 Xihuangchenggenbeijie/ Beijingshi 100032/ People's Republic of China.

### **United States of America**

**Women make up a tiny proportion of those on death row in the USA, accounting for less than two per cent of all death sentences imposed since individual states began to reintroduce the death penalty in the early 1970s.**

**Even so, that proportion amounts to more than 100 women who have been sentenced to death in just two decades. More than 60 of these sentences have been reversed or commuted.**

**Women have been sentenced to death in 23 states, well over half of the states which still have the death penalty on the statute books. Over one quarter of these sentences were imposed by just two states, Florida and North Carolina. The 37 women still on death row are in 14 separate states.**

**Historically, most women sentenced to death in the USA have not been executed. Unfortunately, there has been growing pressure to reverse this trend.**

**Some of the women on death row today have almost exhausted their appeals and it seems likely that one or more of them will be executed in the near future.**

### **Facing death by lethal injection**

Faye Copeland is 73 years old. For four years she has been expecting to die. She is not ill. She is on death row in the USA.

She was sentenced to death in April 1991, along with her husband Ray Copeland. Together they were found guilty of murdering five men, in separate incidents, during the late 1980s. Ray Copeland, who was also sentenced to death, escaped the executioner - he died of natural causes in October 1993.

Faye Copeland remains on death row despite her present attorney's claims that she was a battered wife, cowed into submission by her violent and abusive husband. The prosecution at her trial said Faye Copeland aided and abetted her husband. Her defence lawyer argued there was no evidence that she had fired any shots.

Faye Copeland is the oldest person awaiting execution in the USA: her case is currently pending appeal. If all her appeals fail, she will be killed by lethal injection.

As in so many capital cases in the USA, there are ample reasons to doubt the fairness of the legal system which put her on death row in the first place. There are also reasons to hope for clemency if all other legal options are exhausted.

Sadly, justice and humanitarian concerns are rarely enough to avoid the electric chair, the fatal injection, the gas chamber or the noose in the USA today. More than 250 people, including women and juvenile offenders, have been executed since 1977.

Faye Copeland is one of 37 women now awaiting execution in the USA. If she is executed, she will be the first woman to be executed since Velma Barfield was killed more than a decade ago in North Carolina.

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Faye Copeland is one of the women whose cases we are highlighting in our campaign. Add your voice to ours. Write to the Governor of the state of Missouri. Say that you have heard about Faye Copeland's death sentence and urge him to grant clemency to Faye Copeland. Send your letters to: The Honourable Mel Carnahan/ Governor of Missouri/ PO Box 720/ Jefferson City, MO 65102/ USA.

## **BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA**

### **Bosnia-Herzegovina**

**Rape in the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina has received unprecedented publicity. Women have been raped in their homes by soldiers from their own town or strangers passing through. Women prisoners have been raped by soldiers and guards in detention centres. Women have been imprisoned in hotels and other buildings specifically so that they could be raped by soldiers.**

Rape has been deliberately used as a method of intimidation, particularly by armed Serbs against Muslims or Croats, aimed at forcing them to flee or expelling them from contested territory. The United Nations expert on human rights in Bosnia-Herzegovina has said that rape is being used as "an instrument of ethnic cleansing".

Although many women did flee, they frequently had to stay for weeks or even months after they were raped within easy reach of the rapists, before finally escaping.

The shame and social stigma attached to rape discourage many women from reporting what has been done to them, making it extremely difficult to assess the full extent of the sexual abuse of women in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

However, difficulties in assessing the evidence do not hide the fact that in Bosnia-Herzegovina armed men have systematically used rape to dehumanize their opponents, to undermine and punish their enemies and to reward their allies.

### **Raped for five hours**

Mirjana is a Serbian woman, from the town of Novi Grad in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In June 1992 she and three other Serbian women were abducted and gang-raped repeatedly for five hours by seven different men.

Mirjana is not her real name – we have changed her name to protect her anonymity. But we cannot hide the fact of her rape from her former neighbours, because they were the very men who raped her.

Mirjana is one of countless women raped since war broke out in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992. This war has turned neighbour against neighbour, and seen countless women raped and otherwise abused. Mirjana and her friends were raped by their Croatian neighbours, apparently because elsewhere a group of Serbian men had raped Croatian women.

Although the most frequent victims have been Muslim women who were raped by Bosnian Serb soldiers and irregulars, Mirjana's cases highlights the fact that soldiers from all sides have become rapists, and the suffering of individual victims is the same, regardless of their nationality.

Two years ago, Amnesty International publicized the case of Mirsada, a 16-year-old Muslim girl who was raped in a hotel in eastern Bosnia and made to "disappear" by Serbian paramilitaries in June 1992.

The Croatian men who raped Mirjana and her friends called themselves the "Fire Horses" (*Vatreni konji*). They were apparently responsible for other rapes and abductions in the area that month. Another woman told police she had been abducted and raped by a group of drunken men calling themselves "Fire Horses". Instead of investigating the rape, the police detained her on suspicion of possessing arms. In another incident, two women were abducted by men claiming to be police. They were driven to a wood, where they were beaten and raped before being abandoned naked.

All of these incidents took place within a few days of each other, in the same town. Human rights abuses against women continue in Bosnia-Herzegovina, despite the international protest that has surrounded cases such as that of Mirjana and her friends.

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Write to the presidents of all three states involved in Bosnia-Herzegovina about the rape of Mirjana and women like her from all ethnic backgrounds by uniformed men. Urge that all cases of reported rape by soldiers and irregulars be investigated fully and that those responsible are brought to justice. Send your letters to: Slobodan Milošević/ President of the Republic of Serbia/ Andrijevica 1/ 11000 Beograd/ Yugoslavia; Dr Franjo Tuđman/ President of the Republic of Croatia/ Visoka 22/ 41000 Zagreb/ Croatia; Alija Izetbegović/ President of the Presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina/ c/o Permanent Mission of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina/ 22 bis, rue Lamartine/ 1203 Geneva/ Switzerland.

## **KUWAIT**

### **Kuwait**

Thousands of people were arrested by Kuwaiti security forces immediately after the withdrawal of Iraq's occupying armies in February 1991. Kuwaiti forces and armed civilians immediately began a campaign of arbitrary arrests, torture and even killings of those suspected of "collaboration" with the Iraqis. The vast majority of those targeted were non-Kuwaitis, including Hamda As'ad Yunis, who has Jordanian nationality.

A special Martial Law Court was established to try cases of individuals suspected of "collaboration" with Iraqi occupation forces. The more than 160 defendants who appeared before this court did not have a fair trial. That right was denied at every stage of the proceedings. Many were not told what charges they were facing or what their rights were and they were not allowed to see their lawyers before the trial. The proceedings were rushed and there was no right of appeal.

The Martial Law Court was dissolved on 26 June 1991 when the period of martial law ended. However, that did little to help those already convicted and now serving long prison sentences. Twenty-nine people, including nine women, were sentenced to death. Eventually, following widespread international criticism of the unfair trials, all death sentences were commuted to terms of imprisonment.

Nonetheless, trials on "collaboration" charges are still continuing in Kuwait before the State Security Court and people have since been sentenced to death in unfair trials. An Iraqi national sentenced to death was executed in May 1993.

### **Facing the rest of her life in prison**

Hamda As'ad Yunis is 69 years old. Despite her age, Hamda As'ad Yunis is in prison and is sentenced to remain there for the rest of her life.

Hamda As'ad Yunis is a political prisoner, imprisoned in a Kuwaiti jail after a blatantly unfair trial held in the aftermath of Iraqi invasion. The desire for vengeance against the invaders was so strong that thousands of people were arrested immediately after the withdrawal of Iraqi troops in 1991. Hundreds of them were charged with "collaboration" and given unfair trials in special courts, where dozens were sentenced to death.

Hamda As'ad Yunis was one of those sentenced to death. Her main crime seems to have been continuing to work as a teacher of Arabic at the Bibi al-Salem secondary school during the Iraqi occupation. In the atmosphere after the Iraqi withdrawal, continuing to take a pay packet as a public servant was considered enough to warrant a death sentence.

Hamda As'ad Yunis was tried before the Martial Law Court, set up specially to try cases of "collaboration". Her trial, like those of all the others tried by the Martial Law Court, was blatantly unfair and lacked even the most basic safeguards.

In May 1991 Hamda As'ad Yunis was sentenced to death on charges of helping to spread tendentious information and accepting funds from the occupying forces. The following month, her death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment - an appalling penalty, imposed by an unfair system.

Four years on, and Hamda As'ad Yunis is still behind bars, as are two of her sons, Al-Mu'taz Billah Muhammad Saleh Isma'il and Muntasir Muhammad Saleh Isma'il. They are also held on charges of "collaboration". All three are in Kuwait Central Prison and Hamda As'ad Yunis sees her sons once a month.

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Hamda As'ad Yunis is one of the women whose cases we are highlighting in our campaign. Add your voice to ours. Write to the Crown Prince of Kuwait. Say you have heard about the case of Hamda As'ad Yunis and call for a full judicial review of her case. Send your letters to: His Highness Shaikh Sa'ad al-'Abdallah al-Sabah/ Crown Prince and Prime Minister/ Al-Diwan al-Amiri/ Al-Safat/ Kuwait City/ Kuwait.

## **MYANMAR**

### **Myanmar**

Dr Ma Thida is one of scores of women held as political prisoners in Myanmar (Burma), many of whom are held solely because of their peaceful political beliefs. Although some 2,000 political prisoners have been released from Myanmar's jails in recent years, hundreds still remain behind bars.

Myanmar's most famous recent prisoner of conscience, Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, has spent years under house arrest for her opposition to Myanmar's ruling military junta.

It is not only politically active, prominent women who become victims of human rights violations in Myanmar. Members of indigenous ethnic minorities, such as the Karen, Mon and Shan groups, are routinely targeted by the military during their counter-insurgency campaigns. Troops ransack villages, burning houses, stealing animals and crops and forcing the villagers to flee. Women and children are sometimes targeted for grave violations such as rape and murder.

In addition, thousands of members of these indigenous minorities, men and women alike, are forced into acting as unpaid labourers for the military, sometimes for months at a time. Held captive by the army, they are given little or no food or water, may be beaten and worked until they drop, and are sometimes killed.

### **In prison for supporting democracy**

Dr Ma Thida is sitting in a cell. There is barely any light. She is alone, as she has been for over a year. She is thin and weak, and is suffering from a gastric ulcer and gynaecological problems. She is 28. If the Burmese state has its way, she will not see open spaces again until she is 46.

The crime for which she has been sentenced to 20 years in prison was to campaign for the main opposition party in Myanmar, the National League for Democracy (NLD), and distributing information about its activities. She is a prisoner of conscience.

She was arrested in August 1993 and charged with endangering public tranquillity. She faces two decades in prison, for being prominent in a peaceful political party. Her days pass in solitary confinement.

Dr Ma Thida is one of some 75 women held as political prisoners in Myanmar. She is one of the most prominent such prisoners. She is a friend of Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi – founder and leader of the NLD – and worked as a campaign assistant for her.

Myanmar's military rulers began rounding up political leaders, including Aung San Suu Kyi, in 1989. When the NLD won a landslide victory in elections in 1990, most of its leaders were in prison.

Dr Ma Thida is also a well-known writer – so well known that the authorities are reported to have postponed her original trial because so many people gathered at the court room. Famous for her short stories, Dr Ma Thida had just received permission from the censors to publish her first novel, *Sunflower*, only to see it banned by the military junta after her arrest. A surgeon herself, now Dr Ma Thida's own health is under threat. She is ill and held in a prison where conditions are notoriously poor and there is little or no medical care. A far cry from her life before she was arrested, when she gave her services as a doctor, without payment, at the Muslim Free Hospital in Yangon (Rangoon).

### **In box on last page**

Dr Ma Thida is one of the women whose cases we are highlighting in our campaign. Add your voice to ours. Write to the Chairman of Myanmar's military authorities. Say you have heard about the imprisonment of Dr Ma Thida and urge her immediate and unconditional release. Send your letter to General Than Shwe/ Chairman/ State Law and Order Restoration Council/ c/o Ministry of Defence/ Signal Pagoda Road/ Yangon/ Union of Myanmar.

## RWANDA

### RWANDA

Hundreds of thousands of women were slaughtered in a genocidal onslaught against the Tutsi ethnic group by soldiers and allied Hutu militias between April and July 1994.

The victims included pregnant women, nuns, young girls and old women. For nearly 12 weeks women, men and children were murdered without mercy: most because they were Tutsi, but many others because they supported human rights or opposition political parties.

The majority of those who escaped to neighbouring countries were women and their children. More than 300,000 Tutsis fled to save their lives.

As the Rwandese Patriotic Front took control of the country, at least a million Hutu refugees left in fear of reprisals. Conditions in the refugee camps are atrocious: in one camp in Zaire, up to 80,000 people died within weeks in a cholera epidemic.

Violence against women in the camps is rife. Those who wish to return to Rwanda are threatened, attacked, sometimes killed by armed Hutu gangs and former government soldiers.

Some refugees have braved the journey back, but many women who have returned, their husbands dead, have found themselves homeless, landless and destitute.

#### Victim of genocidal hatred

"There is shooting, people are being terrorized, people are inside their homes lying on the floor". This message, broadcast by *Radio France International*, was one of the last public statements made by Rwanda's Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana before she was killed on 7 April 1994.

Agathe Uwilingiyimana was Rwanda's first woman prime minister. Her government was committed to power-sharing between the two ethnic groups in Rwanda: the majority Hutus and the minority Tutsis. She was appointed in July 1993 after a three-year civil war between the Hutu-dominated army and the Tutsi-dominated Rwandese Patriotic Front.

The tentative moves towards peace were shattered on 6 April 1994 when the President's plane was shot down. Within hours, soldiers and allied militia units had begun an orchestrated campaign of slaughter.

Agathe, aged 41, and her husband were among the first victims of the genocide -- killed by presidential guards just hours after the President's death. Miraculously, through the courage of friends and colleagues, their five children were hidden and saved.

Over half a million women, men and children were murdered in the following four months of carnage. Not all the killers were men: women were also caught up in the frenzy, manipulated or intimidated until they too committed horrific

crimes. One Hutu woman testified: "I killed three people, three men. I knew them, they were my neighbours... I didn't have any alternative. When I refused to kill, the government soldiers banged a gun on my child's head and she died. She was six weeks old."

But the great majority of the killers were men, and they tortured and killed women in especially brutal ways.

The slaughter spread with a speed that indicates detailed advanced planning. In the months before the eruption of violence, the militias had been armed and prepared – physically and psychologically – to kill Tutsis.

The risk of a human rights catastrophe was clear well in advance. For years Rwanda's leaders had promoted ethnic hatred. In 1993 the United Nations' own expert had called for action to prevent civilian massacres. But nothing was done.

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Agathe Uwilingiyimana is one of the women whose cases we are highlighting in our campaign. Add your voice to ours. Write to your Foreign Minister and urge the Minister to support initiatives to ensure that Rwanda establishes a competent, independent and impartial judicial structure able to fulfil its role in order to prevent violations, promote human rights and end impunity. Please send a copy of your letters to the Minister of Women's Affairs, Madame Aloisia INYUMBA, Ministère de la Condition féminine, Kigali, République rwandaise.

### **ROMANIA**

#### **Romania**

**Maria Moldovan is just one of many women who have suffered violence because of their ethnic identity. All over Europe, as in the rest of the world, women such as Maria Moldovan are targeted for human rights violations simply for belonging to a particular ethnic group.**

**Roma have been singled out for illegal detention, torture and ill-treatment in several other European countries, including Bulgaria, Hungary and the Slovak Republic.**

**Just two months after Maria Moldovan's ordeal, 20 Roma were detained by police in Glushnik, Bulgaria, for illegally picking grapes, and locked in a pigsty overnight. The following morning, villagers were forced to watch as the Roma were taken out one by one, tied to a metal fence, and then beaten by a police officer, the Mayor and other locals. The women were also threatened with rape.**

**Women from many different ethnic groups have been singled out for violations across Europe: ethnic Albanians in Kosovo in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; Kurds in Turkey; ethnic Albanians in Greece; Abkhazians in Georgia; Azerbaydzhanis in Armenia.**

### **Victim of racial hatred**

Maria Moldovan is a Rom, a member of one the largest ethnic groups in Romania. She used to live in H\_d\_reni village in Transylvania, at peace with her neighbours, some of whom were Roma, some Romanian, some ethnic Hungarian.

That peace was shattered on 20 September 1993. In a night of madness, neighbour took up weapon against neighbour. Roma were attacked and killed, their houses razed to the ground. Racial hatred destroyed the village.

The violence began with a fight between two Roma and seven or eight Romanians in which one Romanian was killed. Shortly afterwards, an angry crowd of around 500 Romanians and ethnic Hungarians gathered in the village. The death became an excuse for an orgy of racist violence, culminating in the public lynching of the two Roma men. Another man was burned alive in one of 13 Roma houses torched and destroyed. In terror, all 32 Roma families living in H\_d\_reni fled the village.

As people screamed and flames lit up the sky, Romanian police stood by and watched. They did nothing to stop the lynch mob. They did nothing to protect Roma houses. Their only action, it seems, was to impede some of the fire brigades.

Maria Moldovan was one of those forced to flee. Two months later, in November 1993, she was fined by the police for disturbing the peace. Her "crime" had been to shout out in public that the police had beaten her son Costel earlier that day shortly after he had been helping to rebuild Roma homes.

She appealed and a hearing was set for August 1994. However, two months before the hearing was due, her fine was converted into 33 days' imprisonment and she was arrested. She was held in prison for two days before the authorities admitted that a mistake had been made.

To date, no one has been charged with murdering the three Roma men or destroying Roma houses. Police officers who stood idly by that night were simply reprimanded and transferred. In contrast, Maria Moldovan has been harassed, charged, fined, arrested and imprisoned - all because she is a Rom and stood up for her son and her rights.

### **In box on last page**

Maria Moldovan is one of the women whose cases we are highlighting in our campaign. Add your voice to ours. Write to the President of Romania. Say you have heard about the prosecution and detention of Maria Moldovan. Urge the authorities to investigate her case promptly and protect her against possible ill-treatment or intimidation. Send your letters to: D-lui Ion Iliescu/ Excelen\_iei Sale/ Pre\_edintele României/ Pia\_a Victoriei/ Buchare\_ti/ Romania.

## TURKEY

### TURKEY

Human rights violations in Turkey are a daily occurrence, not only in the southeastern provinces where the PKK and government forces are fighting, but also in cities, towns and villages throughout the country.

The mainly Kurdish population in the southeast is being subjected to a major military operation to crush the PKK and all manifestations of Kurdish separatism. Countless women have been seized by government soldiers, publicly humiliated, beaten, abducted, shot, raped and killed. Neither pregnant women, women with new-born babies, young girls nor the very old have been spared.

Those who speak out against such practices – journalists, lawyers and human rights activists – put their own safety at risk. In August 1993, for example, a woman journalist "disappeared": reportedly she was last seen alive in an Istanbul police building. Since mid-1993, 11 journalists and distributors of the same newspaper have been killed.

Torture in Turkish prisons and police stations is widespread and systematic. Many detainees have died as a result. One woman who died in police custody in 1994 had, according to the police, thrown herself out of an upper window of a police station – but those windows are barred.

Hundreds of people are detained for political offences in Turkey every year. Many of them are women and many of them prisoners of conscience, detained solely for their non-violent beliefs. If Eren Keskin is imprisoned, Amnesty International will consider her a prisoner of conscience and will call for her immediate release.

#### Persecuted for defending others

Eren Keskin's freedom is under threat. In a matter of weeks she could be taken from her home and sent to a Turkish jail. She is a lawyer and a human rights activist, and she faces a prison sentence because of a newspaper article which the Turkish Government did not like.

In September 1994 Eren Keskin was found guilty of "separatist propaganda" and sentenced to two years in prison. That sentence is under appeal and she is currently free – but the threat of prison hangs over her at all times.

She has also been repeatedly harassed. The harassment includes death threats -- "we are measuring your coffin" went one telephone message -- being shot at, physical assault by police officers and arbitrary detention and ill-treatment to prevent her doing her job.

Eren Keskin is a member of the Turkish Human Rights Association and a lawyer. She has defended people charged with membership of various illegal

organizations, including the PKK (Kurdish Workers' Party), an armed group which is in conflict with the Turkish Government. In the eyes of the police, this is reason enough to harass her.

"The police see us defence lawyers as members of the PKK", she says. "They are particularly offended by the fact that a female lawyer has taken up the case of a PKK defendant."

On one occasion, when she went to the scene of an incident she was detained by police, who took turns hitting and insulting her.

Eren Keskin refuses to be silenced. She carries on with her work as a defence lawyer, and speaks out about human rights violations. She sent a message to the Belgian Parliament which was published in a Turkish newspaper in June 1993, under the headline "The world's debt to the Kurdish people".

This article describes the history of the Kurdish conflict and deplores the lives lost on both sides, especially the killings of unarmed civilians caught in the cross-fire. On account of it, Eren Keskin faces a prison sentence.

#### **In box on last page**

Eren Keskin is one of the women whose cases we are highlighting in our campaign. Add your voice to ours. Write to the Prime Minister of Turkey. Tell her you have heard about Eren Keskin and urge her to ensure that Eren Keskin does not go to prison. Send your letter to: Prime Minister/ Mrs Tansu Çiller/ Office of the Prime Minister/ Ba\_bakanl\_k/ 06573 Ankara/ Turkey.

Captions: appeals leaflets, women's campaign

1. CHINA

Nuns in Drapchi Prison, Tibet, celebrating Chinese New Year

C. TIN

2. BRAZIL

Mothers of the "disappeared" from the shanty town of Acari, Rio de Janeiro, campaign to discover their children's fate. One of their founder members was shot dead in broad daylight by two gunmen.

C. Américo Vermelto/Istoé

3. ALGERIA

Algerian women demonstrate against violence. Their banner reads: "Silence is death; if you speak you die and if you keep silent you die. So speak out and die."

C. Gamma/Frank Spooner

4. TURKEY

Women's ward in Diyarbakir Military Prison

5. MYANMAR

Refugees from Myanmar seek sanctuary in Bangladesh. Myanmar's security forces have committed gross human rights violations against the country's minority groups -- such as these Rohingya Muslims -- since 1984.

C. Howard J Davies

6. BOSNIA

This 18-year-old Bosnian woman was gang-raped, allegedly by Serbs. She found she was pregnant and was given an abortion.

C. Nina Berman/Sipa Press

7. KUWAIT

Defendants at a court in Kuwait City accused of "collaborating" with the Iraqi forces which occupied Kuwait in August 1990

C. AP

8. ROMANIA

A Roma family near Kardjali, Bulgaria. Roma people have been singled out for illegal detention, torture and ill-treatment in several Central European countries.

c. Melanie Friend/FORMAT

9. EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Women outside a church in the northern town of Ebbeiyin

C. Sean Sprague/PANOS

10. RWANDA

Rwandan refugees in a camp in Zaire  
C. Jenny Matthews

Agathe Uwilingiyimana with her husband and two of their children

## 11. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Women demonstrating against the death penalty in the USA  
C. Doug Magee

Needle used in executions by lethal injection  
C. Gamma-Liaison/Spooner

## THEME LEAFLETS BACK COVER

### JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN

Women are the invisible victims of the 1990s. Most of the casualties of war are women and children; most of the world's refugees and displaced people are women and children; most of the world's poor are women and children. Human rights violations against women are rampant partly because they remain largely hidden.

Every year, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), more than a million infant girls die because they are born female. Because of their gender women are at risk of a range of violent abuses by private organizations and individuals.

Women are in double jeopardy. Discriminated against as women, they are also as likely as men, if not more so, to become victims of human rights violations. Few countries treat women as well as men.

The past two decades have seen women's organizations spring up around the world. Some women work for their "disappeared" relatives; some are community activists, fighting for basic rights such as freedom from want; some are lawyers seeking justice for the unrepresented; some campaign against torture, some against domestic violence, some for equal treatment at work or for land rights and access to credit.

This wave of courage, creativity and commitment has all too often met a wall of government indifference and sometimes government repression of the cruellest kind. Few governments recognize the work of women's human rights organizations as a legitimate exercise of fundamental civil and political rights.

Amnesty International is a worldwide voluntary movement that works to prevent some of the gravest violations by governments of people's fundamental human rights. The main focus of our campaign is to: free all prisoners of conscience, people detained anywhere for their beliefs or because of their

ethnic origin, sex, colour or language, who have not used or advocated violence; ensure fair and prompt trials for political prisoners; abolish the death penalty, torture and other cruel treatment of prisoners; end extrajudicial executions and "disappearances".

In 1995 the main focus of Amnesty International's campaigning work will be on human rights violations against women. We are joining with countless women around the world to campaign for governments and armed political groups to uphold women's fundamental human rights.

**Text for box (text from 'In box on last page' at end of each leaflet goes here)**

**Final two lines (small print, italicized)**

For more information, contact Amnesty International in your country or write to: Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 8DJ, United Kingdom.