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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT 1996

Annual Report Summaries 1996

An overview of Amnesty International's Annual Report

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WORLDWIDE SUMMARY

Highlights of Amnesty International Report 1996 Covering events from January to December 1995

Governments worldwide continued to extrajudicially execute, “disappear”, torture and execute their citizens in massive numbers throughout 1995, while thousands of prisoners remained in detention after blatantly unfair trials, or without being charged with an offence at all. Amnesty International’s report documents these human rights violations in 146 countries.

Despite embracing the language of human rights, in reality governments showed little inclination to protect the rights of their citizens. In September 1995, leaders attending the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women agreed to protect women’s human rights, yet their security forces continued to violate women’s human rights with impunity.

These governments around the world continued to kill and torture by proxy, often setting up, training, arming and providing protection for paramilitary groups. Death squads carried out governments’ dirty work for them, and allowed those in power to deny responsibility for gross human rights violations.

Armed opposition groups were also responsible for widespread human rights abuses against civilians, often targeting children, women and the elderly. These groups were frequently armed by government allies around the world.

Amnesty International’s report highlights the trade in instruments of torture and how governments continue to permit the sale of weapons to countries well known as persistent violators of human rights.

“Responsibility for human rights abuses does not lie only with those who pull the trigger or apply the electric shock,” Amnesty International’s report said. “It also lies with those who supply the equipment and the training needed to use it.”

Amnesty International’s report calls on governments to cease trading in terror, by banning the sale of torture equipment or security equipment to any state where there is evidence that will be misused.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The following summaries provide an overview but do not detail all the human rights abuses in the Amnesty International report 1996. For full information, please refer to the report.

The following statistics on human rights violations abuses in 1995 are based on information from the Amnesty International report 1996. The statistics include the number of countries in which human rights abuses took place and, where possible, the number of known victims of those violations.

In many cases, the nature and interrelation of the human rights abuses makes it virtually impossible to determine the exact number of victims. These figures, therefore, should be seen as a conservative estimate of the victims.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS WORLDWIDE DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1996

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

- Thousands of extrajudicial executions or possible extrajudicial executions were reported in 63 countries including Bahrain, Burundi, Colombia, India, Russia and Rwanda.

“DISAPPEARANCES”

- The fate of more than 140,000 people in 49 countries who “disappeared” in recent years, including 1995, remains unknown. Many of those, in countries including Burundi and Rwanda, Colombia, Iraq, Sri Lanka and Turkey, may have subsequently been killed.

TORTURE OR ILL-TREATMENT

- At least 10,000 detainees were subjected to torture or ill-treatment, including rape, in 114 countries including the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Indonesia and East Timor, Iran, Mexico and Sudan.
- More than 4,500 people died as a result of torture in custody or inhuman prison conditions in 54 countries, including Egypt, Kenya, Myanmar and Turkey.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

- Prisoners of conscience or possible prisoners of conscience were held in 85 countries, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, China, Kenya, Peru and Tunisia.

UNFAIR TRIALS

- A reported 27 countries, including China, Colombia, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia imprisoned people after unfair trials.

DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL

- 43 countries, including Azerbaijan, India, Israel and the Occupied Territories and areas under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority, Paraguay and Rwanda held a total of more than 46,000 people without charging them with any crime.

DEATH PENALTY

- Some 2,900 people were known to have been executed in 41 countries including China, Kazakstan, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and the United States of America in 1995, although Amnesty International believes the real figure to be far higher.
- Amnesty International documented the cases of more than 3,700 people who were sentenced to death in 58 countries, including China, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine and the United States of America. The organization believes the true figure to be much higher
- A documented total of at least 5,500 prisoners remained under sentence of death in 31 countries, including Iran, Japan, Kenya, Russia and the United States of America.
- In 1995, four countries abolished the death penalty in whole or part - Mauritius, Moldova, Poland and South Africa - while four countries reintroduced the death penalty in whole or part - Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Guatemala and the USA (New York State).

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

- Armed opposition groups committed abuses including torture, hostage taking and deliberate and arbitrary killings in 41 countries, including Afghanistan, Algeria, Colombia, Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom.

AFRICA

Highlights of Amnesty International Report 1996 Covering events from January to December 1995

Ongoing human rights violations in Sub-Saharan Africa were the cause of refugee flows in at least eight African countries. Continuing conflicts added tens of thousands of new refugees and internally displaced persons to the millions of people who had fled from fighting in **Burundi**, **Rwanda**, **Liberia**, **Sierra Leone**, **Sudan** and **Somalia** in previous years. In 1995, the number of refugees and internally displaced reached more than eight and a half million people.

The unresolved tensions underlying the genocide in **Rwanda** of 1994 and the continuing massacres in **Burundi** and **Rwanda** exacerbated the ethnic tensions in Central Africa. Nearly two million Rwandese refugees, mostly Hutu, remained in exile in **Burundi**, **Tanzania**, and **Zaire**. The governments of **Tanzania** and **Zaire** expressed increasing impatience at the burden of hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees.

In mid-August the Zairian authorities threatened to forcibly deport more than one million Rwandese and tens of thousands of Burundi refugees. About 13,000 Rwandese and 2,000 Burundi refugees were forcibly returned, before international pressure halted repatriation. Earlier, in April, some refugees forcibly sent back to **Burundi** by the Tanzanian security forces had allegedly been killed by Burundi soldiers. The Burundi authorities forcibly repatriated at least 500 Rwandese refugees, including some who had already been expelled from **Tanzania**.

Civil wars or political tensions led to an increase in politically motivated killings, “disappearances” and other human rights abuses by armies and different armed groups. Widespread impunity and the fact that people responsible for extrajudicial executions were rarely brought to justice encouraged the continuing human rights violations.

The International Criminal Tribunal for **Rwanda**, established by the United Nations (UN) in 1994 to bring those responsible for genocide and other crimes against humanity to justice, made slow progress due to limited funding and the failure of states to enact legislation permitting cooperation with the tribunal. Amnesty International repeatedly called on foreign governments to provide more support for this tribunal and to assist in the reconstruction of **Rwanda**'s judicial system.

In **South Africa**, a commission to investigate “gross human rights abuses” committed between 1960 and 1993 was appointed and a report by a judicial commission of inquiry into **South Africa**'s arms trade recommended new criteria which would exclude sales to governments which repress human rights. In **Ethiopia**, the members of the former government charged with committing genocide and crimes against humanity was brought to trial. These trials were continuing at the end of April 1996.

Members of regular armies as well as armed opposition movements were responsible for deliberate and arbitrary killings which continued on a massive scale in several parts of Africa. There were reports of extrajudicial executions in Casamance, the southern region of **Senegal** where both government officers and armed separatists perpetrated deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians. In **Sudan**, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) soldiers killed scores of villagers in raids.

In **Burundi**, Tutsi armed groups sometimes assisted the security forces in their unlawful operations against civilians. Killings were also carried out by armed Hutu groups. In **Sierra Leone**, armed groups killed hundreds of civilians while the government soldiers summarily executed captured rebels. Victims were often mutilated and then beheaded.

In **Angola**, government opponents were killed in circumstances suggesting that they may have been victims of extrajudicial executions. The armed opposition *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (UNITA), National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, killed captured soldiers and civilians. It also reportedly ordered the execution of an unknown number of people for alleged killings.

The proliferation of armed groups in Africa and the complex nature of their relationship to state forces did not always allow for a clear distinction between armed opposition groups and governmental agents. In **Sierra Leone**, it was impossible in many cases to attribute responsibility for specific abuses: attackers almost always wore army uniforms but it was often unclear whether they were rebels or government soldiers acting under orders or committing crimes on their own account.

There were frequent reports of "disappearances" in **Burundi** and **Rwanda** and the fate of thousands of people who "disappeared" in previous years remained unknown in **Angola, Eritrea, Ethiopia** and **Sudan**.

In **Ethiopia**, more than 1,500 officials of the pre-1991 government continued to be detained without charge. Hundreds of opponents of the current government, including many suspected of supporting the armed opposition group, Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), arrested for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity, were detained without trial in different areas. Some appeared to be prisoners of conscience.

In **Sudan**, hundreds of people, many of them prisoners of conscience, were arrested, including members of banned political parties, trade unionists, lawyers, students, southern Sudanese and refugees. Most were detained without charge or trial for periods ranging from a few days to a few months. Following violent street protests about social conditions, the authorities arrested scores of political opponents. In **Nigeria**, suspected opponents of the government were detained during the year, including human rights activists, pro-democracy activists, journalists and members of the Ogoni ethnic group. Several prisoners of conscience arrested in previous years remained imprisoned. Other countries such as **Cameroon, Chad, Senegal** and **Zaire** also jailed scores of political prisoners, some of whom were prisoners of conscience.

There were two major unfair political trials in **Nigeria** during a year that witnessed unprecedented international criticism of the military government's human rights record. Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other members of the Ogoni ethnic group were convicted of murder and executed in November, following judicial proceedings which were manifestly unfair. More than 40 people, including prominent human rights defenders and a former head of state, were convicted of treason in unfair secret military trials for alleged involvement in a coup plot.

In **Kenya**, the trial of a human rights activist, Koigi wa Wamwere, and three others ended abruptly in July when both the defence counsel and the defendants themselves were denied the right to present their final submissions orally. Observers from Amnesty International attending this trial expressed serious concerns about the impartiality of the court. In October, Koigi wa Wamwere was sentenced with two others to four years imprisonment and six strokes of the cane.

In **Sudan**, floggings were imposed as a form of judicial punishment. Many of the victims were women convicted after unfair trials. In **Somalia**, Islamic courts inflicted cruel, inhuman and degrading punishments such as amputations and flogging. More than 20 people had limbs amputated. In **Kenya, Tanzania** and **Uganda**, courts continued to impose sentences of caning as punishment.

Cases of torture and ill-treatment were recorded in many African countries. In **Equatorial Guinea** torture of political detainees was widespread. Several of them said they had each been held naked, some for up to a month, inside a locked cupboard measuring 70 cm by 50cm. They were deprived of food and at night they were suspended from poles and beaten. In **Kenya**, the authorities had apparently avoided bringing some detainees to court to prevent evidence of torture coming to light. Others died apparently as a result of police torture. In **South Africa** cases of electric shock, suffocation and other forms of torture by members of police investigation units were documented. In **Chad**, four people died in custody as a result of torture. Reports of torture and ill-treatment of prisoners were also received from **Senegal**.

Conditions in prisons and detention centres in **Rwanda** were life-threatening. In the beginning of 1995, seven prisoners in Kigali Prison were reportedly dying every day. Gitarama Prison, which was built for 600 inmates, held 6,847 when Amnesty International delegates visited it in June. In **Kenya**, more than 819 prisoners died, mainly from infectious diseases resulting from overcrowding and frequent shortages of food, clean water and basic medication. In **Cameroon**, many prisons reportedly provided no medicines at all. Prison conditions and inhuman treatment led to at least 16 deaths in custody in **Guinea**.

In 1995, the constitutional Court in **South Africa** ruled that the death penalty violates the right to life and **Mauritius** passed a law abolishing the death penalty. However, more than 12 African countries sentenced people to death. In **Kenya**, more than 500 people were under this sentence. Executions took place in at least seven countries. In **Botswana**, the death penalty was applied for the first time in eight years. One execution took place in **Zimbabwe**, the first for seven years. **Gambia** reintroduced capital punishment and **Côte d'Ivoire** passed a new law extending its scope to different offences.

At least 95 people were executed in **Nigeria**. The writer and political activist, Ken

Saro-Wiwa, and eight other Ogoni were hastily executed 10 days after sentencing, on the eve of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting which was about to consider the human rights situation in **Nigeria**. There was widespread international outrage at the executions.

Women and children were particularly targeted in some 24 countries. In **Liberia**, within less than six months, 652 women were reportedly raped by members of warring factions. In **Sierra Leone**, women were raped, and were among the many who were mutilated or killed and beheaded by rebels. About 100 schoolchildren were among the hundreds of Sierra Leonean civilians abducted by rebels. Their fate remained unknown. In **Uganda**, armed opposition groups reportedly abducted at least 400 children. The fate of many of them was unknown at the end of the year. In **Sudan**, scores of children were abducted by government militia forces. Many were believed to be held in domestic slavery by their abductors.

In several African countries, moves towards peace led to hopes for an improvement in the human rights situation. In **Angola**, the overall level of violence was reduced owing to the peace agreement and people displaced by the war began returning to their homes. In **Mozambique**, the human rights situation was much improved over previous years following the country's first multi-party elections. In the beginning of 1996, elections were held and peace talks started in **Sierra Leone**.

During the year, an increasing number of non-governmental organizations worked to defend civil and political rights as well as social, economic and cultural rights.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN AFRICA DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1996

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

- Hundreds of people were victims of extrajudicial executions or possible extrajudicial executions by government security forces or their agents in at least 20 countries, including Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sudan and Zaire.

“DISAPPEARANCES”

- People “disappeared” or remained unaccounted for after disappearing in previous years in Angola, Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Senegal and Sudan.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

- Cases of torture and ill-treatment were reported in at least 29 countries in the region.
- Hundreds of people died apparently as a result of torture in custody or from inhuman or degrading prison conditions in 14 countries, including Chad, Guinea, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal and Sudan.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

- Prisoners of conscience and possible prisoners of conscience were held in 27 countries, including Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan and Zaire.

UNFAIR TRIALS

- Hundreds of cases of political prisoners being held after unfair trials were recorded in at least eight countries, including in Ethiopia, Nigeria and Sudan.

DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL

- Thousands of people remained in detention without charge or trial in at least 15 countries, including in Ethiopia, Guinea, Rwanda, Senegal and Sudan.

DEATH PENALTY

- Executions were carried out in at least seven countries including Botswana, Lesotho, Liberia, Nigeria, Sudan and Zimbabwe.

- Hundreds of people were on death row or were sentenced to death across Africa including in countries such Botswana, Guinea, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- The constitutional Court in **South Africa** ruled that the death penalty violates the right to life and **Mauritius** passed a law abolishing the death penalty.
- The death penalty was restored in Gambia and it was extended to other offences in Côte d'Ivoire.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

- Armed opposition groups committed serious human rights abuses, including torture, hostage taking or deliberate and arbitrary killings in more than 18 countries, including Angola, Burundi, Liberia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Uganda.

AMERICAS

Highlights of Amnesty International Report 1996 Covering events from January to December 1995

The gap between what most governments of the region say and what they do to change the human rights situation widened. While the language of human rights has been almost universally adopted by the institutions of the states, human rights violations are still taking place throughout the region.

Different patterns of impunity for perpetrators of human rights violations were present throughout Latin-America. In **Colombia**, almost total impunity continued to prevail in judicial investigations into extrajudicial executions, “disappearances”, and torture by the armed forces. In **Peru**, thousands of unresolved cases of human rights violations perpetrated by members of the security forces and government officials over the past 15 years were definitively closed by law. In **Mexico** and **Brazil** the climate of impunity in which the security forces operate puts virtually all the population at risk.

In **Chile**, military and civilian courts continued to close investigations into past human rights violations, even though a number of officers had their prison sentences confirmed, while legislation that would contribute to further closing of such cases was discussed. In **Argentina**, new revelations by members of the armed forces regarding the fate of people who “disappeared” during the period of military government (1976-1983) failed to prompt judicial investigations to establish the circumstances of thousands of “disappearances”.

In **Haiti**, although President Jean-Bertrand Aristide expressed his commitment to ending impunity, little was achieved in practice, largely because of slow progress in the much needed reform of the justice system. In **Honduras**, positive steps were taken to bring to justice those responsible for some past human rights violations. The first charges against security officers on human rights violations took place, and judicial proceedings were continuing at the end of the year. However, in other cases little or no progress was made.

Extrajudicial executions and “disappearances” took place during 1995 in at least 16 countries of the region. In **Colombia**, at least 1,000 people were extrajudicially executed; in **Brazil**, victims numbered in the hundreds. In **Guatemala**, more than 150 extrajudicial executions by members of the security forces and government-backed armed groups were reported. Many extrajudicial executions also took place in **Nicaragua** and **Venezuela**. In **Mexico**, 17 unarmed peasants were massacred by the judicial police in a single incident in Guerrero State.

In **Colombia**, more than 150 people “disappeared” after detention by the armed forces, the police or paramilitary groups. Paramilitary forces operating in rural areas were also responsible for numerous “disappearances” of political and community activists. In **Peru**, nine people were

reported to have “disappeared” in 1995 and the fate of at least 4,200 people who “disappeared” in previous years is still unknown.

Torture and ill-treatment were widespread in almost all countries of the region. In **Mexico**, extensive use of torture and ill-treatment by law enforcement agents continued to be reported, as in past years. Dozens of people were also tortured during and immediately after the operations in Chiapas State between 9 and 14 February, and as a result of police raids on suspected Zapatista National Liberation Army members in others parts of the country.

In **Peru**, complaints of torture by detainees suspected of “terrorism” continued to be received. In a single arrest in August in the Village of Chalhuayacu, 41 people were said to have been forced to sign a document in which they admitted to being “subversive”. In **Brazil**, evidence that torture was widespread and a common method of extracting information from criminal suspects was confirmed by the Chamber of Deputies Human Rights Commission. In **Venezuela**, widespread use of torture by the security forces was reported.

In the **United States of America (USA)**, there were deaths in police custody in disputed circumstances and widespread allegations of torture and ill-treatment by police and prison officers. Chain-gangs were introduced in prisons in several states. In **Jamaica**, scores of prisoners on death row were reportedly ill-treated and at least two prisoners died in custody.

Prison conditions continued to be appalling in some of the countries of the region including **Venezuela** and **Haiti** and poor in many others, including **Cuba**, the **Dominican Republic** and **Paraguay**.

The death penalty continued to be used extensively in the **USA**, where 56 prisoners were executed in 1995, the highest number recorded since executions resumed in 1977. Two states - Pennsylvania and Montana- carried out executions for the first time in more than 30 and 50 years respectively. In **Cuba**, two men were executed and at least three others were sentenced to death.

A worrying trend emerged in the Caribbean where several governments stepped up the use of the death penalty. **Saint Lucia** carried out the first execution in nearly nine years and **Saint Vincent** and **the Grenadines** carried out three executions in one day after four years without executions.

Chile is one of the few countries in Latin America to retain the death penalty. While no executions were carried out in 1995, five political prisoners continued to face possible death sentences after a military prosecutor called for the death penalty in their cases. In **Guatemala**, the Congress passed a law extending the death penalty to the master minders and perpetrators of kidnapping or abduction, the perpetrators and those attempting to cover up such crimes. However, the law was neither ratified nor vetoed by President Ramiro de León Carpio within the legally specified period, leaving its status unclear.

At least six countries in the region held prisoners of conscience in their jails. In **Cuba**, some 600 prisoners of conscience and several hundred other political prisoners arrested in previous years remained in prison.

In **Peru**, hundreds of prisoners of conscience and possible prisoners of conscience remained in prison at the end of the year. In addition, more than 5,000 people sentenced after unfair

trials in previous years also remained in prison. Prisoners of conscience and political prisoners were also held in **Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela.**

Human rights defenders were victims of persecution, intimidation and death threats in most of the countries of the region, including **Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Peru.** In **Mexico** and **Colombia**, dozens of human rights defenders, including journalists, were threatened with death for criticizing the human rights situation in the country. Some of them were directly attacked for their activities.

In **Cuba**, human rights monitors who transmitted unofficial reports to the foreign media and to others outside the country were the subjects of strong measures by the government. Independent human rights monitoring remained severely limited with lawyers, journalists and members of unofficial political and human rights groups being subjected to frequent short term detention and intimidation.

In **Guatemala**, journalists, members of human rights groups and members of the judiciary were intimidated, threatened and, in some cases, victims of extrajudicial executions. Women human rights defenders appeared to be particularly targeted in **Colombia** and **Mexico.**

In addition to human rights violations carried out by the governments, armed opposition groups committed abuses in **Colombia** and **Peru.** In **Colombia**, armed opposition groups committed numerous grave human rights abuses, including scores of deliberate and arbitrary killings. At least 400 people were held hostage, principally by the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC), Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia and the *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (ELN), National Liberation Army. Some were released while others were killed in captivity. In **Peru**, dozens of civilians were deliberately and arbitrarily killed by the *Partido Comunista del Perú (Sendero Luminoso)* (PCP), Communist Party of Peru (Shining Path).

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE AMERICAS DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1996

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

- Hundreds of people were victims of extrajudicial executions or possible extrajudicial executions by members of the security forces or their agents in at least 16 countries of the region, including Brazil, Colombia, and Guatemala.

“DISAPPEARANCES”

- “Disappearances” took place in at least six countries of the region, including Colombia and Guatemala.
- The fate of thousands of people who “disappeared” in previous years remains unknown with more than 4,200 of such cases in Peru, more than 1,500 in Colombia, and more than 300 in Mexico.

TORTURE OR ILL-TREATMENT

- Torture and ill-treatment, including rape, took place in at least 20 countries, including Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela.
- Cases of detainees who died apparently as a result of torture while in police custody were reported in Brazil, Ecuador, Jamaica, and the USA.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

- More than 1,000 prisoners of conscience or possible prisoners of conscience were held in seven countries. Peru and Cuba held at least 500 prisoners of conscience or possible prisoners of conscience each and Colombia at least 100.

UNFAIR TRIALS

- At least 300 people were imprisoned after unfair trials in Colombia, and at least one in Cuba.

DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL

- Detentions without charge or trial took place at least in two countries of the region: Panama and Paraguay.

DEATH PENALTY

- At least 62 executions were carried out in four countries of the region: Cuba (2), Saint Lucia (1), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (3), and the United States of America (56).
- More than 3,000 people were in death row in the USA. Seven other countries held prisoners under sentence of death, including Bahamas, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

- Hundreds of abuses by armed opposition groups took place in Colombia and Peru.
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ASIA/PACIFIC

Highlights of Amnesty International Report 1996 Covering events from January to December 1995

Behind the Asia/Pacific's image of economic dynamism, governments in the region were responsible in 1995 for torturing, extrajudicially executing, "disappearing" and executing their citizens, while thousands remained incarcerated after unfair trials. Women, children and the elderly were all victims, and the ease with which perpetrators of human rights violations were able to escape punishment contributed to the continuing climate of fear in many countries.

Torture and ill-treatment, often leading to deaths in custody, continued to be a major concern throughout the region, with thousands of victims including women, children and human rights defenders reported from **Afghanistan** to **Australia**.

As the civil war raged unabated in **Afghanistan**, hundreds of cases of torture including rape were reported. Victims were tortured solely because they belonged to a rival ethnic group, or to extract money from their families. In **China**, torture of political and criminal detainees remained widespread, often to force confessions or to intimidate and punish prisoners, with many victims tortured with electro-shock weapons.

In **India**, torture of detainees was endemic in every state, with many victims coming from underprivileged sections of society. Torture was also reported in **Bangladesh**, **Cambodia**, **Indonesia** and **East Timor** and the **Philippines**.

Many people died as a result of torture or ill-treatment in detention. In **Myanmar**, more than 1,300 prisoners died as a result of illness and ill-treatment when they were forced to work on road building projects. Many of these prisoners were made to labour long hours, breaking rocks while held in leg-irons and denied adequate food or sleep.

At least 100 people died in custody in **Mongolia**, some as a result of starvation. Others died from illnesses exacerbated by starvation, often as a result of the unrealistic legal requirement that prisoners must work for their food. In **Pakistan**, at least 70 people died in custody as a result of torture, deaths which the police often tried to disguise as suicides. Prisoners also died as a result of ill-treatment in detention in **Afghanistan**, **Bangladesh** and **India**.

Twenty-one aboriginal people died in custody or during police operations in **Australia** - the highest number since records started being kept in 1980 - and police reportedly continued to harass relatives who were unwilling to accept official explanations and called for further investigations.

Many people were sent to prison in the Asia/Pacific region after unfair trials. **China** continued to jail political prisoners after blatantly unfair trials - operating a verdict first, trial second policy. Verdicts were often based on confessions extracted under torture, and some defendants facing the death penalty were denied the right to legal representation or to be given advance notice

of their trial. In December, the prominent dissident Wei Jingsheng was sentenced to 14 years in prison after an unfair trial, despite international condemnation.

In **Indonesia** and **East Timor**, at least 20 prisoners of conscience were sentenced to prison terms after unfair trials and some 150 political prisoners continued to serve sentences of up to life imprisonment after unfair trials in previous years. In **Viet Nam**, members of religious groups were among those given prison sentences after unfair trials.

Amnesty International documented the cases of at least 5,000 prisoners of conscience or possible prisoners of conscience in 18 countries in the region, although the organization believes the real figure to be much higher. More than 2,200 of these are imprisoned in **China** and at least 1,000 in **Afghanistan**.

Sri Lanka held more than 300 prisoners of conscience, and hundreds of possible prisoners of conscience and political prisoners were held in the **Republic of Korea** (South Korea) and **Myanmar**. Citizens forcibly returned from other countries were among possible prisoners of conscience reported in the **People's Democratic Republic of Korea** (North Korea).

Prisoners of conscience were among thousands of people detained without charge or trial in the region. **China** continued to detain countless numbers of people without charging them with an offence or bringing them to trial. In some areas only 10 percent of those detained under the "shelter and investigation" administrative procedure had actually committed an offence.

Legislation allowing detention without charge or trial remained in force in **India**. Despite the lapsing of a terrorist prevention act which had been used to detain tens of thousands of people, many of those detained under its provisions remained in custody.

Region-wide governments continued to use the death penalty for a widening range of offences. **China** sentenced people to death in massive numbers, with a recorded 3,110 death sentences and 2,190 executions in 1995, although Amnesty International believes the real figure to be much higher. China executed more people than the known figures for the rest of the world put together, with the death penalty applicable for 68 crimes including re-selling value-added tax receipts, speculating and profiteering and causing damage to public property.

Singapore executed at least 50 people - the majority for non-violent drug-related offences. Despite the lack of official information, there were reliable indications that the real figures were much higher. In March, Flor Contemplacion, a Filipina domestic worker, was executed for murder despite international appeals for her sentence to be commuted.

The death penalty was also used in **Taiwan**, where at least 15 people were sentenced to death, some of them after unfair trials based on forced confessions. Executions also took place in **Japan**, **Malaysia**, the **Republic of Korea**, and **Viet Nam**.

As well as the high level of judicial executions, extrajudicial executions remained a major concern in the Asia/Pacific region. During the continuing violence in the **Indian** state of Jammu and Kashmir, scores of people were extrajudicially executed by security forces. Scores of arbitrary killings took place during the escalating violence in the **Pakistani** city of Karachi. Extrajudicial executions by police and security forces were also reported in **Indonesia** and **East Timor** and the **Philippines**.

Armed clashes between opposition activists and government supporters allegedly backed by security forces increased in **Bangladesh** throughout 1995. Several people were extrajudicially executed when security forces opened fire on a demonstration against police attempts to falsify evidence about police involvement in custodial rape. Local human rights groups investigating the killings claimed that one of the dead was a 10-year-old boy.

Deliberate and arbitrary killings, torture including rape and hostage taking were just some of the abuses committed by armed opposition groups against civilians throughout the Asia/Pacific region.

The international community continued to turn a blind eye to the human rights situation in **Afghanistan**, where armed opposition groups were responsible for human rights abuses on a massive scale. Women, children and the elderly were among more than 1,000 documented victims. Opposition groups were also responsible for cruel, inhuman and degrading punishments including amputations and stonings.

In **Sri Lanka**, armed opposition groups committed offences in the context of the resumed conflict between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and government forces. Many of those killed were Sinhalese civilians living in the northeast. In May, 42 villagers, including at least 12 women and six children, were deliberately shot dead by LTTE forces at Kallarawa, near Trincomalee. LTTE forces were also responsible for human rights abuses against Tamil civilians.

Ongoing violence between the government and armed opposition groups in the **Philippines** resulted in further abuses. The Muslim armed group, Abu Sayyaf, killed more than 50 people in an attack on Ipil town in April, and were also responsible for kidnapping civilians for ransom. Armed opposition groups were also responsible for human rights abuses in **Cambodia, India** and **Myanmar**.

There were some positive human rights developments in the region. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD), was released after nearly six years of house arrest in July in **Myanmar**. However, other leaders of the NLD remain in detention. Political prisoners and prisoners of conscience were released in the **Republic of Korea, Nepal** and the **Philippines**. The **Pakistan** government announced the establishment of a Ministry for Human Rights and in a rare move in **Malaysia**, the King granted clemency to a taxi driver sentenced to death.

The work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) throughout the region in 1995 continued to be vital in protecting human rights. Hundreds of NGO members came together for regional summits, participating in the parallel NGO form of the Asia/Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in Osaka, **Japan** in November.

In August, nearly 30,000 women and men gathered in Beijing, **China** for the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women. NGOs from almost every country in the world participated in the largest NGO Forum ever and welcomed the inclusion of human rights protection in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Amnesty International called on governments to ensure the commitments agreed in Beijing were followed up by concrete action.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ASIA/PACIFIC DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1996

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

- Hundreds of extrajudicial executions or possible extrajudicial executions were reported in 12 countries, including Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and East Timor, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

“DISAPPEARANCES”

- “Disappearances” were reported in four countries in 1995 - India, Indonesia and East Timor, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.
- The fate of at least 3,000 people who “disappeared” in the region in recent years remains unknown.

TORTURE OR ILL-TREATMENT

- Thousands of cases of torture or ill-treatment, including rape, were reported in 21 countries including Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia and East Timor, Pakistan and the Philippines.
- At least 1,700 people died as a result of torture in custody or inhuman prison conditions in 11 countries, including India, Mongolia, Myanmar and Pakistan.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

- At least 5,000 prisoners of conscience or possible prisoners of conscience were held in 18 countries. China held thousands and Afghanistan and India held more than 1,000 each. Other prisoners of conscience and political prisoners were held in Indonesia and East Timor, Myanmar, Nepal, the Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka.

UNFAIR TRIALS

- At least 96 people were imprisoned after unfair trials reported in three countries - China, Indonesia and East Timor and Vietnam.
- Throughout the region more than 3,000 people remained in jail after unfair trials in previous years.

DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL

- Nine countries held a total of more than 4,000 people. China detained people in massive numbers and India held more than 3,000, while hundreds were held in Sri Lanka. Detentions without trial were also recorded in Pakistan, Malaysia and Bangladesh.

DEATH PENALTY

- 13 countries passed at least 3,305 death sentences in 1995.
- More than 2,291 executions were carried out in 12 of these countries. China executed 2,190. More than 50 people were executed in Singapore. Executions were also recorded in Indonesia and East Timor, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan and Viet Nam.
- A documented total of at least 168 prisoners remained under sentence of death in four countries - India, Indonesia and East Timor, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

- Armed opposition groups committed abuses including torture, hostage taking and deliberate and arbitrary killings in six countries, including Afghanistan, Cambodia, India, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

EUROPE

Highlights of Amnesty International Report 1996 Covering events from January to December 1995

The armed conflicts in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Chechnya and Turkey continued to be the major source of massive human rights violations in Europe. Torture or ill-treatment by police and security forces were carried out in most of the countries of the region while the death penalty continued to be applied and executions carried out in most of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Albania and Lithuania.

In **Bosnia-Herzegovina** the fighting continued until a cease-fire agreement was reached in October. In November, an agreement providing for a comprehensive peace settlement and new constitutional arrangements was signed in Dayton, Ohio, by the presidents of Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia. Thousands of people were abducted by Bosnian Serb forces, many of whom were believed to have been deliberately and arbitrarily killed. Civilians were deliberately targeted by artillery, mortar or sniper fire, mainly by Bosnian Serb forces. Abuses against non-Serbs took place in Bosnian Serb controlled areas throughout the year, with people being beaten, threatened, raped or killed in the course of forcible expulsions from Bosnian Serb controlled territory. Hundreds of prisoners of conscience were held by the various parties to the conflict. Most were detained solely on account of their national group. Many detainees were reportedly tortured, ill-treated or made to perform forced labour in dangerous conditions.

In **Croatia**, many Serbs who remained in the Krajina region after the area was retaken by Croatian forces in August were tortured, ill-treated or forcibly expelled. Scores of people were extrajudicially executed by Croatian armed forces in the Krajina region and Croatian Serb civilians were deliberately targeted by Croatian forces. There were also reports of arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment in Croatian Serb controlled areas and rebel Serbian forces deliberately targeted civilians in a rocket attack.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia continued its work during 1995 and issued further indictments, bringing the total number of individuals indicted by the end of the year to 52.

In **Russia**, human rights violations by government forces in the context of the conflict in the self-proclaimed Chechen Republic continued to be reported, including possible indiscriminate killings of civilians, extrajudicial executions, torture and ill-treatment, and detention without trial. About 250 civilians, including women and children, were reportedly killed by the Russian Federal Army which was attempting to capture the town of Samashki in April. Several allegations of rape were made against Russian forces in the Chechen Republic. In June, forces loyal to Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev were reported to have killed at least 40 civilians and taken hundreds hostage in the town of Budennovsk. Despite a peace agreement signed by Russian and Chechen negotiators in July, peace had not been restored to the region by the end of the year.

In **Turkey**, state of emergency legislation remained in force throughout the year in 10 southeastern provinces where the conflict between government forces and armed members of the secessionist *Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan* (PKK), Kurdish Workers' Party, claimed 4,000 lives, including those of civilians, during the year. People known to oppose government policy towards the Kurdish minority were victims of political killings, some of which may have been extrajudicial executions. There were reports of "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions of villagers in the course of security raids. "Disappearances" continued throughout the country and no safeguards were implemented.

There were reports of torture or ill-treatment in most of the countries of the region, including **Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Spain, Switzerland,** and the **United Kingdom**.

In **Russia**, there were numerous allegations of torture and ill-treatment in detention, both in criminal cases and during the conflict in Chechnya. Prisoners awaiting trial were held in conditions which amounted to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, resulting in one instance in the death of 11 prisoners. Reports from the autonomous Republic of Mordovia indicated that torture and ill-treatment of criminal suspects under investigation were routine.

In **Turkey**, reports of torture by police and gendarmes were commonplace in many parts of the country, particularly in the major cities and the southeast. There were reports of more than 15 deaths in custody, apparently resulting from torture or ill-treatment. Amnesty International received an increased number of reports of children subjected to torture.

Fifteen countries of the region handed down death sentences and at least nine carried out executions, including **Kazakstan, Krygyzstan,** and **Russia**.

In **Russia** at least 16 people were reported to have been judicially executed and a further 34 who had their petitions for clemency turned down faced imminent execution by the end of the year. An estimated 500 to 600 prisoners were believed to be held on death row.

Ukraine officially committed itself to abolishing the death penalty and to introducing a moratorium on executions, although there were reports that death sentences continued to be imposed and executions carried out. At least 74 death sentences were passed in the first six months of the year and at least two executions were carried out.

In **Kazakhstan** 101 executions were carried out and in **Kyrgystan**, President Askar Akayev refused clemency petitions from 30 prisoners under sentence of death. Although only one execution was subsequently confirmed, it was believed that all 30 sentences were carried out in the following months.

On the positive side, **Spain** abolished the death penalty completely, while **Moldova** committed itself to introducing a moratorium on executions and to abolishing the death penalty within three years.

Prisoners of conscience were held in **Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Romania, Switzerland, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Yugoslavia.**

Conscientious objectors to military service were imprisoned in a number of European countries, including **France, Spain and Switzerland.** In **Greece**, about 350 conscientious objectors continued to serve prison sentences of up to four years. All were prisoners of conscience.

Armed opposition groups continued to commit abuses in **Spain, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.** In **Spain**, attacks by the armed Basque group *Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* (ETA), Basque Homeland and Liberty, on the security forces and civilians continued throughout the year. Fifteen people were killed and approximately 95 were injured. Armed groups also continued to kidnap people, usually businessmen, for ransom.

In **Turkey**, armed PKK members were responsible for at least 60 deliberate and arbitrary killings. Villagers armed and paid by the Turkish Government to fight the PKK and captured by the PKK during the course of attacks were frequently executed, in some cases together with their extended families. The Islamist organization Islamic Raiders of the Big East-Front, IBDA-C, reportedly claimed responsibility for a number of attacks in which civilians were killed and wounded.

The illegal organization Revolutionary People's Communist Party-Front, DHKP-C, was responsible for at least two killings.

In the **United Kingdom**, seven men were killed in Northern Ireland as "punishment"; six by Republican armed groups and one by Loyalists. Four others were wounded after shootings. Reports of "punishment" beatings increased.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EUROPE DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1996

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

- Hundreds of people were victims of extrajudicial executions or possible extrajudicial executions by members of the security forces in at least nine countries of the region, including Croatia, Russia and Turkey.

“DISAPPEARANCES”

- “Disappearances” took place in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Turkey and Uzbekistan.

TORTURE OR ILL-TREATMENT

- Torture or ill-treatment, sometimes including rape, took place in at least 29 countries of the region, including Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Germany, Greece, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Spain, Turkey and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
- Deaths in custody as a result of torture or ill-treatment were reported in at least 10 countries, including Russia and Turkey.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

- Hundreds of prisoners of conscience and possible prisoners of conscience were held in 16 countries, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, Greece and Turkmenistan.

UNFAIR TRIALS

- People were imprisoned after unfair trials in Georgia, Turkmenistan and Yugoslavia.

DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL

- Detentions without charge or trial took place in at least four countries: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Russia and the United Kingdom.

DEATH PENALTY

- At least 173 executions were carried out in nine countries of the region, including Belarus, Georgia, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Ukraine.

- Hundreds of people were on death row at the end of the year in eight countries, including Armenia, Bulgaria, Moldova and Russia.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

- Thousands of abuses by Bosnian Serb forces took place in Bosnia-Herzegovina.
- Abuses took also place in at least seven other countries of the region: Croatia, France, Georgia, Spain, Tajikistan, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Highlights of Amnesty International Report 1996 Covering events from January to December 1995

Armed internal conflicts and social and political unrest led to appalling human rights violations in the Middle East and North Africa. Political detention without charge or trial, unlawful executions, “disappearances”, torture and unfair trials were committed with almost total impunity and lack of investigation by governments and their agents.

Armed groups and militias suspected of operating with the acquiescence of the authorities were believed to be responsible for killings, torture and other cruel punishments. Armed opposition groups were an integral part of the Middle Eastern political landscape, committing an increasing number of grave human rights abuses without any accountability.

Political opponents, women, children, human rights activists, journalists, minorities or religious groups were the main targets for state oppression.

During 1995, positive steps were noted in some countries: the release of political detainees in **Israel** and **The Occupied Territories** and **Syria**, the closure of the desert detention camp in Ain M’Guel in **Algeria** and the abolition of the State Security Court and moves toward ratification of international human rights treaties in **Kuwait**. Nevertheless, these improvements remained limited, and positive steps in **Morocco**, such as release of prisoners of conscience and decrease in the use of torture, were not extended to the **Western Sahara**.

In response to the outbreak of widespread protests calling for the restoration of democratic rights, the authorities in **Bahrain** arrested thousands of people, including women and children. Those detained included prisoners of conscience. Reports of torture of detainees were widespread.

Under the **Palestinian Authority**, supporters of Islamist or leftist groups opposed to the peace agreement with **Israel**, journalists and human rights defenders have been detained, frequently without charge or trial.

Despite the recent releases of at least 1,500 political prisoners including prisoners of conscience in **Syria**, hundreds remained in detention, some of them years after the expiry of their sentences. Up to 80 Kurds were arrested during 1995 in connection with unauthorized political organizations and hundreds of Palestinians and Lebanese nationals arrested in previous years remained in detention. Most were held incommunicado and their whereabouts were unknown. In **Egypt**, 54 prominent members of the Muslim Brothers were tried and sentenced to up to five years’ imprisonment with hard labour by a military court. They are prisoners of conscience.

Detention was used in **Tunisia** to punish and silence political opponents and their relatives. Hundreds of prisoners of conscience, both male and female, were arrested and detained, including **Mohammed Mouadda**, leader of the legal opposition party, the *Mouvement des Democratres Socialistes (MDS)*, Movement of Democratic Socialists, who was arrested in October 1995. In March 1996, he was sentenced after an unfair trial to 12 years' imprisonment.

In **Egypt**, thousands of suspected members or sympathizers of banned Islamist groups were held in administrative detention without charge or trial during the year under emergency legislation. Dozens of lawyers arrested in previous years remained in detention. Hundreds of people were arrested after clashes between the security forces and armed Islamist groups in Benghazi and other towns in eastern **Libya**. Almost five years after the end of the Iraqi occupation of **Kuwait**, more than 160 political prisoners and prisoners of conscience remained held after unfair trials.

In **Israel** and the **Occupied Territories**, more than 200 Palestinians remained in administrative detention while Lebanese, some of whom were abducted in **Lebanon**, continued to be held in Israeli prisons under administrative detention orders. More than 200 detainees were held without charge or trial at the Kham detention centre in an area of **South Lebanon** controlled by **Israel** and the South Lebanon Army militia.

Thousands of people who “disappeared” in previous years remained unaccounted for. The cases of thousands of detainees who “disappeared” in **Iraq** and people abducted in **Lebanon** during the civil war remained unresolved. In **Morocco**, there was no further information on hundreds of people, mostly Sahrawis, who “disappeared” up to 20 years ago. In **Kuwait**, the fate of at least 70 detainees who “disappeared” after the withdrawal of Iraqi forces in 1991 remained unknown. In **Yemen**, the fate and whereabouts of people who “disappeared” in previous years remained unknown.

In **Algeria**, hundreds of people were known to have been extrajudicially executed by the security forces and government-backed militias. Many were reportedly killed in their homes in front of their families, when they posed no lethal threat. Such killings appeared to be used increasingly as an alternative to arrest. Some of the 49 Palestinians killed by **Israeli** forces died in circumstances suggesting extrajudicial executions or excessive use of lethal force.

In **Iran**, up to 10 demonstrators were reportedly shot dead in Islamshahr by members of the Revolutionary Guards during demonstrations in protest at price rises and inadequate water supplies. In **Yemen**, seven supporters of the ‘Aden football team were reportedly shot dead by the security forces in circumstances which suggest that they may have been extrajudicially executed.

In **Saudi Arabia**, the judicial punishments of amputation and flogging continued to be imposed for a wide range of offences. The majority of the victims of such cruel methods were foreign nationals. At least 11 people were sentenced to between 200 and 1,500 lashes each, Mohammad ‘Ali al-Sayyid, an Egyptian national, was sentenced to 4,000 lashes for burglary.

At least 27 people, including 15 women, were sentenced to flogging in the **United Arab Emirates**. The sentencing of Sarah Balabagan, a Filipino domestic worker, to 100 lashes and one year's imprisonment provoked an international public outcry. During a previous trial, she was sentenced to death for the murder of her employer, who she claimed had raped her.

At least 14 people were sentenced to amputation in April by a court in Sana'a **Yemen**. Five of them convicted of robbery were sentenced to cross amputation of the right hand and the left foot. In **Iran**, numerous cases of flogging and several of stoning to death were reported. A 16-year-old girl was reported to have been sentenced to life imprisonment and to have her eyes gouged out for the murder of members of her family. During the first six months of 1995, several hundred army deserters and defaulters in **Iraq** were reportedly subjected to ear amputation. Most were also said to have been branded with an "X" symbol of their foreheads.

Torture and ill-treatment continued to be widespread throughout the region. Torture of political prisoners was systematic in **Egypt** with commonly cited methods including the use of electric shocks, suspension by the ankles and burning with cigarettes. In **Tunisia**, detainees continued to be subjected to electric shocks on sensitive parts of the body and immersion of their heads in water mixed with chemicals and in **Lebanon** detainees were hanged by their wrists tied behind their backs. In **Jordan**, reports of torture such as beating, hanging from bars or sleep deprivation were received and in **Algeria** torture continued to be reported.

In **Israel** and **The Occupied Territories**, Palestinian detainees continued to be systematically tortured or ill-treated during interrogation by the General Security Service (GSS). Despite the death in custody of 'Abd al-Samad Harizat as a result of violent shaking, the ministerial committee which oversees the GSS allowed the shaking of detainees to continue and renewed, throughout the year, the extended use of secret guidelines effectively allowing torture.

In areas under the jurisdiction of the **Palestinian Authority**, four people died in custody in circumstances suggesting that torture may have contributed to their deaths. At least 26 detainees died in detention centres in **Egypt**. According to reports, torture and ill-treatment, combined with poor hygiene and overcrowded cells contributed to or caused most of the deaths.

There was a sharp increase in the number of executions in **Saudi Arabia**. At least 192 people, most of them foreign nationals, were executed during the year and scores of prisoners were reported to be on death row. In **Iran**, at least 47 people were executed, some in public. As in previous years, the number of executions was believed to be considerably higher than publicly reported.

Armed opposition groups committed grave human rights abuses in at least seven countries. In **Algeria**, hundreds of civilians were killed after being abducted or deliberately and arbitrarily killed in targeted attacks and bomb explosions reported to have been carried out by armed opposition groups defining themselves as "Islamic groups". More than 20 journalists were killed most of them reportedly by armed groups.

In areas of **Iraqi Kurdistan**, Kurdish opposition groups were responsible for serious human rights abuses as killing, mutilation and torture. In **Lebanon**, dozens of civilians were killed by armed political groups, often in reprisal for killings by opposing forces. In **Israel** and **The Occupied Territories**, suicide bombings carried out by armed opposition groups killed civilians as well as members of the armed forces.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1995

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

- Hundreds of people were victims of extrajudicial executions or possible extrajudicial executions by government security forces or their agents in at least six countries, including Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq including areas under Kurdish control, Israel and the Occupied Territories and the areas under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority, Jordan and Yemen.

“DISAPPEARANCES”

- The fate and whereabouts of thousands of people who “disappeared” remained unaccounted for in several countries, including Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Western Sahara, Syria and Yemen.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

- Cases of torture and ill-treatment were reported in at least 15 countries in the region.
- Cases of detainees who died apparently as a result of torture in custody or from inhuman or degrading prison conditions were reported in 15 countries, including Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Israel and the Occupied Territories and the areas under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority, Morocco and Tunisia.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

- Thousands of prisoners of conscience and possible prisoners of conscience remained in prison in 17 countries, including Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia.

UNFAIR TRIALS

- Hundreds of cases of political prisoners being held after unfair trials were recorded in Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq including areas under Kurdish control, Israel and the Occupied Territories and the areas under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Syria.

DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL

- Thousands of people remained in detention without charge or trial in 13 countries including Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Israel and the Occupied Territories and the areas under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority, Kuwait, Libya and Saudi Arabia.

DEATH PENALTY

- Executions were carried out in nine countries: at least six in Egypt, at least 47 in Iran, at least 12 in Jordan, three in Kuwait, one in Lebanon, at least six in Libya, at least 192 in Saudi Arabia, at least five in United Arab Emirates and at least 41 in Yemen.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

- Armed opposition groups committed serious human rights abuses, such as deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians, torture and hostage taking in seven countries including Algeria, Egypt, areas of Iraqi Kurdistan under Kurdish control, Israel and the Occupied Territories and the areas under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority, Lebanon and Yemen.