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PERU: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALLS FOR
IMPUNITY LAW FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
VIOLATORS TO BE ANNULLED

Amnesty International has condemned in the strongest terms a new law that grants total impunity to those responsible for human rights violations in Peru.

The human rights organization describes the new law as a measure destined to protect the perpetrators of thousands of human rights violations committed in the country during the past 15 years, and calls on President Alberto Fujimori to take the necessary measures to have the law immediately annulled.

Thousands of people have been victims of torture, "disappearances" and extra-judicial executions by the security forces since 1980. A law stipulating that investigations and judicial procedures linked to these crimes be closed -- and which renders ineffective those few sentences handed down to human rights violators -- is an affront to the victims and their relatives.

"This impunity law nurtures a vicious circle of violence in which human rights abuses go unpunished. Impunity, literally 'the exemption from punishment', is

the outright denial of the values of truth and justice, and leads to the occurrence of further violations," Amnesty International said.

The new law contradicts the principles stated in the Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions -- both adopted by the United Nations -- and which explicitly prohibit the granting of blanket immunity to those involved in human rights violations.

Amnesty International reiterates again its strongest condemnation of the atrocities perpetrated by the *Partido Comunista del Perú (Sendero Luminoso)*, Communist Party of Peru (Shining Path), and the *Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru, MRTA*, Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement. Those responsible for such crimes -- like those members of the security forces responsible for human rights violations -- must be brought to justice.

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