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# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 74/94

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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - TURKEY, USA/COLOMBIA

**PLEASE NOTE:** The enclosed item on USA/Colombia is being sent to international media for immediate release. This is the first time that we have called for all military aid to be suspended - although in some countries in the past we have called for specific kinds of weapons or other military aid to be suspended. The reason we are releasing this now is because the US Congress is reviewing its aid to Latin American and Caribbean countries tomorrow and AIUSA is lobbying on the issue. Because you do not have much background to work from, if you feel you can't handle media interviews please refer them to Christine Haenn at AIUSA, Tel: +1 202 544 0200, or to the IS press office. Paula, Tel: +44 71 413 5564.

**PLEASE NOTE:** As events outstripped our information here at the IS, we have waited until we could draw up a thoughtful response to the on-going crisis in Rwanda. We are also aware of the need to synchronize our response to the Rwanda crisis with our longer-term strategy on Burundi. Plans for a "Burundi Week" to be launched on 17 May have not been affected by events in Rwanda. However, we are considering ways to ensure that both countries are given adequate media attention in May (during Burundi week and beyond), so that one does not overshadow the other.

NEWS INITIATIVES - INTERNAL

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Hong Kong - 0600 hrs gmt, 21 April - SEE NEWS SERVICES 71/94 AND 36/94

Trade Unionists - 29 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 62

Saudi Arabia - 10 May - SEE NEWS SERVICE 62

Burundi - 16 May - SEE NEWS SERVICES 53/94 and 36/94

\*\*China - 2 June\*\* - More details to follow

## TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

Switzerland CAT - 19 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 53/94

Israel & OT CAT - 25 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 53/94

## FORTHCOMING NEWS INITIATIVES

Annual Report - 7 July - SEE NEWS SERVICE 51/94

**News Service 74/94**

**AI INDEX: EUR 44/WU 11/94  
13 APRIL 1994**

**TURKEY: MORE VICTIMS IN A GROWING TREND OF "DISAPPEARANCES"**

At least 26 people "disappeared" in Turkey in 1993 and many more cases have been reported since the beginning of 1994. Most recently, on 9 April the bodies of two more victims of this ominous trend were discovered.

Necati Ayd\_n and Mehmet Ay had "disappeared" after being detained on 18 March by the Anti-Terror Branch of Diyarbak\_r Police. They were last seen alive in the State Security Court in Diyarbak\_r on 4 April when they were brought before the prosecutor there. Lawyers reported that they had seen the two detainees in court.

On 5 April, a judge in the State Security Court in Diyarbakir ordered their release that day, despite a prosecutor's demand that they remain in custody. Their relatives waited outside the court building until late that evening but the two men never appeared. Four days later, Necati Aydin and Mehmet Ay were found dead.

"The police are clearly implicated in these killings," Amnesty International said. "In the circumstances, we consider the Turkish authorities have no option but to carry out a full and impartial investigation".

Three bodies, buried side by side about one metre deep, were found on 9 April by villagers working in a field near the village of Ka\_\_ti\_. The victims had been killed by a bullet in the head. They were clothed and had been recently buried. A ring was found in the pocket of one of the dead which carried the name of Necati Ayd\_n's wife. Relatives later identified the corpses as Necati Ayd\_n, a former President of the Diyarbakir branch of a health workers' union, and Mehmet Ay. The identity of the third body has not been established.

On 5 April the families applied to the prosecutor for information as to the whereabouts of their relatives. He told them that Necati Aydin and Mehmet Ay had been released and denied that they had been rearrested. The Emergency Region Governor and other authorities likewise denied that the two men had been rearrested.

Amnesty International is calling for immediate steps to be taken to find those responsible for this triple murder and to bring them to justice. The human rights organization urges the authorities to establish the identity of the third victim as soon as possible and that the results of investigations into the deaths be made public.

"Urgent measures must be taken to stem the alarming increase in 'disappearances' and extrajudicial executions in Turkey," Amnesty International said.

Another victim of a "disappearance" was Mehmet \_en. On 30 March, his body was found near Karpuzkaya village in the province of Gaziantep. He had been taken away from his coffee house in the town of Nizip by unidentified men who reportedly had introduced themselves as police officers. Mehmet \_en, aged 35, was a member of the pro-Kurdish Democracy Party, of which more than 60 officials and members have been killed in the last two years.

In southeast Turkey, where a state of emergency is in force, police and gendarmerie have the right to hold people incommunicado for a month if they are suspected of having committed a political offence. The detainee does not have the right to see a lawyer, family, friends or a doctor.

**Procedures laid down in the Turkish Criminal Procedure Code for the prompt and proper registration of detainees, and for notification of their families, are almost universally ignored in the southeastern provinces, and increasingly disregarded in the cities in the rest of Turkey. Lack of proper registration and notification is not only extremely distressing for families, but it also creates conditions in which "disappearances" can occur.**

**Amnesty International fears that the practice of "disappearance", like that of extrajudicial execution, is becoming established as a tool of intimidation in Turkey.**

**ENDS/**

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**AI INDEX: AMR 51/WU 05/94  
13 APRIL 1994**

**USA: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALLS FOR UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO SUSPEND MILITARY AID TO COLOMBIA**

**Amnesty International today calls on the US Government to immediately suspend all military assistance to Colombia until it has been ensured that future aid does not contribute to human rights violations in Colombia.**

**This is the first time that Amnesty International has made such a call in its more than 30-year history. The organization is gravely concerned by evidence -- not least of which comes from the US General Accounting Office (GAO) -- that US military assistance has directly contributed to the killing of unarmed civilians and other serious human rights violations by the Colombian military.**

**Since August 1989 when the US President approved the Andean Drug Strategy, Colombia has received more military assistance from the USA than any other country in the Western Hemisphere. Although the bulk of this aid has been sent under the aegis of counternarcotics initiatives, Colombian military officials have admitted that much of the aid has been diverted to counterinsurgency activities.**

**Over 20,000 people have been killed for political reasons in Colombia since 1986 -- the majority of them by the armed forces and their paramilitary auxiliaries during counterinsurgency operations. Indeed, Colombian counterinsurgency operations are synonymous with the systematic violation of human rights.**

**In August 1993, the US GAO reported that US military officials have not fully implemented end-use monitoring procedures to ensure that Colombia's armed forces are using US aid primarily for counternarcotics purposes. Furthermore, it has evidence that US aid has been given to Colombian military units responsible for human rights violations -- evidence that has been acknowledged by some US politicians.**

**Successive Colombian Governments have hidden behind the myth that drug-trafficking is at the root of the massive-scale political violence in Colombia. Amnesty International recognizes the seriousness of drugs trafficking related violence in Colombia as well as the threat that the narcotics trade poses to the international community and the need to eradicate it. But, the truth is that the aid is not serving that purpose and is instrumental in serious human rights violations. The vast majority of the victims are civilian peasant farmers killed during army counterinsurgency operations.**

**The US Government has persistently failed to question the end-use of the military aid it provides, which has contributed to the deadly spiral of human rights violations in Colombia.**

**Amnesty International calls on the US Government to suspend all military aid until it has adequately answered the following questions:**

- To what extent has there been a diversion of US funds designated for counternarcotics programs to counterinsurgency?**
- Which units of the Colombian armed forces currently receive US security assistance?**
- To what extent has the US Government funded Colombian units that have been implicated in human rights violations?**
- What steps has the US Government taken to ensure its aid does not end up with Colombian units implicated in human rights violations?**
- What investigative and/or corrective measures have been taken to address the findings of the August 1993 GAO report on counternarcotics aid to Colombia?**

**With the presidential elections in Colombia next month offering an opportunity for change, Amnesty International believes that the time is right for the US Government to review how their military aid is used and to reconsider their strategy regarding Colombia.**

**The human rights organization last month launched an international campaign against political killings and "disappearances" in Colombia, calling for governments worldwide to stop ignoring the appalling human rights record of Colombia. "Failure to act legitimizes continued bloodshed," said Amnesty International.**

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