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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - RWANDA WAR CRIMES TRIBUNAL

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India - 27 November

News item to go with report, "India: The Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act: The lack of 'scrupulous care'", AI Index: ASA 20/39/94. The IS press office will only be sending the news item and report to correspondents in India. The report will not be sent out in a Weekly Mailing until 23 November - so please call Sarah Thomas (India Research Team) on +44 71 413 5651 if you need a copy before the embargo.

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9 NOVEMBER 1994

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL WELCOMES UN DECISION TO ESTABLISH AD HOC TRIBUNAL FOR RWANDA

Amnesty International welcomes yesterday's decision by the United Nations Security Council to establish an ad hoc tribunal for Rwanda responsible for bringing to justice perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and violations of humanitarian law applicable to internal armed conflict, committed in 1994.

"If the new tribunal is to do its job effectively the international community needs to provide it with sufficient human and material resources and cooperate with the tribunal, including by the surrender or transfer of the suspects to the new tribunal", Amnesty International said.

The human rights organization is urging the prosecutor for the new Rwanda tribunal, who is also the prosecutor for the ad hoc tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, to appoint a qualified deputy prosecutor for Rwanda as soon as possible. This is essential if those responsible for grave human rights violations are to be brought to justice without undue delay.

However, it is vital that the international community provide massive assistance to Rwanda so that it can re-establish a judicial system which is capable of bringing to justice those responsible for such grave human rights violations, in national tribunals which satisfy international standards for fair trial. Such courts should also try those responsible for thousands of political killings before 1994.

The statute and proposed rules of procedure for the new tribunal contain a number of important guarantees relating to the right to fair trial that need to be effectively implemented in order to guarantee due respect for the rights of defendants. Amnesty International welcomed the fact that the statute does not allow for the death penalty.

However, the establishment of yet another ad hoc tribunal by the Security Council demonstrates the urgent need to establish a permanent international criminal court which could bring to justice those responsible for such horrific crimes when they are committed anywhere in the world.

Despite this, over the last two weeks at the General Assembly governments have sought to delay proper consideration and adoption of the draft statute for this permanent international criminal court. Amnesty International is urging governments to adopt a treaty establishing a permanent international criminal court no later than 24 October 1996, the end of the 50th Anniversary Year of the United Nations. ENDS\

NOTE TO EDITOR This month Amnesty International published its report on "Establishing a just, fair and effective international criminal court", AI Index IOR 40/05/94