

URGENT ACTION

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 144/89 (ASA 17/20/89, 24 May) and follow—ups (ASA 17/22/89, 26 May and ASA 17/23/89, 1 June) — Fear of Mass Arrests

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: Mass killings of unarmed protesters by troops in Beijing

Amnesty International has condemned the deliberate killings of unarmed protesters and residents by troops in Beijing as a gross violation of human rights. On 4 June it appealed to the Chinese government to take all possible measures to prevent any further killings and to issue immediate instructions to all troops and security forces not to resort to the use of lethal force against peaceful protesters. The organization is requesting governments throughout the world to call on the Chinese authorities to prevent further killings and is itself continuing to urge the Chinese authorities to halt the killings. It is appealing to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on summary and arbitrary executions to intervene urgently to prevent further loss of life.

Thousands of men, women and even children are reported to have been killed since heavily-armed troops, escorted by convoys of tanks and armoured vehicles, stormed into the centre of Beijing at 2am on 4 June. Many of the victims were killed or injured when troops fired indiscriminately and repeatedly into crowds; others appear to have been individually targeted. In Tiananmen Square, tanks drove over some of the tents erected by students there, killing the people inside them. Eye-witnesses reported seeing troops gunning down unarmed students who had formed a line linking arms to prevent the troops' advance, and shooting again at a second line which replaced the first one. Civilians on bicycles were crushed by tanks. Residents who rushed into the streets to try and stop the troops when the assault started were beaten and shot. Several foreign journalists were severely beaten by riot police and soldiers. According to all accounts, most protesters and residents were unarmed and helpless when fired upon. Some in the crowds, however, attempted to fight back, throwing petrol bombs at some military vehicles which were set on fire, and attacking soldiers.

Bodies of the dead in Tiananmen Square are alleged to have been burnt and relatives prevented from claiming the victims' bodies. There were still reports of indiscriminate shooting at buildings and protesters by army vehicles and troops patrolling the streets on 5 June. Troops were also reported to have started moving towards some of Beijing's university campuses.

Huge demonstrations are reported to have occurred in other major cities in protest against the shootings in Beijing. It was reported on 5 June that troops had killed 350 students during one such protest in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province in southern central China.

Amnesty International is also concerned that large—scale arbitrary arrests may be carried out and that those detained, particularly those suspected of active participation in the recent demonstrations, face the risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/airmail letters:

N.B. Please remember that it is important for governments carrying out human rights violations to be made aware of the revulsion such actions cause to ordinary men and women in every part of the globe.

— expressing grave concern at the deliberate killing of thousands of protesters and residents by troops;

— urging the government to halt the killings, and to give immediate instructions to all troops and security forces not to resort to the use of lethal force against peaceful protesters and residents;

— urging the authorities to issue immediate instructions to all those empowered to carry out arrests or interrogate detainees to treat detainees humanely and not to subject them to torture or ill-treatment.

APPEALS TO:

DENG Xiaoping Zhuxi (Chairman Deng Xiaoping)
Zhonggong Zhongyang Junshi Weiyuanhui (Chairman of the Central Military Commission)
Beijingshi
People's Republic of China

Telegrams: Deng Xiaoping Zhuxi, Beijingshi, China
Telexes: 22478 MFERT CN (Please forward to Chairman Deng Xiaoping)

Li Peng Zongli (Prime Minister LI Peng)
Guowuyuan
Beijingshi
People's Republic of China

Telegrams: Li Peng Zongli, Beijingshi, China
Telexes: 22478 MFERT CN (Please forward to the Prime Minister)

Yang Shangkun Guojia Zhuxi (President YANG Shangkun)
Beijingshi
People's Republic of China

Telegrams: Yang Shangkun Guojia Zhuxi, Beijingshi, China
Telexes: 22478 MFERT CN (Please forward to the President)

COPIES TO:

Diplomatic representatives of the People's Republic of China and to the office of the New China News Agency (Xinhua) in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 15 June 1989.