#### JOIN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S CAMPAIGN

More than 52% of the world's 13.5 million refugees are under the age of 18. If we fail to protect and adequately, we are failing a large proportion of the world's refugees. Failing to provide for the needs of irreversible harm to them in their childhood, adolescence and even in their adulthood, so the individual as well as communities) can be serious.

Refugee and internally displaced children have fled their homes because they felt their lives and place they end up in may not be much safer, especially if they are unaccompanied. Children in vulnerable; they may lack adequate food and medical supplies, or they may be at risk of exploitation forced recruitment to armed forces. Even if they manage to reach a "safe" country, they may be detained - sometimes in prison-like conditions, denied a fair asylum procedure, or access to welfare, social security and education.

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INTERN ATIONA L PE

# WH Don't AT Play

Urge the government to ensure that no refuge schildren are detailed in containing a price of miters are it all tandards. In particular urge the government to resort to detention only when it is in a best interest of the clock, is stated in the Covertion of the Rights of the Child

Urge the government to allow periodical reviews of continued detention of children seeking refugee protection, in conformity with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. assist children and adolescents young refugees can cause implications for the future (for the

security were threatened. But the camps may be particularly - including sexual violence and

- Help raise awareness about refugees and the specific needs of child refugees. Inform people of the human rights violations which cause children to flee their homes.
- Urge your government to act. Find out if it has ratified, and is honouring, the international treaties protecting child refugees.
- Show solidarity with refugees. Support refugee children who are at risk of being forcibly returned.

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#### **DETENTION OF REFUGEE CHILDREN IN AUSTRALIA**

Under Australian law refugee children and their parents who arrive in the country without proper documents must be kept in detention until their status has been determined and a possible claim for asylum assessed. Those who apply for asylum immediately upon arrival at the airport may also face detention. In its present form, the law does not allow a review of detention on the individual circumstances of a detained child or adult, and continued detention -- after an initial period of determining a person's identity and visa application -- cannot be challenged in court. Of the 2.854 "boat people" who arrived between 1989 and June 1997. 763 children and 75 babies born in detention centres spent up to four years behind barbed wire fences, in clear violation of international standards. Responding to a refugee's complaint, the UN-based Human Rights Committee in April 1997 expressed the view that Australia violated provisions on arbitrary detention and the right to have continued detention reviewed in court, as enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Australia is a party. On 22 May 1997, 51 children were reportedly being held in various detention centres. The main immigration detention and processing centre is in Port Hedland, some 1,300 kilometres from the nearest city, Perth, and about 4,000 kilometres from Sydney or Melbourne where most assistance organizations for refugees are based.

Dushi arrived alone in Sydney in early 1997 without valid travel documents. He was immediately detained under Australian immigration law and held in the maximum security section of an immigration detention centre. This meant he was kept in enclosed, prison—like conditions, and Dushi was often heard crying at night. The authorities claimed that they could take better care of his welfare if he was kept in the maximum security section of the detention centre. After he was interviewed the authorities started discussing which government department would be responsible for his guardianship if he were allowed to stay in Australia permanently. Dushi continued to be kept in maximum security conditions while appropriate guardianship arrangements were negotiated. He was not granted refugee status until almost three months after his arrival.

Although children may be released at the government's discretion, conditions for release are such that hardly any child is eligible. In addition, there are no provisions for a parent to be released to take care of a child, even if the child meets all the conditions required. Among all "boat people" detained since 1989 only one per cent (or 30 individuals) have so far been released under these special provisions, most of them adults. Once released, these people are not eligible for income support or social security assistance.

Despite recent reductions in the average length of the asylum determination process -- and hence the length of time asylum-seekers spend in detention -- those who appeal against an initial rejection are effectively penalized by prolonged detention and limited contact with the outside world. While some provisions are made for schooling of children, such detention can have a significant impact on a child because it can last for years.

The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Australia ratified in 1990, states that the imprisonment of a child should be in conformity with the law and should only be used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest period of time. It guarantees the basic rights of all children, without discrimination, ensuring that they live in freedom, dignity and security. It also obliges states to take special care in dealing with the cases of refugee children. The Australian government is clearly not living up to its obligations regarding refugee children.

The Hon. Philip Ruddock Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600 Australia

and to Australian diplomatic missions in your country.

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INTERN ATIONA L PE

# WH Don't AT Play WH AT Play With my Future

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- Express concern at reports of grave human rights violations against refugee children. Remind them that they have an obligation to uphold the standards set in the UN Refugee Convention and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, both ratified by the former government of Zaire.
- Urge them to show commitment to human rights by identifying and punishing the perpetrators of these violations.
- Seek assurances that refugee children in the Democratic Republic of Congo will be protected from further violations, and will not be forcibly returned to their home country.

assist children and adolescents young refugees can cause implications for the future (for the

security were threatened. But the camps may be particularly - including sexual violence and detained - sometimes in prison-like

the release of prisoners of

- H. p raise awareness about refugees and the specific needs of child refugees. Inform people of the human rights violations which cause children to flee their homes.
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### DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO - MASS KILLING OF REFUGEES

Some of the worst human rights abuses which cause children to flee their homes and seek refuge occur in situations of armed and Burundi over the past few years have caused millions to flee these countries. Many fled to the Democratic Republic of find safety, and instead became caught up in the civil conflict between the Zairian Armed Forces, supporting ex-President Mobutu, the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL), supporting the new President Kabila, and who are now part of the national army.

Children are not excluded from gross human rights violations committed against refugees, and are sometimes even targetted. been killed since October 1996, when civil war broke out in the eastern part of the country. Cases of "disappearance", torture, have also been reported. The main targets for these abuses are members of the Hutu ethnic group, in particular Rwandese Congolese nationals. It is estimated that over 50% of the refugees are children. The AFDL are responsible for many of the gross

The AFDL also obstruct access of humanitarian aid workers to refugee camps - leaving the refugees even more vulnerable to Children and the elderly are often the most vulnerable. In Biaro and Kasese camps, south of Kisangani, access in April 1997 was thousands of people were severely malnourished and very ill, with as many as 70 dying each day. The AFDL persistently claimed interest of humanitarian workers' security. However, many humanitarian organizations expressed fears that the denial of access discovering massacre sites.

Reasons for the obstruction became apparent in late April when as many as 40,000 Rwandese refugees "disappeared" as a result of of refugees "disappeared" from Kasese and Biaro camps after about 80,000 refugees were reportedly attacked by AFDL combatants such as machetes. On 21 April, the day before the attack began, humanitarian workers were refused access to the camps. By When some 40,000 refugees were found in nearby forests by humanitarian workers in subsequent days, some of them bore bullet refugees claimed that boys and men among them had been selected and taken away by the AFDL, and gunshots were heard reportedly buried several hundred refugees in mass graves in and around the camps.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child gives all children, without discrimination, the right to live in freedom, dignity and security. with the cases of refugee children. Zaire ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990. Zaire also ratified the 1951 1965, and its 1967 Protocol in 1975. These safeguard the fundamental rights of all refugees, including children. Under Democratic Republic of Congo is bound by these obligations to safeguard the rights of refugee children in its territory.

Mass graves have been reported in various places, including at Mpwe, Katchungu, Langue-Langue and Shabunda. As many as 200 Rwandese refugees were reportedly killed on 13 May 1997 by members of the AFDL in and around Mbandaka, in the Equateur region. Witnesses said a further 140 refugees were killed by the AFDL at nearby Wenji. AFDL soldiers reportedly held children by the legs and smashed their heads against the ground or trees.

On 29 May, four Rwandese refugees, including a child, and a Congolese Save the Children Fund worker were shot dead when members of the AFDL at Karuba opened fire on them. Karuba was a major collection point for Rwandese refugees seeking to return to Rwanda. Rape by members of the AFDL has also been reported, although individual testimonies are rare, due to the social stigma attached to the victims.

conflict. The atrocities committed in Rwanda Congo (former Zaire). However, they did not and the Tutsi-led Alliance of Democratic Forces for

Sources estimate that thousands of civilians have rape, arbitrary arrests and unlawful detentions refugees, but also Burundian refugees and abuses against refugee children.

shortages of food and medical attention. restricted to two hours a day, even though that access to camps was being denied in the was to prevent them from witnessing massacres or

operations or obstructions by the AFDL. The group and local Zairian civilians armed with weapons 23 April, the Biaro camp was entirely deserted. and machete wounds. Some of the women moments later. AFDL soldiers and local civilians

It obliges states to take special care in dealing Convention relating to the Status of Refugees in international law, the new government of the

Son Excellence
Laurent-Désiré KABILA
Président de la République
Présidence de la République
Kinshasa-NgaliemaRépublique
Démocratique du Congo Address:
Monsieur le Président de la République

M. Bizima KARAHA
Ministre des Affaires étrangères
Ministère des Affaires étrangères
BP 7100
Kinshasa-Gombe
République Démocratique du Congo
Address: Monsieur le Ministre

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# WEDon't disputed circumstances of the killing of Todor

Bogdanovi and, if justified, the prosecution of the officer.

- Urge them to ensure that the forthcoming Asylum Bill will fully conform to France's obligations under the various international and regional human rights and refugee standards. Police patrolling borders must be made aware of these procedures.
- Urge them to implement the recommendations of the UN Human Rights Committee of July 1997, in order to fulfill their obligations under the ICCPR.

adolescents children and refugees can cause irreversible future (for the individual as well as

security were threatened. But the place may be particularly vulnerable; they may violence and forced recruitment to armed prison-like conditions, denied a fair

- Help raise awareness about refugees and the specific needs of child refugees. Inform people of the human rights violations which cause children to flee their homes.
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FRANCE: Todor Bogdanovi\_

#### FRANCE: EIGHT-YEAR-OLD CHILD REFUGEE SHOT AND KILLED BY

In July 1997 the United Nations based Human Rights Committee considered the third periodic concluding observations, the Committee expressed concern that the treatment of asylum comply in all aspects with the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political meeting of the Committee, experts on the Committee raised the case of Todor Bogdanovi\_, an was shot dead by border police. The police were members of the *Direction centrale du la lutte contre l'emploi des clandestins* (DICCILEC), which had recently replaced the *Police de* The new department was formed by the former government in a climate of growing tension in and illegal immigration.

Rados Bogdanovi\_ quoted by Agence-France Presse war. We crossed Albania and then Italy to escape a desperate situation. We were afraid the whole time."

#### **BORDER POLICE**

report of France. In its seekers does not appear to Rights (ICCPR). During the eight-year-old Roma boy who contrôle de l'immigration et de l'air et des frontières (PAF). France with regard to terrorism

On 20 August 1995 at about 3.30am a convoy of four cars and two trailers approached two border police officers on a small, remote mountain road in southern France, near the Italian frontier, leading to the village of Sospel. The convoy contained 43 Roma from Novi Pazar in the Muslim region of Sandjak, Serbia, a village close to the Bosnian border. The Roma were refugees, having left Serbia with the intention of seeking asylum in France or Germany. In January 1995 the UN High Commissioner for Refugees had drafted a special note expressing concern at the deteriorating human rights situation in Sandjak and stating that "the UNHCR continues to believe that the eligibility of these asylum-seekers originating from...Sandjak must be evaluated on a case by case basis, while insisting on the imperative necessity of a very attentive examination of individual applications during the course of a complete and equitable procedure."

The two border police officers claimed that as the convoy approached they attempted to stop it. They maintained they were in uniform and had set up a road block with a warning light. When the first two cars failed to stop, an officer fired three shots, one at the first car with a rubber bullet and two at the second car with metal bullets. The bullets fired at the second car, driven by Todor Bogdanovi 's father, hit the rear window at very close range. Todor, who had been sleeping on the rear window shelf of the second car, was killed.

Contrary to the police officer's statements, the Bogdanovi\_ brothers, who were driving the first two cars in the convoy, said they saw no warning light and no uniforms, but only 'shadows', which they thought were bandits. The officer claimed to be acting in legitimate self-defence. An internal police inquiry was immediately opened, but did not establish that the officer had acted in self-defence and said that the two shots fired at the second car had been 'untimely'. However, in December 1996 the judge conducting the investigation into the death ruled that there were no grounds for prosecution (non-lieu), and that the officer could legitimately have believed that his life was in danger. This ruling not only contradicted the findings of the initial police inquiry but also the police rules regarding use of firearms and the Penal Code provisions on the limits of legitimate self-defence.

Both the police rules and the Penal Code on legitimate self-defence allow the use of firearms against an oncoming car where the officer's life is in danger, but once the car has passed him any use is forbidden and open to prosecution.

The members of the convoy applied at once for asylum. The immediate family of Todor Bogdanovi\_ were given permission to remain in France until mid-December 1995, but on 21 August, just a day after the killing, the Prefect of the Alpes-Maritimes issued orders expelling all the other Roma across the border before their requests for asylum could be fully examined. The administrative tribunal of Nice confirmed the orders. Among those expelled was at least one key eye-witness to the killing, who had not been interviewed by the judge. On 2 June 1997 France's highest legal body, the Council of State, quashed the expulsion orders as illegal. It ruled that in expelling the Roma the Prefect had exceeded their powers. It is not clear what has happened to all the convoy members since their expulsion from France, but some relatives of the dead child's family returned recently to France in the hope of being able to attend an appeal hearing against the *non-lieu*.

Please send your appeals using the recommendations on the following page to:

Experts on the UN based Human Rights Committee expressed concern in the oral sessions at the treatment and expulsion of refugees as well as at what appeared in this case to be an arbitrary and reckless use of firearms. The Committee was also seriously concerned by allegations of ill-treatment by law enforcement officials, including unnecessary use of firearms leading to death, and pointed out that the risk of such ill-treatment was much greater in the case of foreigners and immigrants. In addition, the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees forbids any Monsieur Lionel JOSPIN country from returning a person to a country where he or she would face serious human rights violations, and obliges countries to provide protection to refugees. France has been a party to the Convention since 1954. However, the authorities in Nice contravened these standards by Premier Ministre expelling the Roma before their requests for asylum could be fully examined. France also has obligations under the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which it ratified in 1990, to ensure that all children in its jurisdiction, including refugees and asylum seekers, are able to live in Hôtel Matignon. freedom, dignity and security.

57 rue de Varenne 75007 PARIS

#### MINISTER OF JUSTICE:

Madame Elisabeth GUIGOU Garde des Sceaux Ministère de la Justice 13 Place Vendôme 75001 PARIS

#### MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR:

Monsieur Jean-Pierre

CHEVENEMENT

Ministre de l'intérieur

Ministère de l'intérieur

Place Beauvau

75008 PARIS

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# Don't play all play sith my yo fut ure!

Please write to the Pakistan government and urge them to:

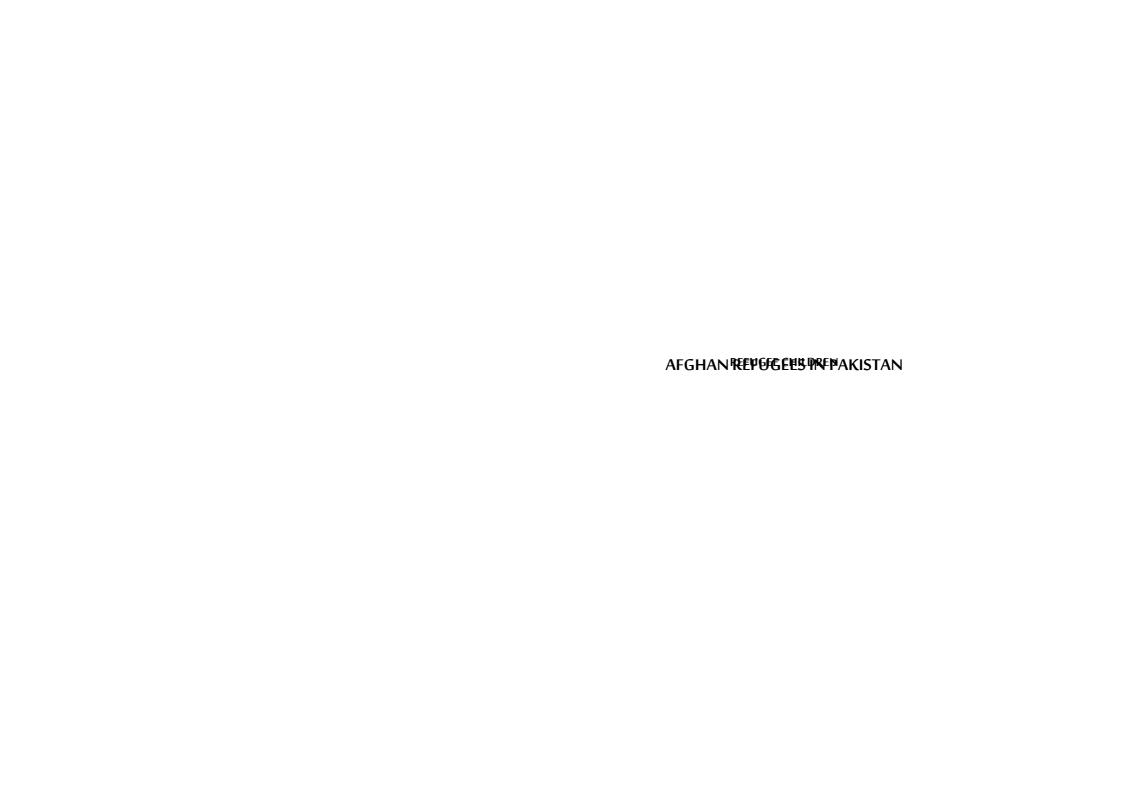
- Take immediate steps to safeguard the rights of Afghan refugee children;
- Ensure that no Afghan refugee children are placed in detention in contravention of international standards;
- Comply with the provisions of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which it has ratified;
- Ratify and implement the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol.

assist children and adolescents young refugees can cause irreversible future (for the individual as well as

security were threatened. But the in camps may be particularly exploitation - including sexual country, they may be detained - security and education.

the release of prisoners of conscience, executions. Amnesty International abuses.

- Join Al's campaign. Contact the Amnesty International office in your country and ask how you can help.
- Help raise awareness about refugees and the specific needs of child refugees. Inform people of the human rights violations which cause children to flee their homes.
- Urge your government to act. Find out if it has ratified, and is honouring, the international treaties protecting child refugees.
- Show solidarity with refugees. Support refugee children who are at risk of being forcibly returned.



#### AFGHAN REFLIGES IN PAKISTAN - ARRITRARY DETENTION OF CHILDREN

Over the past decade and a half, hundreds of thousands of Afghan families have fled a devastating civil war in Afghanistan traumatised

Men, women and children who have seen their homes destroyed and their loved ones brutalised have made a long and Pakistan.

For many, however, arrival in Pakistan has not brought them safety or security. Having left their homes with what few to pay bribes to Pakistani guards to get across the border. On reaching the refugee camps, many vulnerable Afghan families, struggle to survive. Relief assistance to all but the most recent arrivals has been cut. Medical facilities and food are

Afghan refugees, including children, are routinely detained by the Pakistan authorities for not possessing valid passports or money for their release. Those who cannot pay the bribe are usually charged with illegal stay in Pakistan and sent to judicial and passport. This entails paying a further bribe as they are required to have their passport photograph authenticated by the means of the majority of Afghan refugee families.

Refugee children are the main target of this form of harassment as the Pakistani police know that Afghan families will sell

their children out of jail.

The basic rights of refugee children are governed by two international conventions: *The 1951 UN Convention and 1967 Refugees*, and the *1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. In addition, the *1994 UNHCR Guidelines on Refugee* guidance on the treatment of refugee children. They state that detention must only be used as a last resort and must and that the conditions of detention must meet the needs of the children, including access to education and time for play. by international standards only on specific grounds, and even then only when absolutely necessary. If applied, these rights of children are met, ensuring that they live in freedom, dignity and security.

In July 1996, thirty-six Afghan refugee children were arrested in Pakistan for not possessing valid passports. They were placed in detention in Adiala central iail, Rawalpindi. Some were as young as 12 years old. They were held for periods of between one and nine weeks, locked un in a cell for all but two hours of the day until their parents could buy their release.

which has left the country fragmented and its people

arduous journey across inhospitable terrain to seek refuge in

possessions they can carry, some refugees have been forced particularly widows with children and elderly relatives, inadequate.

visas. The police arrest Afghans at random, demanding custody. To obtain release they have to provide a valid visa police. The whole cost of this process is well beyond the

what they can to get

Protocol Relating to the Status of Children provide practical always have a proper justification, Detention of refugees is allowed standards guarantee that the basic

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that the imprisonment of a child should be in conformity with the law and should only be used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest period of time (Article 37(b)). It also obliges states to take special care in dealing with the cases of refugee children. Pakistan ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, but is clearly not living up to its obligations to Afghan refugee children.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif Office of the Prime Minister Islamabad Pakistan

President Farooq Leghari Office of the President Aiwan-e Sadar Islamabad Pakistan

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## INTERN **ATIONA**

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attention.

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security were threatened. But the particularly

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#### RUSSIAN FEDERATION - DENIAL OF ACCESS TO ASYLUM PROCEDURES

On 2 February 1993, the Russian Federation acceded to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its means that it has expressly undertaken certain obligations towards those seeking protection from serious human rights country. However, the sad reality is that the Russian Federation has failed to live up to these commitments and refugees among them large numbers of children, remain unprotected by law and at risk.

Persons wishing to seek protection in the Russian Federation are routinely denied access to asylum procedures. Left in a years, these people are unable to obtain from the Russian authorities any documents identifying them as asylum consistently harassed and ill treated by law enforcement officials. Asylum seekers in this situation are at constant risk of sometimes threatened with return to their country of origin (refoulement). Refoulement takes place on a regular basis of Sheremetevo-II international airport in Moscow.

Amnesty International is particularly concerned that the laws on asylum procedures are confusing, contradictory and that other decrees or laws have the effect of specifically blocking access to asylum procedures. This denial of access asylum seekers being frequently left vulnerable to harassment, extortion and ill-treatment, and often denied access Children refugees have many particular needs which should be taken into account. They are often the ones who suffer this lack of status, some spending their most formative years in the Russian Federation - unable to attend school, their lodgings for fear of being fined or stopped by law enforcement officers on the streets.

Groups of people moving to the Russian Federation include refugees and forced migrants from former Soviet republics, fleeing conflicts within the Russian Federation. Another significant movement is that of refugees and asylum seekers from, for example, Afghanistan, Iraq, Angola, Zaire, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Rwanda and Cameroon. A children.

- Abdirazak, a Somali asylum seeker who arrived in Moscow five years ago. Interview with Amnesty International, August 1996 1967 Protocol. This violations in their own and asylum seekers,

legal limbo, often for seekers, and are being detained and are from the transit zone

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often applied arbitrarily, and to asylum procedures results in to basic social, medical and educational provisions. most from

uncertain of their future, and often afraid to leave

as well as "internally displaced persons" (IDPs) from outside the CIS and the Baltic states into Russia large percentage of these people seeking asylum are

Amnesty International calls upon the government of the Russian Federation to honour its obligation to ensure that children and their families at risk of serious human rights violations in their own countries are afforded protection against refoulement.

In addition to the 1951 UN Convention and 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, the Russian Federation ratified the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990. This Convention guarantees the basic rights of all children, without discrimination, ensuring that they can live in freedom, dignity and security. Rights guaranteed by the Convention include access to education, social security and access to courts. The Convention also obliges states to take special care in dealing with the cases of refugee children. As a party to the Convention, the Russian Federation has a clear obligation to protect the well-being of refugee children, but is as yet failing to live up to these obligations.

#### President of the Russian Federation

Boris Nikolayevich YELTSIN

Rossiyskaya Federatsiya

g. Moskva

Kreml

Prezidentu Rossiyskoy Federatsii

YELTSINU B.N.

Fax: (Press office) (7 095) 206 51 73

#### Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation

Tatyana REGENT

Rossiyskaya Federatsiya

107078 g. Moskva

Boyarsky pereulok, 4

Federalnaya Sluzhba Migratsii

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SOMALI CHILDREN *REFOULED* FROM

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REFU**E EN MEN**DREN

#### SOMALI CHILDREN 'REFOLILED' FROM YEMEN

Some of the worst human rights abuses which cause children and their families to flee their homes occur in situations of armed

Faction fighting in Somalia has caused hundreds of thousands to flee their homes. At the end of 1996 over 1.5 million Somali

Women and children were not excluded from the human rights abuses carried out by the warring factions in Somalia. Abuses detention, torture, rape, and ill-treatment.

Yemen was the destination for thousands of these Somali refugees, where many were housed in refugee camps in various parts of Yemen began a campaign of deportation against so-called "illegal" residents. Thousands of foreign nationals, particularly campaign and forcibly deported. They included people who were recognized—as refugees by the UNHCR. By January 1997 the have announced that 18,000 individuals had been deported from Yemen since the campaign against the so-called "illegal" that many of these people were forcibly returned to a situation where they may be at risk of grave human rights abuses. These included 20 Saudi Arabian nationals who were sought by their government, reportedly on political grounds, who were forcibly returned by the Yemeni authorities in October and November 1996, where they were reportedly detained on arrival.

The group, many of whom were recognized as refugees by UNHCR, were forcibly returned by ship from Aden to Bassasso in Northern Somalia, as part of the campaign against so-called "illegal" residents in Yemen. The number of women and children reported to have been amongst those deported remains unclear, but they are believed to have been living in Yemen since fleeing the Civil War in Somalia.

conflict and civil disturbance.

refugees remained outside the country.

included deliberate and arbitrary killings,

of the country. In August 1995, the Government Somalis, were arrested as a result of this Minister of Interior was reported in the media to immigrants began. Amnesty International fears

Yemen is a State Party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and is prohibited under international law from forcibly returning any person to a country where they risk serious human rights violations on their return. The deportation of the 418 Somali nationals and 20 Saudi Arabian nationals was carried out in clear contradiction to Yemen's international obligations under this convention, Article 33 of which states:

"No Contracting State shall expel or return ('refouler') a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion."

Yemen is, in addition, a State Party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Under this Convention, Yemen is bound to hold the best interests of the child as paramount in any dealings with children, and is also bound to take special care in dealing with refugee children. By forcibly separating these children from their parents, and by returning children to a country where they or their families are at serious risk of human rights violations, the Yemeni authorities have clearly failed to live up to these obligations.

His Excellency

Hussein Muhammad 'Arab

Minister of Interior

Ministry of Interior

Sana'a

Republic of Yemen

Fax: +967 1 251 566

His Excellency

Dr 'Abd al-Karim al-Iryani

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign

Affairs Sana'a

Republic of Yemen

Fax: +967 1 276618

His Excellency

General 'Ali 'Abdullah Saleh

President of the Republic of Yemen

Sana'a

Republic of Yemen

Fax: +967 1 274 147 Telex: 2422 RIASAH YE