AI INDEX: AFR 47/26/95
15 DECEMBER 1995

RWANDA: INDICTMENTS LEAVE TENS OF THOUSANDS MORE AWAITING TRIAL

Amnesty International welcomes the report that the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda confirmed the indictments of eight people suspected of planning or ordering genocide and other crimes against humanity in Rwanda on 12 December 1995.

The human rights organization urges the United Nations and member states to ensure that the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has adequate resources to continue investigations and carry out trials in accordance with international standards.

"Amnesty International is concerned that about 60,000 others, accused by Rwandese authorities of participating in the genocide or other crimes against humanity, remain imprisoned with little hope of release or trial," Amnesty International said.

The detainees remain in Rwanda in conditions amounting to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Many of the detainees who have been arbitrarily arrested may be innocent, but Rwanda's criminal justice system is still far from being able to function properly to guarantee a fair trial for the accused.

"There is negligible action being taken by the Rwandese authorities to deal with people who desperately need a fair trial," Amnesty International said.

"The Rwandese authorities are refusing to accept assistance from foreign judicial experts. They also have not set up effective systems to screen those in detention and to release - with appropriate guarantees for their safety - detainees against whom there is no evidence of insufficient evidence to prosecute."

The human rights organization is calling on the Rwandese government and the international community to mobilize material and human resources to ensure that the Rwandese judicial system can promptly deal with the enormous caseload. Those detainees against whom there is insufficient evidence should be released, and others should be charged and given a fair trial without undue delay and without recourse to the death penalty.

ENDS\