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## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **Afghanistan**

#### **New Amnesty International report Detentions and killings of political personalities**

Amnesty International today issued a report on the arrest by the Taleban authorities of up to 200 Afghan political personalities over the past year, apparently only because of their peaceful opposition to the continued war in the country.

The vast majority of the detainees, who include intellectuals, community leaders, former army officers and civil servants of Pashtun ethnic background, have reportedly been severely tortured. Over a dozen of them were killed while in custody. Some of the detainees have been released but around 100 still remain in detention. Among the detainees are children held hostage in place of their fathers, who have escaped arrest. The report results from interviews with former detainees or others with detailed personal knowledge of these arrests and killings.

Amnesty International is particularly disturbed by these arrests which represent a crackdown on elements within the Afghan society who are peacefully advocating the establishment of a civil society and rule of law after years of devastation and gross human rights violations.

The human rights organization neither supports nor opposes any of the warring factions in Afghanistan and has documented abuses on all sides over many years. It urges that all perpetrators of human rights violations against the Afghan people should be brought to justice and that no one should be allowed impunity. It also strongly urges all parties in Afghanistan to take human rights protection seriously and to respond to calls for an end to the cycle of abuses. Amnesty International welcomes a dialogue with all faction leaders with regard to the concerns raised in its documents and on the practical steps they can take to end these abuses.

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**To receive a copy of the report, please e-mail [afghteam@amnesty.org](mailto:afghteam@amnesty.org), or call (44) (0) 171 413 5566.**