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Attn: News Editors/Features Editors

INVITATION TO PRESS CONFERENCE

Date: Tuesday, 23 September, 1997

Time: 1.45 pm to 2.45 pm

Venue: Room 103, Duke of Windsor Social Service Building, 15, Hennessy Road, Wanchai. Tel: 2864 2929



HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS SHOULD BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF POLICY DIALOGUES AND ECONOMIC DEALINGS

On the occasion of the World Bank / IMF Annual Meeting, Hong Kong, September 1997, Amnesty International is calling on all international financial institutions and global corporations to ensure that human rights considerations are at the forefront of their policy dialogues and economic dealings.

Governments around the world are continuing to resort to repressive measures to maintain wage or industrial competitiveness, attract foreign investment or loans and expedite major projects. This is particularly true in the Asia-Pacific region where an "economic miracle" has been built upon policies of liberalisation mixed with authoritarian social and political models.

As the activities and policies of international financial institutions and multinational corporations impact on the lives of more and more people, they share a responsibility for the promotion and protection of human rights. Care needs to be taken to prevent human rights from being the casualty of efforts to promote liberalisation, competitiveness and development.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) recognises freedom from fear and freedom from want as two sides of the same coin, and the UN World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993 reaffirmed the interdependence and indivisibility of all human rights. There is no hierarchy of human rights. Nor are human rights solely the responsibility of government -- they should be taken into account in all projects, joint ventures and policy initiatives undertaken by international financial institutions and multinational companies.

Amnesty international will make a statement at the press conference with a set of recommendations to international financial institutions.

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