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21 AUGUST 1995

ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL  
CONDEMNS THE KILLING OF CIVILIANS

Amnesty International is appalled at today's bombing of a bus in Ramot Eshkol in Jerusalem -- seven civilians, possibly including a suicide-bomber, were killed and about a hundred others were injured.

The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) has reportedly claimed responsibility for the attack. Amnesty International has appealed to Hamas in the past to end attacks on civilian targets.

"We strongly condemn these deliberate and arbitrary killings which violate fundamental humanitarian principles," Amnesty International said today. " We once again appeal to Hamas to stop the killings of civilians immediately."

At the same time, Amnesty International called on the Israeli government and Palestinian Authority to adhere strictly to international human rights and humanitarian standards in actions taken in response to the attack.

In particular, the organization again called on the Israeli authorities to end the use of torture during the interrogation of detainees. Permission to use exceptional measures during interrogation was extended last week and the shaking of detainees under interrogation, which has recently caused one death, is allowed with the authorization of the head of the General Security Service.

"Human rights abuses by opposition groups can never justify the violation of fundamental human rights by the authorities," Amnesty International said, "just as human rights violations committed by the authorities cannot justify the arbitrary and deliberate killing of civilians."

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