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**TO: PRESS OFFICERS**

**FROM: PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS**

**DATE: 12 MARCH 1993**

**WEEKLY UPDATE SERVICE 18/93**

Contained in this weekly update is an external item on Togo.

**NEWS INITIATIVES**

**INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES**

**Japan - 0500 hrs gmt, 17 March**

Please note the embargo is confirmed for 0500 hrs gmt, 17 March for this document on refugee issues and we anticipate a high level of media interest in this news release.

The Japanese Section is holding a press conference in Tokyo to launch the report on 17 March. IS staff member, David Petrasek, who wrote the report, is going to Tokyo to help with media there. The Japanese Section will be inviting international media to attend the press conference and the IS will also inform international media of the launch. Details of the conference will shortly be available from the IS press office if you need them.

An Electronic News Release (ENR) is being prepared at the last minute to go with the report. Unfortunately, resources and time will not allow the IS to distribute it to sections. However, it will be given to Japanese TV at the press launch and the IS is giving it to WTN, VISNEWS, BBC World Service TV and CNN - so please refer your media to these. The master copy is held at Dubbs, 25-26 Poland Street, London W1V 3DB - Tel: +44 71 629 0055. Media who urgently require the full ENR may order copies direct from Dubbs, paying the copying costs only.

**Chad - 21 April**

**\*Please Note\***

The document to go with this campaign has been sent out to sections dated February. Please inform your section campaign coordinators and anyone else who may receive it that it is EMBARGOED FOR 21 APRIL.

Chad Campaign, document, news release, Q&A and ENR. More details to follow shortly.

**TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES**

**Morocco - 14 April**

Document and weekly update item - more info soon.

**Brazil - 15 April**

**Document on prison massacre, including new forensic information. Weekly update item to go with it. More info soon.**

### **Section Initiatives**

#### **French Section - European Press Officers' Meeting**

**The second European Press Officers' meeting will take place in Paris this year. The registration forms have not arrived yet, but when they do please send them to Luisa de Soriano or Josette Debord at the French Section Press Office before the end of February. The date of this meeting is now fixed for 15 and 16 May as the majority of you asked for. It will be focused on two themes: Audiovisual work (production and TV experiences) and how to improve it; and the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna. The French Section Press Office will send the program to all participants during the last week of February. Many thanks.**

**2. AFR 57/WU 02/93 EXTERNAL**  
**15 March 1993**

**INTERNAL**

Please see AFR 57/WU 01/93, in Weekly Update 09/93 for background info.

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**EXTERNAL**

**TOGO: SECURITY FORCES STILL ALLOWED TO ACT WITH IMPUNITY**

Amnesty International is concerned that no official investigation has been opened to establish responsibility for the killing of at least 19 unarmed demonstrators in Togo's capital, Lomé, on 25 January 1993. Further killings by security forces on 30 January - apparently in retaliation for attacks on them by civilians - have also failed to be investigated, despite an announcement by the authorities that there would be an internal investigation.

"Despite the gravity of these incidents, the security forces remain immune to prosecution, and, what is more, attacks on opposition figures continue and human rights investigations are obstructed," said Amnesty International.

Date Issac Gbikpi-Benissan - body guard for Léopold Messan Gnininvi, an opposition political leader and President of the confederation of opposition parties - was abducted on 1 February 1993 and killed. This followed an attack on his employer's residence by suspected supporters of the former sole political party, which is loyal to the head of state, General Gnassingbé Eyadéma. His body was found by villagers in Adétikope, some 20 kilometres from Lomé, and his parents ordered an autopsy to be carried out. The autopsy found he had received bullet wounds in the chest and his head was also injured.

Although the identity of Date Issac Gbikpi-Benissan's killers has not been established, there are strong suspicions that members of the armed forces were involved. A representative of the Togolese League of Human Rights, (TRANSLATORS: Ligue Togolaise des Droits de l'Homme) Alessi Wilson, attended the autopsy, along with members of the local Gendarmerie. He was later detained for 25 hours at the Gendarmerie in Lomé and questioned about interviewing villagers and using a tape recorder - apparently simply because of his investigative human rights work.

On 26 February 1993, Léopold Ayivi, press attaché to an opposition party and editor at an independent radio station, was seriously injured when he was attacked and shot by two armed men. His life was in danger and President Eyadéma arranged for him to be flown to Paris for medical treatment. The President also announced an inquiry into the assassination attempt. However, once again no investigation is known to have started. It seems that he was targeted for attack because of his non-violent opposition to the authorities; those responsible are believed to be close to those authorities.

These recent events clearly show the urgent need for independent investigations into all human rights violations and acts of political violence. Those responsible must be identified and brought to justice if this cycle of violence is to be broken. The authorities have just announced that a new security force, which excludes the army, will be set up to keep order during and after planned elections - however, it is not clear how it will be organised.

Following the 25 January killing of peaceful demonstrators, the authorities in Togo received numerous appeals from Amnesty International members worldwide. This prompted President Eyadéma to send a senior official to visit the organization's International Secretariat in London with a number of documents and a video cassette. The documents provided by the Presidency concerned both the current political deadlock between the Presidency and the politicians involved in the transitional government and violent attacks on members of the former sole political party and of the President's own ethnic group by his opponents. A video cassette showed victims of violent attacks, but the circumstances of these attacks were not clear.

In addition to condemning extrajudicial executions and attempted extrajudicial executions by the security forces, Amnesty International is also opposed to any other deliberate and arbitrary killings by political groups. However, none of the documents provided

**to Amnesty International by the Presidency respond in any way to the international demand that the security forces should be held to account for human rights violations that they commit.**