
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 33/95

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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - MEXICO (this item is being released to international news agencies)

PLEASE NOTE CORRECTION ON SIERRA LEONE NEWS RELEASE:
(news service 32/95)
7th paragraph, 3rd line should read:

Sierra Leone," Amnesty International said. (not Mr Sané said)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Northern Iraq - 28 February - SEE NEWS SERVICE 266

Campaign on Women - 8 March - SEE NEWS SERVICE 12/95

Brazil - 27 March - SEE NEWS SERVICE 29/95

SYRIA - 11 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 32/95

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MEXICO: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONFIRMS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS DURING
GOVERNMENT'S LATEST ACTIONS AGAINST REBEL MOVEMENT

In the week since the clamp down against armed rebels in Mexico, Amnesty International has received new reports of serious human rights violations.

The organization has confirmed reports that scores of people have been arbitrarily detained and reportedly tortured and ill-treated, in Chiapas, Mexico City and other parts of the country. Several remain 'disappeared'.

Amnesty International has also confirmed reports of dozens of cases of death threats and intimidation against human rights monitors and civil rights activists. While constitutional guarantees were not suspended in the area of conflict, the army carried out arrests of civilians and effectively prevented free access and transit to journalists, human rights monitors and even an ICRC delegate. The ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) suspended its operations in the town of Guadalupe Tepeyac during the weekend, after the Mexican army allegedly interfered with medical neutrality and the Committee's work.

During the latest operations the Mexican army regained control of most of the territory previously held by the rebels in the jungle areas of Chiapas, but top leaders of the EZLN, including the so-called **Sub Comandante Marcos**, remain at large.

On 14 February President Zedillo halted the military offensive in Chiapas, and called for renewed negotiations with the EZLN, and on 15 February he called on Congress to approve an amnesty for all those who put down their arms.

Amnesty International urgently appeals to the Mexican government to fulfil its responsibility to fully protect the human rights of the population, and to investigate and punish any human rights violations. "The long-lasting policy of impunity for human rights violations in Mexico ensures their perpetuation, despite government promises to the contrary," Amnesty International says.

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