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WEEKLY UPDATE SERVICE 41/93

Contained in this weekly update are external items on Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

NEWS INITIATIVES

NEW INFO - USA - Juvenile Death Penalty

(New Information)

Gary Graham was today granted a 30-day stay of execution. We have not received information on the reasons for this, but I'll keep you posted as we get new info in.

Please note that Gary Graham was scheduled to be executed in Texas today, 29 April. Details of his case, which was based on very weak evidence, are included in UA, AI Index: AMR 51/22/93, UA AI Index: AMR 51/29/93, as well as documents: USA: Imminent execution of juvenile offender, AI Index: AMR 51/23/93, and USA: Imminent execution of juvenile offender (update), AI Index: AMR 51/28/93. Also see weekly update item in Weekly Update NWS 11/39/93.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Tadzhikistan - 5 May

(New Information)

PLEASE NOTE CORRECTION: New information received means that one sentence in the news release should be altered - Second sentence, para 8 should read:

"The group was led by a convicted criminal who had spent a total of 23 years in prison for offences including murder. He was seconded to law enforcement duties and was killed in a gun battle at the end of March."

Publication and news release on killings in the context of civil war - with striking similarities to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Indigenous People - 12 May

News release planned to accompany Focus article on Human rights violations against indigenous people worldwide. Indigenous people will be one of the main themes of our work on the World Conference.

Guatemala - 19 May

A document or publication with a news release on a full range of recent human rights violations (in the past year or so) in Guatemala. Unfortunately, the document is running behind schedule and will not be in the Weekly Mailing from the IS until 12 May, one week before the embargo. Please get in touch with the IS if you need a copy earlier.

Egypt - 26 May

A document or publication and news release on all our concerns in Egypt. These include very high numbers of prisoners and torture.

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES**Somalia - 30 April****(New Information)**

A 10-page document with AI's recommendations on human rights connected with UN talks and urging Somali political groups to stop human rights abuses was sent to you by fax/e-mail/telex yesterday. A weekly update to go with it is enclosed in this document embargoed for 30 April. The IS press office is now send this out to international media.

Brazil - 7 May, 1600 hrs gmt

PLEASE NOTE - The document has been sent out in the Weekly Mailing dated simply May 1993. Please make sure that anyone who is likely to see it in your section knows that it is embargoed for 7 May.

Document on prison massacre, including new forensic information. Weekly update item to go with it is enclosed in this document. Sections are also being asked to carry out campaign work in connection with this document.

Malawi - 20 May

Document on human rights violations and the referendum and weekly update item to go with it, which will be sent to international media by the IS Press Office.

Unconfirmed news initiatives

News releases or embargoed weekly update items are being considered on the following subjects:

Nagorno-Karabakh (to go with section-level action, late May)

Aceh, Indonesia (14 July)

Section Initiatives

Europe - Peter Gabriel fundraising opportunity

PLEASE PASS THIS INFORMATION ON TO YOUR FUNDRAISING DEPARTMENT.

The Swedish Section have sent us a fax saying that they approached Peter Gabriel and his manager about collecting money and handing out information at his concert in Stockholm. Twenty AI members were able to attend the concert for free and collected around £1,000 sterling.

The Swedish Section have spoken to Peter Gabriel's manager about other sections being able to do the same thing during his tour in Europe, which takes in venues in France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Germany and the UK between now and early June.

We have sent details of the tour, provided by the Swedish Section, to John Baguley at the British Section (who is involved in the international fundraising working group). The original fax was from Maria Mirsch at the Swedish Section. Hopefully, this information should help your fundraisers - thanks for making sure it gets to the right people in your section.

French Section - European Press Officers' Meeting

The second European Press Officers' meeting will take place in Paris this year. 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.

European World Conference Press Briefing in June

The British Section Press Office has been talking to the EC project office and the Francophone Belgium Press Officer about holding a European press briefing in Brussels for MEPs and for journalists who will be covering the World Conference. The date will probably be Tuesday, June 8th in the morning. The aim will be to look at the EC's role as a whole in terms of its internal shortcomings (Asylum issues, etc), external policies - aid/development, etc, and also to look at Europe's role within the UN.

Although the idea has been suggested by the British Section, it is hoped that all European Section Press Officers will be interested in being involved. For further information please contact either Daphne Davies, in the British Section Press Office or Johannes in the EC project office.

AUDIO-VISUAL NEWS

A script of an Electronic News Release video which has been prepared to go with the Tadjikistan report and news release embargoed for 5 May was telexed/faxed/e-mailed to you today. Copies of the video are available from Dubbs in London. Please contact Louisa at Dubbs on Tel: +44 71 629 0055, Fax: +44 71 287 8796, if you wish to order copies.

**2. AFR 52/WU 01/93 EXTERNAL
EMBARGOED FOR 30 APRIL 1993**

INTERNAL

This item is being sent to international media by the IS press office embargoed for 30 April. Please copy this and the document (faxed/e-mailed/telexed to you yesterday) to Country Coordinators urgently, as the document contains recommended actions. A letter with full details has been sent to them - Thanks.

EXTERNAL

SOMALIA: UPDATE ON A DISASTER - AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PROPOSALS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

As one of the UN's largest-ever peace-building operations starts in Somalia on 1 May 1993, Amnesty International is calling for action on fundamental human rights issues underlying the current disaster.

In December 1992 the UN authorized "Operation Restore Hope", a US-led military operation to establish a "secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia". This partially improved security and significantly helped to reduce deaths from starvation. However, fighting and human rights abuses by Somali armed political groups have continued intermittently in various parts of the country.

The new UN operation, UNOSOM II, aims to restore peace, seek political reconciliation and rebuild Somalia, after more than two decades of repressive dictatorship under President Siad Barre's government, followed by brutal civil wars and mass famine since early 1991.

In a new 10-page report, released on 30 April 1993, Amnesty International reviews the progress made in tackling the human rights disaster in Somalia, which provoked an unprecedented response on an international level. The report cites cases of deliberate killings of civilians by armed groups since last December. The organization sets out new proposals for the long-term protection of basic human rights. Civilian human rights advisors and monitors should be mandated to prevent new human rights abuses and set standards for the future. A thorough and impartial study should be carried out into the human rights violations which led to this disaster. There should be no impunity for those responsible for human rights abuses, who should be brought to justice.

AI is also renewing its appeal to all Somali forces to stop deliberate and arbitrary killings and other abuses, and to adopt internationally-recognized human rights objectives - so that abuses can be brought to an end and safeguards and structures based on the rule of law can be firmly established.

In the run-up to the UN World Conference on Human Rights to be held in Vienna in June, Amnesty International has put forward a 10-point program for strengthening and improving human rights protection within the UN system - including the recommendation that human rights issues should be included in UN conflict resolution and peace-keeping efforts in order to protect victims and promote long-term stability.

"The protection of human rights should be a priority in all of the UN's peace-keeping operations," said the organization. "This is absolutely vital in Somalia - human rights issues must be taken on board as an integral part of the UNOSOM II project."

3. EUR 63/WU 04/93 EXTERNAL
29 April 1993

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: CONTINUED HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

While the world's attention has been heavily focused on the tragic events in Srebrenica, Amnesty International continues to receive information about gross abuses of basic human rights committed in other parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina. These have included deliberate and arbitrary killings, arbitrary arrest and torture and ill-treatment, including rape.

These abuses, together with the blowing up of houses, robbery, forced mobilizations or forced labour, threats and restrictions on movement and freedom of association, have created an atmosphere of immense fear and insecurity that the victims seek to flee whenever possible. Conversely, in spite of the clear pressure to leave on those remaining, many people are unable to do so. Some are held in conditions which effectively make them hostages.

The majority of current concerns relate to Muslim and Croat victims in areas under the control of Bosnian Serb armed forces. However, abuses have taken place recently against Muslim and Croat civilians in the context of clashes between Bosnian Croat and the largely Muslim Bosnian Government forces. Abuses have also occurred, principally against Serbian victims, in other areas under Bosnian Croat control.

BOSNIAN SERB-CONTROLLED AREAS

Thousands upon thousands of people of all nationalities have left their homes in many areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina since April 1992, in circumstances which often amounted to forcible expulsion. One year later, hundreds of non-Serbs still arrive every week in neighbouring Croatia or areas controlled by Bosnian Government or Bosnian Croat forces - after having fled from areas under the control of the Bosnian Serb forces. The remaining non-Serbs are largely concentrated in towns such as Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Janja, Prijedor, Kozarac, Sanski Most, Dobo, Bosanski Novi and others. Very few remain in villages and it is impossible to say precisely how many remain, although the number is probably at least 100,000.

An Amnesty International staff member based in Zagreb has interviewed refugees who have recently left Bosnian Serb-controlled areas of northern Bosnia. They have provided some information about their situation, but were reluctant to give, or allow publication of, details of recent abuses, out of fear for the safety of relatives or friends they have left behind. Some were also concerned for the safety of Serbian civilians who have assisted them.

Those responsible for abuses are often unseen by victims, or witnesses can only identify them as wearing uniforms of the Bosnian Serb army or police. They appear to operate with impunity. Refugees claim that where incidents have been brought to the attention of local authorities, only superficial investigations have been carried out or no action has been taken at all. The victims have sometimes been advised by investigating officers that "it would be better" for them to leave.

However, the Serbian authorities now increasingly insist that those who leave fulfil certain formalities. In most towns, evacuation transport is organized by what refugees refer to as "their (Serbian) Red Cross", for which those wishing to leave are usually obliged to pay exorbitant sums in German Marks - often with additional payments for other papers. Many have to sign documents "voluntarily" surrendering their rights to their property. Recent refugees have also consistently reported being "taxed" further sums when passing through the town of Bosanska Gradiška on the border with Croatia.

Those who wish to leave, however reluctantly, must also obtain a guarantee letter from Croatia or a third country before being allowed into Croatia. The guarantee letter must show that the person will be admitted to a third country or will be supported and accommodated by relatives or friends and so will not require financial assistance.

A number of those who have been unable to depart by the "formal" route have succeeded in escaping to Croatia or other countries via Serbia and Hungary. Refugees from the frontline town of Dobo in northern Bosnia have complained that severe restrictions are placed on the movement of non-Serbs and that the town is virtually a prison. In other towns informants report that frequent identity checks at which soldiers or police insult or threaten non-Serbs or order them back home mean that their movements are extremely restricted. Organized "exchanges" of individual civilians on the frontlines appear to be continuing on a small scale.

Amnesty International believes that the impunity with which abuses against non-Serbs are carried out, and other actions clearly under the control of local Serbian authorities form part of a consistent pattern aimed at provoking the departure of non-Serbs in

which the authorities are implicated. These include restrictions on movement, access to food supplies and the systematic destruction of buildings such as mosques. This pattern has already been documented by Amnesty International in earlier reports¹.

The organization repeats its appeals to the Bosnian Serb leaders to take urgent steps to end human rights abuses in areas under their control and to bring those responsible for perpetrating or ordering such acts to justice.

Amnesty International also calls upon the Croatian authorities to lift restrictions on the acceptance or transit of refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina. The organization recognizes that Croatia has already admitted tens of thousands of refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina, and that its material resources are stretched. However, Amnesty International emphasizes that international standards clearly prohibit rejecting refugees at the border even in situations of large-scale influx. The organization believes that the formal requirements, such as guarantee letters and visas, placed on refugees seeking to enter Croatia may be preventing many people from obtaining protection against human rights abuses in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Amnesty International also repeats its appeal to other European countries to lift or waive visa requirements for nationals of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This is because it believes that the Croatian authorities would be less inclined to reject refugees at the border if other European states were willing to allow refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina to move on from Croatia to their territories.

BOSNIAN CROAT-CONTROLLED AREAS

Human rights abuses in the course of forcible expulsions have not occurred exclusively in areas under the control of Bosnian Serbs. Amnesty International is also concerned that arbitrary killings in the context of forced expulsions of Serbs have occurred in territory under the control of Bosnian Croat forces, known as the Croatian Defence Council (HVO), mainly in the southern part of the Republic known as Herzegovina.

For example, on 5 February 1993, a group of 14 people, mainly Serbs, were reportedly rounded up from an apartment block in Mostar by HVO soldiers and were made to cross the lines at Stolac to Serbian-held territory in Bosnia-Herzegovina later the same day. Shots were fired from the HVO side as they crossed and two women were killed and an 85-year-old woman injured. The HVO is reported to be investigating the incident.

A group of more than 200 Serbs, mainly women, children and elderly men in the village of Rašani near the town of Tomislavgrad have for some months been denied permission by the HVO to leave the area for Serbian-controlled territory. Some of them were forcibly moved there from other villages in autumn 1992. Severe restrictions have reportedly been placed on their movements, apparently with the aim of deterring Serbian artillery attacks on the town.

Amnesty International considers that the Serbs in Rašani are civilians who are being held because of their nationality in a form of administrative detention as hostages. It calls for the lifting of restrictions on their movements and for all those who wish to leave HVO-controlled territory to be evacuated under the supervision of international agencies.

CENTRAL BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Recent reports of deliberate and arbitrary killings, arbitrary detentions, ill-treatment, rape and other abuses against Muslim and Croat civilians in the context of clashes in central Bosnia-Herzegovina cause grave concern.

The abuses have occurred during renewed fighting between HVO forces and the mainly Muslim Bosnian Government armed forces. Although the HVO and Bosnian Government forces are nominal allies against Serbian forces, there has been considerable tension between them over the status of the territory controlled by the HVO. In July 1992, this area was proclaimed by Bosnian Croatian leaders as an autonomous region called the "Croatian Community of Herzeg-Bosna". The first serious clashes between the two forces occurred in Prozor in October 1992. On 4 April 1993, the HVO demanded that Bosnian Government troops withdraw by 15 April from the areas assigned to Bosnian Croats under a United Nations (UN)-backed peace proposal, generally referred to as the Vance-Owen peace plan.

Most recently, the two forces have been fighting for control over territories around the central Bosnian towns of Vitez and Zenica and the towns of Jablanica and Konjic further to the south-east. Incidents have occurred in other towns. Both sides are said to have committed abuses, but so far the majority of reported victims appear to be Muslim civilians.

According to Croatian radio reports on 14 and 15 April, Muslim forces attacked villages around Konjic, near Mostar, expelling Croats from seven villages. The same source stated that on 16 and 17 April, Muslim forces attacked HVO headquarters in Vitez and in Travnik in central Bosnia.

UN officials have reported meeting over 700 Croats fleeing Muslim forces north of Zenica. Croatian sources have also alleged mass arrests of Croats in Travnik and Zenica, however other sources indicate that the majority of those arrested in Zenica are HVO

¹ See the report *Bosnia-Herzegovina: Rana u duži - A wound to the Soul*, AI Index: EUR 63/03/93, January 1993.

soldiers. On 26 April, soldiers of the UN peace-keeping force (UNPROFOR) reportedly found the bodies of five Croatian men, their hands tied, who had apparently been killed by Bosnian Government forces in the village of Grahovcici.

A report in the British *Guardian* of 22 April 1993, referred to arbitrary killings by HVO forces on 18 April in the village of Šanti_i just outside Vitez, where UNPROFOR soldiers recovered the corpses of more than 30 Muslims - apparently civilians. The *New York Times* of 21 April 1993 quoted a report from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which states that Muslims had been found shot in the head at close range in villages around Vitez. Two doctors, allegedly Muslims, travelling from Zenica to Travnik had reportedly been halted at a checkpoint and killed by shots to the head. UNPROFOR soldiers also found the bodies of 10 Muslim civilians, including women and one child, shot dead near the village of Ahini_i. Local Croat sources reportedly claimed that the killings had been carried out by Croat irregular forces who were no longer under the control of the HVO. According to a report in the British *Independent* of 21 April 1993, quoting anonymous UN sources, Croat soldiers had gang-raped Muslim women in Vitez, and gangs of soldiers from both sides had gone on the rampage through each others' villages. Amnesty International has in addition received reports that the HVO has made mass arrests of Muslims in the area of _apljina, south of Mostar, where over 300 Muslims are allegedly held in military barracks.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovi_, and the Bosnian Croat leader, Mate Boban, have nonetheless repeatedly reaffirmed their alliance, and joint patrols have taken place in some areas where their forces are more finely balanced, in an attempt to prevent incidents. On 21 April, the two sides agreed a ceasefire, but this has since been repeatedly broken. On 25 April President Alija Izetbegovi_ and Mate Boban signed a statement ordering a halt to hostilities. The statement also declared: "The signatories...condemn most severely all violations of the rules of international humanitarian law, regardless of their perpetrators, both sides, according to data available so far, having been responsible".

Amnesty International repeats its appeals to all sides in the conflict to halt abuses, to bring the perpetrators to justice, and to strengthen chains of commands in armed forces and take other urgent steps to ensure respect for human rights and humanitarian law.