

AI Index: NWS 11/47/92  
Distr: SC/PO

No. of words: 4112

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TO: PRESS OFFICERS

FROM: PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS

DATE: 25 NOVEMBER 1992

WEEKLY UPDATE SERVICE 47/92

Contained in this weekly update are external items on Djibouti, Burundi, Liberia and EC Refugees.

'CORRECTION'

Please note that the weekly update item AFR 53/WU 07/92 on South Africa, sent out in WU NWS 11/46/92 has a mistake in it. The 3rd line in the first paragraph should read, "government on 10 November", (not October).

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

China - 9 December

(New Information)

International news release to accompany document on torture in China will be sent to you today. Please note that after consultation and feedback from sections it has been decided NOT to change the embargo. Thank you to all those who responded.

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

Burundi - 27 November

Weekly update item enclosed to go with document a year after wave of ejes in Burundi and summary of general concerns there. The IS will send this to international media.

South Africa (ANC) - 2 December

(New Information)

Item in last weekly update embargoed for 2 December on ANC abuses. The IS will be sending this item to international media.

Djibouti - 3 December

Weekly update item enclosed embargoed for 3 December to go with document about adoption of pocs after unfair trial.

USA - 10 December

(New Information)

Weekly update item to coincide with Human Rights Day, condemning a planned execution in Virginia.

Cuba - 14 December

Weekly update item embargoed for 14 December to go with document about pocs.

SECTION INITIATIVES

Please continue to send the IS press office information about your planned media activities.

EC Refugees - 27 November

The AI European Community Office in Brussels is holding a press conference of 27 November and will be issuing the item enclosed in this weekly update as a news release. For more information contact Johannes van der Klaauw at the EC office (number on item).

2. AFR 33/WU 02/92 EXTERNAL  
EMBARGOED FOR 3 DECEMBER 1992

INTERNAL

Please note that the following item is embargoed for 3 December to go with a report, Djibouti: Prisoners of Conscience - Unfair Trial by Security Tribunal, AI Index: AFR 23/04/92, also embargoed for 3 December 1992. There will also be a RAN action and Lawyers Group action. Prisoners' photographs in the report are available from the IS Audio-Visual Unit in particular of Ali Aref, showing debilitating effects of imprisonment.

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EXTERNAL

DJIBOUTI: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CRITICIZES CONVICTIONS BY SECURITY TRIBUNAL AND APPEALS FOR RELEASE OF PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

Amnesty International is calling for the release of 12 prisoners of conscience in Djibouti, including the former head of the pre-independence government, who were jailed for prison terms up to 10 years by a special security tribunal last July.

In the run up to the country's first multi-party elections in more than a decade, due on 18 December, the human rights organization has also urged the government to make other human rights commitments, in particular to abolish or reform the security tribunal and investigate complaints of torture to which the court itself failed to respond.

In a report released today, Amnesty International said that the trial of former head of government Ali Aref on charges of heading a conspiracy to attack a military barracks and overthrow the government was blatantly unfair.

"These people have been sentenced in some cases to a decade behind bars on trumped up charges," Amnesty International said. "The real issue is that they have peacefully opposed the government."

A lawyer sent by Amnesty International to observe the trial in Djibouti, which borders Ethiopia and Somalia, said that over half its judges were government officials and the defence was prevented from having all their witnesses appear in court. In one case, a defence witness was actually arrested in court to prevent his testimony from being heard.

Most of the evidence presented in court was confessions and other statements which the defendants said they were tortured into signing, yet the investigating magistrate and the tribunal judges refused to investigate their torture allegations. An Amnesty International investigation team, including a doctor who carried out medical examinations, found in 1991 that many of the defendants, as well as others arrested with them had been tortured.

Immediately after their arrests, some people were subjected to "the swing", where they were beaten while hung from a horizontal bar with hands and feet tied and gagged with a rag soaked in detergent. Others were given electric shocks, burned with cigarettes or had bottles forced into the anus.

Ali Aref was arrested in January 1991 along with more than 130 other members of the Afar ethnic group, which is noted for its opposition to President Hassan Gouled Aptidon's government. Many of them were released in the weeks following their arrest, but Ali Aref and 10 others were held for 18 months in poor conditions before their trial.

Amnesty International also expressed concern in its report about the detention during 1992 for several days or weeks of other peaceful government opponents, including members of new human rights organizations. The organization also noted the unsatisfactory nature of official investigations into the deaths of 10 prisoners by suffocation in September 1991 and into the killing of as many as 50 Afars rounded up by the police in December 1991. Amnesty International has called for independent inquiries into these incidents and into reports of extrajudicial

executions of dozens of villagers in the southwest in February 1992. These killings reportedly occurred at the time of clashes between government forces and the armed opposition, Front pour la restauration de l'unité et de la démocratie (FRUD), Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy, which has engaged in violent opposition to the government in several parts of the country during the past year.

Parliamentary elections are scheduled for 18 December 1992. These follow the introduction of a new constitution in September 1992 which allows four political parties, including the ruling Rassemblement populaire pour le progrès (RPP), Popular Rally for Progress, to compete in elections thus ending 11 years of one-party rule.

3. AFR 16/WU 03/92 EXTERNAL

EMBARGOED FOR 27 NOVEMBER 1992

INTERNAL

Please note that the following item is embargoed for 27 November and accompanies a document, Burundi: Sectarian security forces violate human rights with impunity, AI Index: AFR 16/10/92, which is also embargoed for Friday 27 November 1992.

EXTERNAL

BURUNDI: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALLS FOR AN END TO IMPUNITY FOR SECURITY FORCES

Amnesty International is calling on the government of Burundi to hold its security forces accountable for hundreds of extrajudicial executions and "disappearances" which occurred a year ago in the course of counter-insurgency operations.

"The government has so far done next to nothing to establish the facts," said Amnesty International, "and so far no members of the security forces responsible for the gross human rights violations at the end of 1991 have been brought to justice." The organization is also urging a change in unfair trial procedures which have resulted in more than 70 political prisoners being sent to prison and five others being sentenced to death this year.

The call comes a year after inter-ethnic violence in Burundi which left 1,000 dead at the hands of government forces and dozens more killed by insurgents. Rebels carried out sectarian attacks, mainly against the country's minority Tutsi community but also against some members of the majority Hutu ethnic group who refused to support them, in November 1991. Several dozen people were reportedly killed by the insurgents.

In response, members of the Burundi security forces, which are dominated by members of the Tutsi ethnic group, killed at least 1,000 people, many of them victims of extrajudicial executions. Most of the victims were Hutu. Several dozen people also "disappeared" while in the custody of the security forces shortly after the attack - they are feared dead as, one year on, there is still no information about them.

The government accused Hutu members of the *Parti pour la libération du peuple Hutu* (PALIPEHUTU), Hutu people's Liberation Party, of carrying out the attacks. About 1,000 Hutu were arrested in connection with PALIPEHUTU activities both before and after the attack in November 1991. Most of those arrested were severely beaten and subjected to various forms of torture. About 500 are still in detention, most of them without trial.

Information available to Amnesty International suggests that many of those still detained were arrested on the basis of denunciations by their personal enemies, without evidence that they participated either in PALIPEHUTU activities or in the attacks. By contrast, although members of the security forces were responsible for most of the sectarian killings and other grave human rights violations which followed, no more than five are known to have been arrested and none have been brought to trial.

The government has rejected appeals made both inside and outside Burundi for official investigations into reports of human rights violations at the end of 1991. As when mass extrajudicial executions previously occurred in the wake of political violence in August 1988, it seems that President Pierre Buyoya's government is dispensing justice selectively by granting de facto impunity to the security forces.

Trials of suspected PALIPEHUTU supporters began in April 1992. Last month a French lawyer representing Amnesty International observed parts of one trial and established that the trials since April had been grossly unfair in many respects. In particular, defendants were not allowed access to legal counsel before or during their trial, the trials lasted only a few hours and detainees were not given enough time to defend themselves, and the court failed to investigate allegations by some defendants that they had been forced to incriminate themselves and other defendants as a result of torture and other forms of duress. Three trials have been concluded so far, with 78 people, all Hutu, convicted: 73 were sentenced to prison terms and five to death.

In a new report published today, Amnesty International calls on the Burundi government to prevent a recurrence of the human rights violations which occurred both in 1988 and at the end of 1991. The measures recommended include setting up an independent and impartial public inquiry to establish the facts surrounding human rights violations, with a view to bringing those responsible to justice. The authorities should also end secret detentions by the security forces, during which detainees are frequently subjected to torture, "disappearance" or killed.

All reports of human rights violations must be investigated by an independent authority and those responsible for the violations brought to justice and victims compensated. All political trials should conform to international standards for fair trial, with suspects allowed time and facilities to prepare their defence and to cross-examine witnesses. All allegations of torture made by defendants should be investigated by the court and uncorroborated confessions made under torture should be ruled inadmissible as prosecution evidence.

4. AFR 34/WU 02/92 EXTERNAL

25 November 1992

LIBERIA: RISK OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AS CONFLICT INCREASES

Amnesty International is calling on all parties involved in the armed conflict in Liberia to respect human rights as fighting intensifies around the capital, Monrovia. Thousands of civilians were deliberately and arbitrarily killed solely because of their ethnic origins in fighting in 1990 between forces of each side in the current conflict. Amnesty International is urging that the United Nations Special Representative, who has recently been mandated to report to the United Nations Security Council on the situation in Liberia, also addresses violations of humanitarian law and human rights.

In recent years, it has been difficult for Amnesty International and other human rights monitors to get information about human rights abuses, particularly in the large parts of Liberia under the control of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), a rebel force headed by former government official Charles Taylor. However, past records of abuse by both sides in the conflict suggest that hostage-taking, torture and killings could well occur again on a large scale.

Amnesty International is calling on all the armed forces involved to give orders to their troops not to kill prisoners or others who have not taken up arms or who have ceased to resist, and to make sure that their troops respect human rights, are accountable for their actions and observe basic international humanitarian standards. Amnesty International is also appealing to governments around the world, particularly those with influence over the armed forces operating within Liberia, to urge that such forces respect human rights, to protest at any further human rights abuses and to make every effort to prevent further massacres.

Following requests by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Organization of African Unity, on 19 November 1992 the UN Security Council asked the UN Secretary-General to send a Special Representative to Liberia, as a matter of urgency, to carry out an independent assessment of the situation and to make recommendations to the Security Council. The Security Council's Resolution 788 also imposed an arms embargo on Liberia which exempted the peace-keeping forces of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). It condemned attacks on the ECOMOG forces and called on all parties to the conflict to respect various peace accords which have been agreed.

Amnesty International believes that the international community has to address immediately the grave and rapidly deteriorating human rights situation in Liberia and is urging that the UN Special Representative, as part of the evaluation of the situation, explore and recommend urgent means of ensuring strict observance of humanitarian law and the protection of human rights, in light of the abuses now taking place, which include arbitrary killings, torture, hostage-taking and arbitrary arrest and detention. In the long term, a strong human rights component should be an essential part of any measures aimed at a resolution of the conflict in Liberia, and will be particularly important in the run-up to elections. Further steps by the UN for protection of human rights could include sending human rights monitors to investigate and report on violations, to take measures to prevent these occurring and to assist in establishing a climate of confidence and respect for human rights necessary for the holding of elections. Human rights monitors should have unrestricted access to and establish a presence in all parts of the country and should report regularly and publicly on their findings and recommendations.

The NPFL forces, which began an artillery attack on Monrovia on 15 October 1992, are reported to have deliberately killed civilians and taken others prisoner in their assault on the city. About 50 people were reportedly abducted and others killed by NPFL troops when they took control of the Louisiana township near Monrovia on 12 October 1992. Five Roman Catholic nuns - all United States nationals aged in their 50s and 60s - are also believed to have been killed by the NPFL in Gardnersville, a suburb of Monrovia, between 20 and 22 October 1992; three Liberian novices reportedly "disappeared" at about the same time. Up to 300 orphans and a former government official, J. Adolphus During, were apparently taken away by NPFL forces on about 28 October from an orphanage in Chocolate City, a suburb near Gardnersville. Orphans who escaped apparently said that the NPFL was forcing the boys to fight for them. Outside Monrovia, the NPFL are alleged to have killed more than 25 people in Maryland County in late October, apparently because they were suspected of supporting another armed group.

Charles Taylor's administration, the National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly Government (NPRAG), has denied allegations that NPFL forces killed the nuns or were in control of Gardnersville at the time of the killings. It has said that the NPFL was in control of the Gardnersville area only from 30 October 1992 and rescued the stranded orphans at that time. On 31 October the NPRAG's radio station claimed that the killings had been committed by a Muslim Nigerian soldier retreating from the area, while other reports suggest that the NPFL has controlled Gardnersville since shortly after it attacked Monrovia. On 1 November, Charles Taylor said that the orphans had been taken to Gbarnga, Bong County, where the NPRAG has its headquarters.

Accusations about human rights violations have been made by both sides. On 11 November 1992 the NPRAG-controlled radio accused the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU), which controls Monrovia, of ordering the killings of named individuals. However, the individuals were later seen, alive, in Monrovia; one had been detained as a suspected NPFL supporter by the ECOMOG forces. On 14 November the Interim Government accused NPFL forces of massacring hundreds of civilians, particularly its employees, in the suburb of Barnersville; independent corroboration is not yet available.

In late October 1992 civilians in Monrovia were subjected to ill-treatment, harassment and looting by troops of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and of the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO). At least six people were reported to have been summarily executed on suspicion of being NPFL fighters. The AFL is the government armed force which supported former President Samuel Doe in the 1990 civil war and which, on 21 November 1992, was reinstated as Liberia's national army by the Interim Legislative Assembly in Monrovia. ULIMO is another armed group, established in 1991 by former AFL members, and is supposedly assisting in the defence of the city. On 2 November the ECOMOG force threatened to shoot on sight any members of armed groups who broke the night curfew. On 21 November 1992 an AFL soldier was publicly executed in Monrovia after being convicted by court martial the day before of the murder and robbery of a civilian in October. Concern has been expressed that suspected NPFL fighters captured by ECOMOG soldiers, who have often been difficult to distinguish from civilians fleeing the fighting, may have been handed over to the AFL without any safeguards for their protection from torture and extrajudicial execution. The ECOMOG force has denied ill-treating any prisoners.

In 1990 an estimated 20,000 civilian non-combatants were deliberately and arbitrarily killed following the invasion of Liberia in December 1989 by the NPFL. 40,000 more are thought to have starved to death. Massive inter-ethnic killings were perpetrated by both the AFL and NPFL, particularly against the Gio and Mano ethnic groups which were perceived as supporting the NPFL and the Krahn and Mandingo groups which were identified with President Doe. After Nigeria and other ECOWAS member states sent peace-keeping troops into Monrovia in August 1990, hundreds of Nigerian and other West African civilians resident in Liberia, including children, were taken hostage by the NPFL and many were killed. An interim government was set up in Monrovia, initially the only part of Liberia not controlled by the NPFL.

In 1991 the conflict spread to neighbouring Sierra Leone, where it again resulted in hundreds of deliberate and arbitrary killings of prisoners and civilians by both rebel forces and the Sierra Leone authorities. The NPRAG has continually failed to abide by several peace accords and to allow the NPFL to be disarmed and encamped under the supervision of the ECOMOG force, accusing it of not being neutral in the conflict.

From mid-1992 onwards thousands of refugees fled renewed fighting and inter-ethnic killings by the NPFL and ULIMO, most of them to Monrovia. In July and August 1992 ULIMO seized control of areas of Liberia between the border with Sierra Leone and Monrovia which had previously been held by the NPFL. In mid-August 1992 civilians accused of supporting the opposing faction were reportedly killed by both sides as they contested control of Tubmanburg, 60 kilometres north of Monrovia. However, refugees did not confirm the NPRAG's claim that as many as 1,500 people had been killed in Tubmanburg. On 24 September 1992 Charles Taylor acknowledged that NPFL troops were "perpetrating atrocities" and said that he would take "drastic military action" against those responsible for assaulting some of the 600 ECOMOG troops detained by the NPFL for a week in early September. On 25 September NPFL forces reportedly killed about 15 civilians in Kle (Klay), 45 kilometres north of Monrovia.

5. EUR 01/WU 01/92 EXTERNAL  
EMBARGOED FOR 27 NOVEMBER 1992

INTERNAL

The following news release is being released by the EC office in Brussels on 27 November in a press conference. Sections who would like further information on the report or press conference should contact the EC representative at Tel No: +32 2 537 1302.

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EXTERNAL

EUROPE: EUROPEAN COMMUNITY "STACKING THE DECK" AGAINST GENUINE ASYLUM SEEKERS

European Community governments are "stacking the deck" against genuine refugees through their increasing preoccupation with blocking so-called bogus asylum-seekers -- an approach that could have a knock on effect around the world, Amnesty International said today.

"Tens of thousands of asylum-seekers fleeing for their lives or safety are knocking at the doors of the European Community, often in vain, while the governments seem to be more concerned with the growing number of what they consider to be fraudulent or undeserving asylum claims," the human rights organization said.

In releasing its new report on EC governments' proposals for common asylum policies, Amnesty International is launching an appeal to those governments not to single-handedly reinterpret international refugee law in ways which undermine some of the basic principles of refugee protection.

The organization said that the new proposals would set a dangerous precedent for the treatment of asylum-seekers elsewhere in Europe and around the world, where governments may be expected to follow the EC once these common policies are adopted.

"The watering down of refugee protection in Europe is all the more disturbing because all the decisions are being taken behind closed doors -- without public or parliamentary debate or the involvement of independent experts and refugee organizations," Amnesty International said.

One of the proposals could lead to all EC countries using a special speedy process for dealing with "manifestly unfounded" asylum claims, a process which Amnesty International fears would not guarantee a fair hearing or allow adequate appeals. The EC governments are also attempting to widen the definition of what would be considered an abusive or unfounded asylum claim to include claims where the asylum-seeker could have sought protection in another part of his/her country of origin, or in a third country.

The EC governments are also coming up with a common line on returning asylum-seekers to third countries outside Europe where the governments believe they should be seeking asylum rather than in Europe.

Although the proposals state that asylum seekers would be returned only to third countries which provide them with effective protection against being returned to countries where they face human rights violations, Amnesty International is concerned that EC governments have not taken measures which will ensure that such protection is guaranteed in every individual case of possible return. Moreover, there are no binding international agreements setting out explicitly the essential principles that countries must include in their asylum procedures to ensure that those at risk are identified and given protection.

Even within the 12 EC countries, Amnesty International has documented a number of shortcomings in asylum procedures which have led to asylum seekers being sent back against their will to countries where they were subjected to serious human rights violations.

There is also great concern that the EC governments will jointly apply the notion of countries in which there is "generally no risk of persecution". Such a concept is already in force in some European countries and would mean that asylum-seekers coming from countries considered to be "safe" would not be granted a full hearing taking account of their individual experiences or risks.

All these proposals touch on the fundamental principles of refugee and asylum law which have been carefully worked out by the international community for over forty years.

"The measures now being discussed would amount to a reinterpretation of some of those principles, arrived at by a small group of powerful governments which treat many asylum-seekers as illegal immigrants and not as people fleeing from persecution and deserving special treatment," Amnesty International said.

In its report, Amnesty International reiterates its call for an international agreement based on a number of essential principles to ensure that all asylum-seekers receive a fair and satisfactory hearing of their claim, including the examination by a fully independent and competent body and the right to appeal, with suspensive effect on expulsion, against a negative decision.

"Using these principles, EC governments can still deal with the increasing number of asylum claims quickly. They would also have a clear international standard to determine if a third country would provide proper protection for asylum-seekers," Amnesty International said.

The organization said that EC governments haven't done enough to address the serious human rights violations that force asylum-seekers to flee, and instead are looking for a "quick fix" to the problem by obstructing access to asylum procedures for all those trying to find safety from persecution.

A recent example of this is the visa requirements which have been imposed by many European governments for people fleeing persecution in the former Yugoslavia.

"If this is the EC response to the worst refugee crisis in Europe since World War II, we have to fear the worst for all those who will continue to seek protection in the EC from persecution at home," Amnesty International said.

No. of words: 1398

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FROM: PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS

DATE: 27 NOVEMBER 1992

ADDITION TO WEEKLY UPDATE SERVICE 47/92

Contained in this addition to the weekly update are external items on Iraq and East Timor.

1. MDE 14/WU 02/92

EMBARGOED FOR MONDAY 30 NOVEMBER 1992

INTERNAL

Please note the following item is embargoed for Monday 30 November 1992 and will be sent out to international agencies by the IS Press Office on Monday morning, for immediate release. Apologies for the short notice but we need to act as quickly as possible to be in time for the drafting of the resolution on Iraq.

Please draw this to the attention of your home government lobbyists. Sections in the the UK, Denmark, Portugal, France, Belgium, New Zealand and the US are particularly requested to give this matter high priority by urgently raising the issue of human rights in Iraq with their Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They should say that the EC last week strongly endorsed the recommendation to establish on-site monitors in Iraq made by the Special Rapporteur on Iraq, and urge that steps toward the implementation of this recommendation be included in the draft resolution on Iraq to be considered by the General Assembly next month.

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EXTERNAL

IRAQ: MARSH ARABS STILL PERSECUTED, UN SHOULD MONITOR HUMAN RIGHTS ON-SITE

Amnesty International said today that human rights violations have continued to escalate in the marshes of southern Iraq since the end of August -- when an air exclusion zone was imposed by the United States, United Kingdom and French forces -- and again called on the United Nations (UN) to take concrete steps to protect human rights in Iraq.

"The level of violations makes it clear that it's time for the UN to act. A proposal by the UN Special Rapporteur was made months ago to set up on-site human rights monitors in the country -- that action could have saved countless lives if it had been acted on sooner," the human rights organization said.

Amnesty International has long urged that a special UN team should be sent to Iraq, with powers to investigate alleged abuses, ensure protection for victims and work with the government to help enforce human rights standards. "The UN has another chance to take up this

potentially life-saving proposal when the General Assembly considers a resolution on Iraq next month. We urge the General Assembly to endorse on-site monitoring as a matter of urgency and ensure that further concrete action on this proposal is taken."

In recent weeks, Amnesty International has received reports from eyewitnesses, some of whom fled their villages to escape bombardments, telling of widespread arrests and executions, along with the torture of detainees and the deliberate killing of unarmed civilians outside the context of armed conflict.

Amnesty International believes that since April this year, when the military authorities issued orders to the local population of the marshes to evacuate the area, there has been a policy of deliberately targeting non-combatant civilians. In September, the organization reported instances of the extrajudicial execution of unarmed civilians through aerial attacks. Although the air exclusion zone has put an end to the aerial attacks, government forces have stepped up ground attacks which are now accompanied by widespread arbitrary arrests and the torture or execution of detainees.

Amnesty International has recently received many eye-witness reports of human rights violations in the region. These statements suggest an emerging pattern of tank and artillery shelling of towns and villages followed by arbitrary arrests by infantry brigades in areas penetrable on foot. For example, a 64-year-old farmer from al-Qurna stated that scores of people were arrested at random after an attack on the village of al-Salem near al-Mudaina (Basra province) in early September; a 35-year-old religious scholar from al-'Agar (Misan province) testified that widespread arrests of unarmed civilians followed artillery and mortar attacks on the town in the same period, and that those arrested included families fleeing the bombardment; scores of people, including women and children, were also reportedly arrested after the town of al-'Atwaniyya (Misan province) was surrounded by government troops in a dawn raid on 27 October.

In the second week of October, widespread arrests were reportedly carried out by government forces in the context of the officially-named "punitive campaign" (al-Hamla al-Ta'dibiyya). Several thousand people were said to have been arrested in Misan province; many of them reportedly unarmed civilians arrested from their homes or in the streets at random by the security forces, apparently as part of the authorities' efforts to intimidate the population and to crush any form of resistance to the central government.

The detainees were reportedly held at the 4th Army Corps' headquarters in the city of al-'Amara, although a small number of them have since been transferred to Baghdad. According to reports received, many of the detainees were held for short periods of up to 20 days and tortured or ill-treated, and released only after making payments of 3000-4000 Iraqi dinars. Amnesty International has received the names of some of these detainees. Other earlier mass arrests have also been reported.

What happened to many of those detainees since the imposition of the air exclusion zone remains unknown, and there are growing fears that some may have been extrajudicially executed while in custody. Among the testimonies received by Amnesty International were those of two former detainees released in June this year after being held for four months at al-Radwaniyya garrison south west of Baghdad. Both men reported that they had been held in one of six makeshift cells in the yard of the garrison, each of which held about 300 detainees.

The two men stated that they had been tortured while in custody, including being subjected to repeated beatings and electric shocks, and that several detainees had died under torture -- one detainee apparently died from severe burns after being tied to a skewer and roasted over a flame. According to their testimonies, hundreds of detainees were executed during the four months they spent in custody. The victims, most of whom were arrested after the March 1991 uprising, were apparently lined up against palm trees, blindfolded and executed by firing squad; their bodies were then buried in one of several mass graves in the garrison.

Amnesty International believes that such gross violations make it imperative that the international community take immediate and effective steps to address the critical human rights situation in Iraq.

The human rights organization said it continues to support the recommendation to establish on-site monitors in Iraq made by the Special Rapporteur on Iraq in his first report to the UN Commission on Human Rights last February and reiterated by him in July and November to the General Assembly. "It is regrettable that no action on this important recommendation, which would do much to safeguard those at risk in Iraq and prevent further human rights violations from occurring, has yet been taken," said the organization. "The Commission on Human Rights requested the Special Rapporteur, in consultation with the Secretary-General, to develop further his recommendation for on-site monitors, and

report on this to the General Assembly. We hope that the General Assembly will endorse this recommendation and ensure that concrete action is taken in this regard without delay."

2. ASA 21/WU 06/92 EXTERNAL

27 November 1992

EAST TIMOR: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S REQUEST TO VISIT EAST TIMOR REJECTED BY INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT

The Indonesian Government has formally rejected Amnesty International's request to visit East Timor, saying that a visit would interfere with government efforts to "normalize the situation" in the territory. The organization had asked to send a delegation to Dili on the occasion of the anniversary of the 12 November 1991 massacre and has been refused access to the territory, and to Indonesia, for more than 15 years.

In a letter to Amnesty International's Secretary General, dated 17 November 1992, the Director General of Political Affairs of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the government "appreciated the intention" of the proposed visit, but had to be "very selective" in agreeing to such visits because they "...tend to occasion some excitement among the people..." of East Timor. It added that the East Timorese people "...need more time to settle down to a calm atmosphere and recover from the traumatic event of 12 November last year." The letter concluded that a "...high frequency of such visits will not be conducive to our efforts to normalize the situation as soon as possible."

Despite increased restrictions on access to the territory since the November 1991 massacre, the government's letter claimed that East Timor "...remains open to visits by foreign groups and organisations and requests for such visits are always seriously considered." As evidence, the letter cited the personal visit of Mr William Treat, a former member of the UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, on 6-7 November 1992. Mr Treat and his wife, the first foreign "delegation" to visit the territory in several months, stressed that their trip was not made in any official capacity. Prior to their two day trip to Dili, European and Australian parliamentary delegations had been denied requests to visit East Timor.