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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - **RWANDA** - embargoed for 6 April (this item will be released to international media)

INTERNAL - NOTE TO PO WORKING ON SUDAN CAMPAIGN

PLEASE NOTE CORRECTION:

USA news release (NS 63/95, 27,3 95)
4th paragraph, 6th line:
Please add Yemen to the list of countries.

URGENT NOTE TO PO:

The IS will be sending a press release to all sections tomorrow about the situation in Burundi; the researcher came back from a mission on Sunday.
The IS research department and CCR are discussing further membership action on Burundi. Please inform other section staff, such as campaign coordinators, that more information and suggestions will be coming soon. For further information please refer to the following Urgent Action:
AFR 16/04/95 UA 77/95 : "Torture: Burundi".

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Campaign on Women - 7 March - SEE NEWS SERVICE 12/95, 34/95, 37/95, 42/95 & 44/95

RWANDA - 6 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 37/95

SYRIA - 11 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 32/95

GERMANY - 23 MAY - SEE NEWS SERVICE 59/95

ETHIOPIA - JUNE - SEE NEWS SERVICE 59/95

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

** BAHRAIN - 30 APRIL ** This item will focus on testimonies of Bahrainees who have been tortured while in detention.

ISRAEL AND OCCUPIED TERRITORIES - 11 May - SEE NEWS SERVICE 59/95

IRAN - 31 May - SEE NEWS SERVICE 59/95

EVENTS AND MISSIONS

The details below are for your information only, and there may or may not be media work involved. Can you please not publicize anything until further notice from the IS.

Brazil - 28 March (Pierre's visit) - SEE NEWS SERVICE 29/95, 59/95, 60/95

MISSION TO BURUNDI 13 - 27 March - SEE NEWS SERVICE 37/95

MISSION TO KENYA 16 March - 2 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 37/95

MISSION TO HAITI 18 March - 3 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 58/95

MISSION TO CHAD - 27 April - SEE NEWS SERVICE 59/95

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL 6 APRIL 1995
AI INDEX: AFR 47/WU 02/95

RWANDA: INTERNATIONAL ACTION NEEDED TO ENSURE JUSTICE AND PREVENT REVENGE

On the anniversary of the slaughter of an estimated one million people that began in Rwanda one year ago, Amnesty International noted that no one has yet been brought to justice despite promises of international assistance.

"The longer the Rwandese people wait to see justice done, the greater the likelihood of gross injustice: either the evidence for prosecution will be destroyed or those suspected of killings -- who are innocent until proven guilty -- will 'disappear' or be killed," the human rights organization said.

Amnesty International today published a report describing how the Rwandese judicial system -- shattered by the conflict -- is not able to bring documented suspects to justice or ensure that those against whom there is insufficient evidence are released from detention.

"The international community has failed Rwanda, by not helping to re-establish a judicial system that ensures fair trials and excludes the death penalty in all cases," Amnesty International said.

"Rwanda needs police and forensic experts, judges, prosecutors and defence lawyers to prevent those responsible for atrocities from evading justice and to protect its citizens from baseless accusations," the organization added.

The UN Security Council established the International Tribunal for Rwanda in November 1994 after a lengthy delay. The prosecutor quickly secured funding and sent a six-person team of investigators to Kigali in January 1995. Nevertheless, the tribunal requires far more resources to investigate and try more than a limited number of cases and its existence does not remove the urgent need for trials by the national authorities.

The 15-page report also describes how people assumed to be guilty of genocide and other crimes against humanity are arbitrarily detained and ill-treated in overcrowded prisons. Still more are killed, "disappear" or are detained in secret jails where they are at risk of being tortured.

In an incident in March 1995, for example, 22 people died from suffocation after a group of more than 70 detainees were crowded into a single cell -- designed to hold only 10 prisoners -- at Muhima Gendarmerie brigade in the capital, Kigali.

Reports earlier this year indicated that up to seven people were dying daily in Kigali prison, which was designed for 1,500 prisoners but currently holds about 5,000. Similar overcrowding occurs in other prisons, with more than 23,000 detained by March 1995, and about 100 more arrested each day.

Conditions are equally bad outside the official prisons. Josephine Mukanyangezi, a widow with two young children, was once a judge in Kigali. Arrested in September 1994 by army officers, Josephine Mukanyangezi and her children were detained in a pit latrine at a private house and forced to sit in battery acid. She remains detained without charge in Kigali prison.

The Rwandese judicial system clearly cannot cope: many judges and lawyers were killed between April and July 1994, and others have since been imprisoned or fled. Out of 800 magistrates in the country before the massacres, only 200 remain. There are only 12 prosecutors, and only 36 criminal investigators out of 360 previously employed by the government.

In this chaotic situation, government soldiers can take the law into their own hands. For example, the former president of the Kigali High Court was "disappeared" in October 1994 when his duties as a magistrate brought him into conflict with military authorities. Just before being taken away by soldiers, Gratien Ruhorahoza had listed 80 prisoners he intended to release for lack of evidence. Ruhorahoza is not in any official prison but may be detained in a military camp, where he is at risk of torture or execution.

"Our sources in Rwanda claim that government soldiers assassinated the Hutu Prefect of Butare, Pierre-Claver Rwandgabo, who dared speak out against the mass arrests," Amnesty International said. "Soldiers are rearresting or 'disappearing' prisoners who have been released by judicial officials because they were unlawfully held."

Outside Rwanda, former government supporters continue to kill and terrorize in the refugee camps of Tanzania and Zaire, killing dozens suspected of supporting the new Rwandese government, Amnesty International said. Yet many remain in the refugee camps because they are afraid of returning home.

"Many refugees are refusing to return to Rwanda because of these arbitrary arrests and "disappearances", which take place despite official promises that they have nothing to fear," Amnesty International said.

Among those arrested after returning to Rwanda are dozens of former government soldiers and officials who had been recalled to join the new government. For example, Jean Mukuralinda, a former Butare High Court magistrate, was arbitrarily arrested when he returned at the invitation of the new minister of justice. Jean Mukuralinda remains in prison today.

Amnesty International welcomed the government's 1994 creation of a committee to screen detainees for release, pending judicial review of these cases. But the organization questions its impartiality and effectiveness: three committee members represent agencies carrying out most of the arrests, and only six detainees have been ordered released by March 1995.

ENDS\

INTERNAL

NOTE TO PRESS OFFICERS WORKING ON THE SUDAN CAMPAIGN:

The following is an excerpt from a news release received at the International Secretariat on 21 March 1995 from the United Nations Operation Lifeline Sudan.

We are forwarding it to press officers to assist them in Sudan campaign work, since this press release confirms one of AI's main campaign messages: "The violation of human rights lies at the root of the humanitarian emergency in Sudan."

NEWS RELEASE: For immediate use

Humanitarian emergency feared in northern Bahr el Ghazal

Nairobi, 21 March 1995: Increasing food shortages could lead to a humanitarian emergency in northern Bahr el Ghazal province, southern Sudan, following widespread fighting and militia raiding in recent months.

Most villages which were served by the UN and NGOs working under Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) have been severely affected, according to Philip O'Brien, OLS Coordinator, who returned at the weekend from a visit to the area.

"In Lietnhom, Malualkon and Turalei, the villages and crops were completely destroyed by militia forces. In Malualkon, all educational materials were burnt, even the chalk.

"People have lost what would have been a very good harvest and we are now seeing the beginning of food shortages. Any failure of logistical support or flight access could lead to a rapid decline into serious malnutrition and possibly deaths, especially among young children," he said.

Mr. O'Brien, also UNICEF Chief of Operations, visited northern Bahr el Ghazal with staff from the World Food Programme (WFP) to assess humanitarian needs and the feasibility of establishing a new relief base in the area. The previous base in Akon was evacuated on Christmas eve because of insecurity. Since then, OLS has been denied permission for relief flights to Akon and nearby Lietnhom, forcing agencies to fly to smaller centres where fewer people can be reached.

"The region is extremely unstable. The sense of insecurity and anxiety about an impending raid was palpable," said Mr O'Brien. "Until security settles down and unless we regain flight access to Akon and Lietnhom, which we have requested, all we can do is send in small, mobile relief teams on short assignments."

WFP will continue distributing food to civilians in need in Bahr el Ghazal, where flight clearances, security and logistics (sic) capacity allows. WFP estimates that more than 105,000 people in the area need food assistance.
