
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 104/93

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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - SOUTH AFRICA

NEWS INITIATIVES - INTERNAL

Expulsion in Sweden

Mónica Castillo Páez was forcibly expelled from Sweden on the morning of Saturday 21 August, accompanied by Swedish officials. She asked for asylum in transit at Schipol Airport, Amsterdam, en route to Peru. The authorities in the Netherlands are now examining her asylum claim. Please see UA 183/93 (8 June), plus UA updates on 13 and 23 August, for further information.

Former-Yugoslavia

Please note: Former-Yugoslavia Information Sheet 4 will be sent to sections this week - please contact your Campaign Coordinators for copies.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Saudi Arabia - 14 September

The news release was sent to you today and a Q&A is being prepared, which should be ready some time next week.

**Yugoslavia/Kosovo - 23 September

An international news release is planned for 23 September and a regional launch is being considered. Further info will follow.

Sudan - 29 September - SEE NEWS SERVICE 88

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

Yemen - 26 August - SEE NEWS SERVICE 95

North Korea - 1 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 88

FORTHCOMING NEWS INITIATIVES

Myanmar - 8 October (international).

EJEs and "Disappearances" - 20 October (international)

Venezuela - 10 November (international, linked to EJEs & Disappearances)

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SOUTH AFRICA: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL RESPONDS TO ANC REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

Amnesty International has welcomed the African National Congress' (ANC) decision to release the report of an independent inquiry into human rights abuses by its members. Amnesty International has not yet seen the report, however, it is apparently thorough in many respects although it stops short of recommending that no one implicated in human rights abuses should be allowed to hold a senior post in the ANC, or indeed in any future government of South Africa or its security forces. Nor does it suggest that there should be criminal charges brought.

And, says Amnesty International, these failings could be significant. "Unless those responsible for human rights abuses are brought to justice, the patterns of torture and killings are all too likely to be repeated in the future," said the human rights organization.

Despite these shortcomings, however, Amnesty International welcomed the report from the Motsuenyani Commission, which the ANC appointed in the wake of recommendations of a previous commission last year. The organization sent a delegate to attend the commission hearings in May this year.

In contrast with the previous commission, held in camera, the Motsuenyani Commission was held in public - a decision which Amnesty International believes has enhanced this process of disclosure and accountability. The commission also took note of other concerns raised by Amnesty International and others about the 1992 commission, and addressed the issue of killings and "disappearances" at the hands of the ANC's security department in the 1980s.

The Motsuenyani Commission has apparently also named at least two senior ANC figures as implicated in human rights abuse. The Commission has also recommended that immediate superiors of ANC officials found guilty of violations should be held indirectly responsible for these violations. This willingness to look at the chain of command and insist that the ANC leadership as well as rank and file members take responsibility, will strengthen the growth of greater accountability within the ANC and is very positive, said Amnesty International.

The report apparently also calls for compensation to be paid to people whose rights were violated and for continuing investigations into the fate of those who "disappeared" while in ANC custody. Other steps recommended include the ANC making public apologies to the victims of these abuses and disciplinary action by the ANC against those responsible for abuses and their seniors.

Although there is still a danger that the necessary follow-up action by the ANC will not be undertaken, says Amnesty International, this process of investigation and willingness to accept responsibility by ANC leadership is in marked contrast to the record of the South African Government, which steadfastly refuses even to admit that human rights are violated by their security forces.

Amnesty International continues to receive reports of torture and ill-treatment of detainees by members of the police and army. The government has refused to authorize an independent investigation of these on-going human rights violations, despite having signed the United Nations Convention Against Torture in January 1993.

ENDS/