
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 105/93

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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - NICARAGUA, SYRIA, PERU (Spanish - English to follow)

NEWS INITIATIVES - INTERNAL

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Saudi Arabia - 14 September

****CORRECTION**** Saudi Arabia news release, AI Index: MDE 23/09/93. Third paragraph, first line should read: "The vast majority of Saudi Arabian citizens are Sunni Muslims and the official creed of the state is the Wahabi doctrine of Islam."

Yugoslavia/Kosovo - 23 September - SEE NEWS SERVICE 104

Sudan - 29 September - SEE NEWS SERVICE 88

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

Death Penalty - next week

In view of the current media interest in the death penalty, we are preparing a media advisory, for immediate release some time next week, listing suggested themes on the death penalty around the world. It will be sent to you in a News Service. The IS will send it to international media.

Yemen - 26 August - SEE NEWS SERVICE 95

Iraq - 8 September

News service item on "disappeared" Kuwaitis during Gulf War. The IS press office will send to Middle East media. If you want a copy of this document in time for the embargo please get in touch with the IS press office - the document is 50 pages long and we will have to post it, so please contact us as soon as possible.

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)

AI INDEX: AMR 43/WU 03/93
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UPDATE TO NEWS SERVICE 102/93 - AI INDEX: AMR 43/WU 02/93

NICARAGUA: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONDEMNS HOSTAGE-TAKING BY "RECONTRA" GROUP

Amnesty International has learnt that following the incident on 19 August 1993 in which 40 people were taken hostage by a "recontra" group, some of the hostages have been released but, meanwhile, a pro-Sandinista group has taken more than 30 others hostage.

On Friday 20 August 1993, an armed group of Sandinista supporters stormed the headquarters of the coalition party National Opposition Union (UNO), in the capital Managua, taking hostage a group of around 30 people, among them Nicaragua's Vice-President Virgilio Godoy and former President of the National Assembly Alfredo César. The pro-Sandinista group, led by a former Sandinista army major, demanded the release of the government officials, parliamentarians and military officers held hostage by the "recontra" in Quilali, department of Nueva Segovia.

The President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro and former Sandinista President Daniel Ortega made a joint appeal for the release of all hostages by both rival groups.

From then on, both groups have released some of the hostages: on Saturday 21 August 1993, the pro-Sandinista group released 14 hostages as a gesture of goodwill. Subsequently on Sunday 22 August 1993, the "recontra" group freed 20 of its prisoners. This prompted the release on Monday 23 August 1993 of three more hostages by the Sandinista supporters.

A Commission made up of representatives from the government, the Sandinista Front, the coalition party UNO and a representative of the Organization of the American States, has been set up in order to mediate the release of all hostages.

Amnesty International unreservedly condemns human rights abuses such as hostage-taking and deliberate and arbitrary killings by armed opposition groups. The organization is very concerned about the safety of the remaining hostages on both sides, and urges the immediate and unconditional release of all the hostages still being held.

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INDICE AI: AMR 46/WU 05/93
25 DE AGOSTO DE 1993

PERU: AMNISTIA INTERNACIONAL CONDENA MASACRE DE ASHANINKAS ATRIBUIDA A "SENDERO LUMINOSO"

Amnistía Internacional está seriamente preocupada por la masacre de no menos de 62 personas, incluyendo a mujeres y niños, por atacantes identificados como militantes del grupo alzado en armas, Partido Comunista del Perú (Sendero Luminoso), PCP. Las víctimas en su mayoría provienen de 12 comunidades nativas del grupo étnico Asháninka. La matanza fue perpetrada el 19 de agosto de 1993 en la Provincia de Satipo, Departamento de Junín.

De acuerdo a información proveniente de una comisión eclesíastica que visitó la zona y entrevistó a sobrevivientes, miembros del Partido Comunista del Perú (Sendero Luminoso), PCP, fueron los responsables de la matanza. Aproximadamente 70 atacantes, fingiendo ser miembros de fuerzas gubernamentales de vigilancia denominadas patrullas de "defensa civil", habrían entrado por la tarde del miércoles 18 de agosto a 12 pueblos satipeños con lanzas, machetes y hachas. En cada una de estas comunidades los atacantes habrían asesinado a hombres, mujeres y niños, habiéndose retirado de la zona en la mañana del jueves 19 de agosto. Según los informes muchas de las víctimas fueron severamente mutiladas antes de ser asesinadas. Personas gravemente heridas, entre las cuales se encuentran ocho niños y una mujer, han sido trasladadas a Lima. El resto están siendo atendidos en la zona. Según las fuentes, la población desplazada se calcula en 700.

No es ésta la primera vez que el PCP lleva a cabo matanzas entre la población Asháninka en la provincia de Satipo.

Entre los casos investigados por delegados de Amnistía Internacional durante recientes visitas al país figuran una serie de homicidios de pobladores Asháninkas perpetrados por miembros del PCP en los distritos de Río Negro y San Martín de Pangoa, provincia de Satipo.

El 17 de mayo de 1990 fueron asesinados aproximadamente 30 hombres, mujeres y niños en Satipo que vivían en una casa comunal indígena en el asentamiento de Unión Alto Saniverí. Según el testimonio de uno de los dirigentes de la comunidad, la matanza fue un acto de represalia porque los miembros de la comunidad se habían negado a unirse a las filas del PCP.

Amnistía Internacional se opone sin reservas a la tortura y al homicidio de presos y a todos los demás homicidios deliberados y arbitrarios cometidos tanto por los grupos como el PCP como por las fuerzas de seguridad.

Es por esto que la organización exhorta al PCP a que repudie públicamente estos hechos y detenga la tortura y los homicidios deliberados y arbitrarios.

Asimismo Amnistía Internacional insta a las autoridades peruanas a que tomen todas las medidas necesarias para garantizar que las personas de la región en la Provincia de Satipo afectadas por estas atrocidades reciban protección adecuada y que se lleve a cabo una investigación exhaustiva, inmediata e imparcial de esta masacre.

Desde el comienzo de la década de los 80 Amnistía Internacional ha estado recibiendo información sobre ejecuciones sumarias y matanzas, en ocasiones de comunidades enteras. Estas atrocidades han sido cometidas tanto por el PCP como por las fuerzas militares y los grupos de defensa civil apoyados por ellos.

La posición declarada del PCP es que las comunidades que no lo apoyan están en su contra y por lo tanto se encuentran sujetas a represalias. Por otro lado, las comunidades vistas como colaboradoras - voluntarias o involuntarias - del PCP, pueden sufrir a su vez represalias por parte de las fuerzas de seguridad. En las palabras de un campesino, "estamos entre la espada y la pared. Si la autoridades no nos eliminan, nos elimina Sendero Luminoso".

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SYRIA: PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE DIES IN CUSTODY AFTER 23 YEARS IN DETENTION

Amnesty International has written to President Hafez al-Assad expressing grave concern about the death of Salah Jadid in al-Mezze Prison, Damascus, on 19 August 1993, after almost 23 years of detention without charge or trial.

The organization said: "It is deeply regretful that this man had to spend 23 years of his life behind bars as a prisoner of conscience and that the endless appeals for his release by Amnesty International over many years have come to nothing."

Amnesty International is gravely concerned at the circumstances surrounding Salah Jadid's sudden death and has called for an immediate inquest with the findings to be made public. His family have apparently been told officially that he died of "septic shock", acute kidney failure and a sharp drop in blood pressure. Previously he was reported to be suffering from osteoporosis and rheumatism of the joints.

Salah Jadid, born near the coastal city of Lataqiyya in North West Syria, was married with five children, the youngest of whom was born six months after his arrest. He was a lieutenant-colonel in the Syrian army and served as Army Chief-of-Staff between 1963 and 1965. In August 1965 he left the army and was appointed to the civilian post of Assistant Secretary General of the Regional Command of the Ba'th Party. He held this post until November 1970 when President Hafez al-Assad took power in a bloodless coup d'état. Salah Jadid and many other government and Ba'th Party officials refused to cooperate with President Hafez al-Assad and were arrested and detained. Many of them have since been released, mainly on health grounds, but at least seven remain in detention.

Jadid is the third person from his group of prisoners, former government and Ba'th Party officials held since 1970 and 1972, to have died within the last nine months. The other two are Dr Nour al-Din al-Atassi, the former President, and Muhammad Rabah al-Tawil, a former Minister of Interior, who died respectively in December 1992 and April 1993, months after their release in August 1992. Both had been in detention without charge or trial since December 1970.

This emerging pattern of deaths among this group of prisoners causes Amnesty International grave concern, particularly as seven of these prisoners of conscience continue to be held without charge or trial since their arrest in 1970 and 1972. The organization has yet again urgently appealed to President Hafez al-Assad to immediately and unconditionally release all seven prisoners of conscience and any other such prisoners.

The seven remaining detainees include Muhammad 'Id 'Ashawi, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Hadithe Murade, former member of the Regional Command and Political Office of the Ba'th Party, who have been held since their arrest in December 1970. All are said to be in poor health, suffering from various ailments brought on by over two decades of detention without charge or trial. Muhammad 'Id 'Ashawi has reportedly been suffering from acute anaemia, rheumatism and a stomach ulcer. The other five are: Dafi Jam'ani (in his early seventies), 'Abd al-Hamid Miqdad (in his late fifties), 'Adel Na'issa (in his early sixties), Fawzi Rida (in his early sixties), and Mustafa Rustum (in his early sixties).

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