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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - EAST TIMOR, This item goes with a short document that has just been finalized. It is being sent for immediate release to international media - please call the IS Press Office if you need to have the report faxed to you urgently.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Colombia - 5 August - SEE ITEM SENT OUT IN NEWS SERVICE 157/94. Please note that there may be some changes to this item, I will let you know what these are as soon as possible.

Kosovo - 20 September - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

Algeria - first week of October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

France - ** 12 October** - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

Bhutan/Nepal - 25 August - See news service 168/94

Brazil - 14 September - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

Togo - 15 September - See news service 168/94

Indonesia - 28 September - LAUNCH OF CAMPAIGN

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INDONESIA/EAST TIMOR: PROTESTERS BEATEN, DETAINED AND "DISAPPEARED"

Recent beatings, detentions and "disappearances" of East Timorese pro-independence protesters contradict assurances by the Indonesian Government that the situation in East Timor is 'normal' and the human rights problems resolved. Amnesty International said in a report issued today.

"While the Indonesian Government has insisted upon its commitment to human rights principles, in practice anyone who expresses even the mildest criticism of Indonesian rule in East Timor continues to be at risk of torture or arbitrary detention," the organization said.

At least three young activists were reportedly arrested on 10 July for organizing a brief demonstration during a visit to East Timor by the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, arbitrary and summary executions. Their current circumstances are unknown and there are serious fears for their safety.

The following week, on 14 July, security forces violently broke up what was described by eye-witnesses as a largely peaceful demonstration at the University of East Timor campus. Dozens of students were severely beaten by police, up to nine people reportedly "disappeared" and at least 22 were arrested during and after the demonstration.

Restrictions on access to police and military detention centres by independent human rights monitors have made it impossible to determine the number and fate of those arrested. Amnesty International is seriously concerned that detainees may be at risk of torture and "disappearance".

Later in July, the military command in East Timor was reported to be searching for anyone suspected of organizing or participating in the demonstration. One student organizer was reportedly captured on 23 July and subjected to a public beating for three hours before being taken away by soldiers to an unknown fate.

These developments confirm fears expressed by Amnesty International in its annual statement before the UN Special Committee on Decolonization on 13 July. The statement documents human rights violations, including torture and killings which have occurred during the past year.

At the Committee, the human rights organization pointed out that through their inaction, member states of the UN share the blame for the continuing human rights problem in East Timor.

In its report, Amnesty International deplored the recent beatings and torture of students and other pro-independence activists and called upon the Indonesian Government to act immediately to guarantee the safety of all detainees and make public information about their whereabouts.

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