
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 246/94

TO: PRESS OFFICERS
FROM: IS PRESS OFFICE
DATE: 28 OCTOBER 1994

AI INDEX: NWS 11/246/94
DISTR: SC/PO
NO OF WORDS:604

INTERNAL

NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - **AFGHANISTAN** (This item is being sent to targeted media by the IS)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

APEC - 3 November - SEE NEWS SERVICE 243 AND NEWS SERVICE 212/94

Peru/Committee against Torture - 9 November - SEE NEWS SERVICE 243/94

Iraq - 29 November - SEE NEWS SERVICE 212/94

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

News Service 246/94

AI INDEX: ASA 11/WU 06/94
28 OCTOBER 1994

AFGHANISTAN: 12,000 PEOPLE KILLED SINCE APRIL 1992 WHILE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS KEPT QUIET

The international community is still turning a blind eye to the almost daily killings of dozens of unarmed civilians in jet bombings, artillery and mortar attacks and machine gun battles where some 12,000 people have died since April 1992, according to Amnesty International.

"Warring factions have ignored international calls for a ceasefire and the international community, so vocal against the violation of the human rights of the civilian population in other parts of the world, has remained virtually silent about the human rights catastrophe in Afghanistan," Amnesty International said.

New reports have just been received about two people killed and 50 injured during fresh attacks on the country's capital, Kabul, on 26 October. Between 21 and 24 October at least 95 people were reportedly killed and over 290 wounded. This is only a fraction of the number killed or injured in Kabul since Mujahideen groups took power in April 1992.

On 21 October, at least 45 people were killed and 150 wounded in a round of artillery and mortar fire around Kabul University, the Deh Mazang area and the so-called television mountain. Eyewitnesses reported that one of the bombs hit a school housing displaced people, killing 10.

"This attack -- which took place only two days after the UN peace envoy, Mahmoud Mestiri, met with Afghan party leaders to discuss a solution to the country's crisis -- shows yet again the warring sides' total disregard for any initiative that could bring the killings to an end", Amnesty International said.

Amnesty International is calling on all parties to the Afghanistan civil war to uphold the principles of international humanitarian law and halt the deliberate and arbitrary killing of unarmed civilians.

Civilians in residential areas around the country have been subjected to jet bombings, artillery and mortar attacks as well as machinegun battles, while Kabul has suffered such attacks almost daily.

Another round of rocket attacks on Kabul on 23 October reportedly left at least 15 people dead and 43 injured; and in a fresh barrage of rockets on Kabul on 24 October, at least 35 people were killed and 98 wounded. Hospital

sources in Kabul have announced that they are unable to cope with the arrival of so many seriously wounded patients.

All factions in the ongoing civil war are engaged in the indiscriminate and arbitrary shelling of residential areas throughout the country; but reports indicate that attacks on Kabul residential areas are launched most often by an alliance led by the Hezb-e Islami of Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar fighting the forces of President Rabbani which control most parts of the city. The vast majority of the victims have been unarmed civilians killed in the streets of Kabul, or in their houses or in dwellings where they had sought shelter after their homes had been destroyed. Some have also been killed or injured when hospitals have been hit.

According to one estimate, up to 800 people have been killed and 17,000 wounded in attacks against Kabul between 12 September and 12 October alone. Hundreds more have been killed and thousands more have been wounded since 1 January when the Supreme Coordination Council, a new alliance of the Hezb-e Islami of Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and the northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum, launched an attack against Kabul to overthrow President Rabbani.

ENDS\