



amnesty

international newsletter

JANUARY 1984 Volume XIV Number 1

Appeal for worldwide amnesty

More than one and a half million people have signed *AI's* Appeal for a Universal Amnesty for All Prisoners of Conscience.

At a special ceremony on the eve of Human Rights Day, 10 December, the organization handed over a petition on behalf of the signatories to the United Nations Secretary-General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, and the President of the General Assembly, Jorge E. Illueca.

The hand-over in New York launched a weekend of worldwide action in support of the appeal. Members of *AI* and other human rights activists were out in many countries on 10 December collecting more signatures.

"Signatures are still flowing in and we aim to get thousands more. We will be able to tell the UN human rights commission when it meets next year that this is a real demonstration of world conscience," said *AI's* Secretary General, Thomas Hammarberg, who, with the organization's Chairperson, Suriya Wickremasinghe, handed the *AI* petition in to the UN.

Originally launched by *AI* a year ago with the support of seven Nobel Prize winners, including Andrei Sakharov and Willy Brandt, the appeal urges the release of people imprisoned for their political or religious beliefs, their colour or ethnic origin, who have not used or advocated violence.

"None of these people should be in prison," it says. "The fact that they have been arrested and punished because of their beliefs or origins is an affront to humanity."

AI knows of thousands of such prisoners, and there are believed to be many



AI appeal presentation: pictured with a copy of the appeal are *AI's* Chairperson, Suriya Wickremasinghe, and its Secretary General, Thomas Hammarberg, with UN Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar (front left) and General Assembly President Jorge E. Illueca (front right).

more whose cases the movement has not yet documented.

The weekend's drive saw demonstrations, marches and meetings across the world. The activities included the lighting of candles throughout Belgium for prisoners of conscience; an art exhibition in Mexico City; a human rights week in Venezuela, including radio and television programs devoted to the appeal; a "walk-athon" in Tokyo; marches in Denmark, with participants carrying white *AI* flags and blue UN flags; and "sign-ins" in

hundreds of towns and cities across the USA.

The amnesty appeal has been endorsed by Pope John Paul II and by a unanimous decision of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

It has been endorsed or circulated by 19 other international organizations, including the International Commission of Jurists, the Islamic Council, the World Jewish Congress, the International Press Institute, the International Federation of Journalists and trade unions representing tens of millions of members.

The appeal will remain open for further signatures until early February, when it will be presented to the UN Commission on Human Rights, whose 40th session runs from 6 February to 16 March 1984. See also pages 4 and 5.

At the time of going to press, *AI's* Appeal for a Universal Amnesty for All Prisoners of Conscience had been signed by 1,591,242 people from 122 countries. At least 200,000 signatures had come in during the previous month. Many thousands more are expected by February 1984.

The appeal has now been formally endorsed by the World Confederation of Labour; the International Transport Workers' Federation; the International Federation of Building and Wood Workers and by the *Central*

Latinoamericana de Trabajadores, Latin American Confederation of Workers.

In a letter to *AI*, the *Central* states: "We hereby assure you of the support of all our affiliated organizations in every Latin American country with more than 10 million workers, many of them still in prison or prevented by political, social or economic means from exercising their most elementary and fundamental human rights. On behalf of them, we offer our help, support and solidarity to you in this effort."

Also in this issue: ● Turkish peace group leaders jailed, page 2 ● Banishment in Zaire, page 6 ● Soviet mathematician arrested, page 7 ● Update on Egypt, page 8 ● Nicaraguan Indians freed, page 8

Turkey Peace group leaders jailed

A military court in Istanbul has sentenced 23 leading members of the Turkish Peace Association (TPA) to terms of imprisonment with hard labour, after convicting them on charges relating to membership of a banned organization, under Article 141 of the Turkish Penal Code.

The 23—who had been on trial since 24 June 1982—were all adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience.

Eighteen of them were sentenced by Military Court No. 2 to eight years' imprisonment plus two years eight months' internal exile, and the remaining five to five years' imprisonment plus 20 months' internal exile.

Two of the prisoners are reported to be seriously ill:

- **Mahmut Dikerdem**, aged 68, the TPA's President and a former Turkish ambassador, has cancer of the prostate and is said to need constant medical attention and a special diet. He received an eight-year prison sentence.

- **Orhan Apaydin**, aged 56, President of the Istanbul Bar Association, has one functioning kidney and a heart condition. He is said to be a frail man in need of constant medical attention. He received a five-year prison sentence.

Most of the 23 prisoners are in Metris Military Prison, Istanbul. In the second half of 1983 some 2,500 inmates there held a six-week hunger-strike to protest against conditions in the prison.

Relatives and associates have expressed grave concern about the conditions under which the TPA members are being held.

They are reportedly being kept in unheated, damp and crowded cells and there is anxiety about how some of the older among them will stand up to winters in Metris.

The 23 imprisoned TPA members were charged under Articles 141 and 142 of the Turkish Penal Code with membership of an illegal organization and making communist propaganda. Although the TPA

was a legal organization in Turkey until the military coup of September 1980—when all political organizations were banned—the prosecution maintained that its members' activities turned it into an organization banned under Article 141.

The 91-page indictment accused the TPA of having "used the holy name of Peace from the beginning as a cover, under which it carried out . . . the directives of the USSR".

The TPA was accused of trying to undermine Turkey's agreements with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and of intending to replace the existing order in Turkey with a Marxist-Leninist system.

The indictment stated that the TPA set about achieving these aims by collaborating with political parties, associations, trade unions, professional organizations and people of the same opinion inside and outside the country by making their opinions known through the printing of brochures and bulletins and the organizing of congresses, meetings and marches.

In particular, the TPA was said to have made propaganda in eastern and south-eastern Turkey—where most of the Kurdish ethnic minority live—"to promote racism and thus provoke division".

In *AI*'s view none of the charges brought against the TPA members or the evidence cited in the indictment to support them indicate that the defendants have used or advocated violence. *AI* believes that the defendants were indicted solely on the basis of their non-violent beliefs and activities; it has adopted those sentenced as prisoners of conscience and appealed to the Turkish authorities for their immediate and unconditional release.

- The fourth session of the trial was observed on *AI*'s behalf on 17 August 1982 by Professor Otto Triffterer, of the Institute of Criminal Law at the University of Salzburg, Austria □

Central African Republic Two sentenced for signing letter

Four leading members of a banned political party, the *Mouvement de libération du peuple centrafricain* (MLPC), were tried in Bangui between 21 and 25 November 1983 by the *Tribunal Spécial*, Special Tribunal, established for political cases.

They were accused of complicity in an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the government in March 1982 and of other offences against public order.

The defendants were assisted by lawyers and the trial was open to the public. An *AI* observer, *Maître Robert Durst* of the Paris Bar, was present throughout the four-day trial.

'Advocating disobedience'

The court did not convict the defendants on the complicity charges but found two of them, **Hugues Dobozeni** and **Dieudonné Padoundji-Yadjoua**, guilty of advocating disobedience to the government's orders. They were convicted of having signed a letter sent by the MLPC Political Bureau to President Kolingba at the beginning of March 1982; it announced the MLPC's intention to break the military government's ban on political activities. The letter also called upon President Kolingba to resign as head of state.

The two men were sentenced to two years' imprisonment each. They have no right of appeal against conviction or sentence. Both were arrested in March 1982 and are due for release in March 1984.

The court referred the cases of the two other defendants, **Théodore Bagayambo** and **Jean Methet-Yapende** back to the Procurator's Office for further inquiries. They remain in custody.

Ten others tried

Ten other defendants arrested after the March 1982 coup attempt are known to have been tried by the *Tribunal Spécial* since 24 October.

Four of them were acquitted and four others were convicted and sentenced to terms of up to three years' imprisonment on charges that included desertion, rebellion and illegal possession of weapons.

The cases of two others, **Jérôme Allam** and **Gaston Ouedane**, both members of the military government until the time of their arrest, were referred back to the Procurator's Office at the beginning of November for further inquiries. They were accused of failing to reveal their knowledge of a plot against the government to the appropriate authorities.

AI knows of four other detainees arrested in March 1982 in connection with the coup attempt who have not yet been brought to trial □



Some of the accused at the TPA trial: Mahmut Dikerdem (front row, left) and Orhan Apaydin (front row, right) are reported to be seriously ill. Seated between them is Reha Isvan, former Deputy Head of the Department of Education in Istanbul—her sentence was eight years' imprisonment.

Campaign for Prisoners of the Month



Each of the people whose story is told below is a prisoner of conscience. Each has been arrested because of his or her religious or political beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin or language. None has used or advocated violence. Their continuing detention is a violation of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. International appeals can help to secure the release of these prisoners or to improve their detention conditions. In the interest of the prisoners, letters to the authorities should be worded carefully and courteously. You should stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. In no circumstances should communications be sent to the prisoner.

Six prisoners, Pakistan

They are members of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) imprisoned after a secret trial for violating martial law regulations forbidding the publication of "objectionable material".

The six were arrested in early 1981 in connection with the publication of a fortnightly pamphlet, *Awam Dost*, and other material supporting the PPP. Under Pakistan's martial law (in force for six years), political parties, political activity and criticism of the armed forces are prohibited.

In May 1982 the six were tried in camera in Camp Jail, Lahore, and convicted by Special Military Court No. 42 of producing and distributing material critical of the government and aiming to promote the PPP.

They were sentenced on 17 October 1982 to seven years' imprisonment plus flogging: two of them to 20 lashes each and the others to 10 lashes each—to date the floggings have not been carried out. (Prisoners tried by Special Military Court have no right of appeal to a court of law.)

The six are: Sheikh **Sohail Ahmed**, a businessman; **Shahnawaz Bhatti**, a former Lahore municipal councillor; **Shoaib Mir**, a former test cricket umpire; **Majeed Malik**, **Nawaz Rabbani** and **Riaz Raja**.

Sheikh Sohail Ahmed is reported to have been manacled hand and foot and kept standing continuously for three days after arrest. He was then transferred to Kot Lakhpat Jail and reportedly held in solitary confinement in poor conditions for some 10 months before transfer to Camp Jail, where all six are serving their sentences.

AI has no information on the pre-trial treatment of the other prisoners.

The organization believes that all six have been imprisoned for the peaceful exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Please send courteous letters appealing for their release to: His Excellency President General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq / The Presidency / Muree Brewery Road / Rawalpindi / Pakistan.

Death Penalty

AI has learned of 76 people being sentenced to death in 14 countries and of 61 executions in eight countries during November 1983.

Dragos OLOIERU, Romania

A former teacher, aged 60, he is serving an eight-year prison term imposed in January 1982 for "propaganda against the socialist state".

Dragos Oloieru was arrested after he had written to various international humanitarian organizations complaining about his treatment by his employers and the Romanian authorities. One of his letters was broadcast by a foreign radio station in November 1981.

Dragos Oloieru, who had served a previous sentence on political charges (from 1959 to 1965), was dismissed from his work at a transport enterprise in 1980.

He subsequently sought redress from local and central authorities on the grounds that his dismissal had been unjust. His petitions reportedly did not receive a reply.

In the letter that was broadcast abroad, he claimed that he had been dismissed so that his job could go to a Communist Party member.

In May 1981, he said, he went to Bucharest to see the Central Committee of the Communist Party about his case—but an official there threatened him, saying he would be sent to a psychiatric institution if he persisted in trying to see the committee.

He alleged that his brother, Octavian, had been imprisoned in jails and psychiatric hospitals for political reasons for more than 17 years.

Dragos Oloieru was arrested in Radauti, Suceava county, on 4 December 1981 and appeared before the military court of Iasi in January 1982.

The charges against him were based on the broadcast letter. The court found that he had "disparaged the central organs of the state, and thus the social order of our country". On 13 January it sentenced him to eight years' imprisonment under Article 166 of the Romanian Criminal Code for "propaganda against the socialist state".

He is reportedly serving his sentence in Aiud prison, in Alba county and is said to suffer from chronic active hepatitis.

Please send courteous letters appealing for his release to: His Excellency President Nicolae Ceausescu / Calea Victoriei 49-53 / Bucharest / RS Romania.

Zahera Ahmad Badawi KAMAL, Israel/Occupied Territories

A physics teacher, aged 36, she has been administratively restricted for two and a half years.

Zahera Kamal, who had been politically active and involved in a number of Palestinian cultural and social organizations, was first served with a six-month restriction order in June 1980, in accordance with Articles 108-110 of the 1945 Defence Emergency Regulations. The order was renewed for the 7th time on 1 December 1983.

She lives with her parents in the Wadi al-Joz district of East Jerusalem and has been restricted to Jerusalem—although since late 1980 she has been permitted to travel the 12km to Ramallah each day to carry on her teaching job at the Women's Training Centre there.

She has to sign in at 02.30 p.m. every day at the Moscobiya police station, just inside West Jerusalem.

At night she is restricted to her home from an hour after sunset to an hour before sunrise. The police often call at the house to check that she is there.

AI is concerned because she has been restricted without having been formally charged or brought before a court of law. She has not been given details of any charges against her and has no right to challenge any evidence against her.

AI groups have asked the Israeli authorities to specify why she has been restricted but have received no reply. The available information does not suggest that she was involved in the use or advocacy of violence but rather that she has been restricted because of her non-violent political activities.

She is reported to be one of at least 62 Palestinians who have been placed under town arrest or had such restriction orders renewed in Israel or the Occupied Territories during 1983.

Please send courteous letters appealing for the restrictions on Zahera Kamal to be lifted to: Mr. Yitzhak Shamir / Prime Minister / Office of the Prime Minister / Jerusalem / Israel; and to: Mr. Moshe Arens / Minister of Defence / 7 "A" Street / Hakirya / Tel Aviv / Israel.

Prisoner releases and cases

AI learned in November of the release of 68 prisoners under adoption or investigation; it took up 196 cases.

If you prefer, you may send your appeals to the embassies of these governments in your country



A petition on behalf of well over a million signatories to AI's Appeal for a Universal Amnesty for All Prisoners of Conscience was presented to the United Nations at a special ceremony in New York on the eve of Human Rights Day, 10 December. AI's presentation address, by the Chairperson of its International Executive Committee, Suriya Wickremasinghe, is reproduced below, as well as statements by the President of the General Assembly, Jorge E. Illueca, and the UN Secretary-General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar.

A Universal Amnesty for All Prisoners of Conscience

Presentation address by Suriya Wickremasinghe:

6 We have come to the United Nations to speak on behalf of the thousands of men and women whose governments have imprisoned them because of their political or religious beliefs or because of their colour or ethnic origin, none of whom has used or advocated violence. These are prisoners of conscience. Their imprisonment violates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Most prisoners of conscience are detained for trying to exercise their rights to freedom of expression, association, assembly or movement. Trade union activity or participation in strikes or demonstrations is a common cause of imprisonment. Members of religious groups are jailed for religious practices which contravene restrictive limits set by the state. Some prisoners of conscience are held for actions taken as individuals; others for belonging to a group or movement. Some acted in direct opposition to the government in power, while others worked within the country's political system without seeking confrontation with authority. Some are held simply because of the political activity of members of their family, or for belonging to a national minority.

Few governments are willing to admit that they detain people in violation of internationally agreed norms. Some choose to give a very narrow interpretation to these standards. Other governments assert that they do not



The UN Secretary-General accepts AI's appeal from Suriya Wickremasinghe, with the President of the General Assembly looking on.

send people to prison for their beliefs, but only for criminal acts—while their legislation makes even the peaceful expression of dissent a crime. Some governments define the concept of national security so broadly that almost anyone suspected of being critical of the government can be detained.

Many prisoners of conscience in the world today were arrested because they themselves worked for the release of persons who should not be in jail, or because they tried to publicize facts about other human rights abuses.

A year ago, we felt that renewed effort was needed to have these people freed. The

result was the launching of the present Appeal for a Universal Amnesty for All Prisoners of Conscience. It has been circulated in 29 languages in more than 120 countries.

We started with 10 signatories, each a Nobel Prize winner. Today, a year later, we have more than a million and a quarter signatures.

The appeal has been signed by former presidents and heads of government, by scientists and artists, by newspaper editors and writers. But by far the majority of signatures are not from the leaders or makers of public opinion but from the public itself—from men and women of all walks of

life, from many cultures, speaking on this issue with one voice.

- A trade unionist in the Dominican Republic promised and delivered thousands of signatures from his members.

- Lawyers in Pakistan opened registers in Bar Associations in different towns so that people could come in and sign.

- We received the signatures of a ship's crew plying between New Zealand and Tahiti.

- In several regions, trade unions have thrown their weight behind the appeal—a Latin American confederation formally wrote to us endorsing the appeal on behalf of its 10 million members.

Asking that prisoners of conscience be freed does not mean that we identify ourselves with the views of those whose liberty we seek. What is at stake is the fundamental right freely to hold opinions and freely to express them. No person and no government has the right to a monopoly of truth or to deny to others the right to voice their ideas. This principle is an important part of the international agreements on human rights.

While we speak to you now, thousands of prisoners of conscience around the world are spending this day deprived of their basic human right to liberty, often in appalling conditions. They should be freed unconditionally.

Today, on the eve of commemoration of the 35th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, such arrests continue. We are not content on this occasion simply to remind ourselves of these victims. We are demanding that every prisoner of conscience be freed.

With these words, Mr President and Mr Secretary-General, on behalf of the more than a million signatories from all parts of the world, we present to you this Appeal for a Universal Amnesty for All Prisoners of Conscience, which is also being transmitted to all governments.

Such an amnesty would have implications far beyond the restoration of the individual freedom of the men and women concerned. It would be a historic step in the implementation of solemn obligations. It would advance respect for the dignity and worth of the human person everywhere.

Responding to the presentation of AI's appeal, the UN Secretary-General, Pérez de Cuéllar, said:

“I accept this appeal with deep concern. The story which it tells and which you have just related is indeed disturbing. In our day and age people should not have to suffer for their conscience, their beliefs or their opinions.

The Charter of the United Nations preaches tolerance and understanding among nations and peoples, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights requires that this very tolerance and understanding be practised between individual human beings as well as between governments and their people.

It is very distressing that, notwithstanding these commitments, there are still many thousands of political prisoners in the world today.

In drawing attention to this issue, Amnesty International has once again rendered a valuable service to the entire

international community. Your previous campaigns against torture, the death penalty, arbitrary and summary executions, and now against political imprisonment, have served to focus world opinion on these problems in a very special way.

I want you to know that we at the United Nations are grateful for the work which you are doing with such dedication and skill. The world owes you a debt of gratitude for your efforts.

I should also like to assure you that the Commission on Human Rights will be appropriately informed of this appeal.

Please rest assured that you have my full understanding and support even if, for reasons which you will appreciate, I sometimes must operate in ways which are different from yours.

I thank you very much for your courageous efforts and strongly encourage you to continue your good work.”

In a statement made after AI's appeal was presented at the UN, the President of the General Assembly, Jorge E. Illueca, said:

“The movement to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms is sponsored by the United Nations Organization under the powers given in Article 1 and other provisions of the United Nations Charter. However, it is evident that the formulation of binding general rules of international law for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms by adequate machinery for their enforcement still remains more a promise than an achievement.

The worldwide appeal for a Universal Amnesty for All Prisoners of Conscience presented today by Amnesty International... is in harmony with the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the General Assembly Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel,

inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and other human rights instruments proclaimed by the United Nations.

Without passing judgement as to the merits of any particular case, the appeal addressed to the General Assembly and to all governments endorsed by more than one million signatures, is giving effectiveness to the popular participation recommended by the General Assembly as an important factor in development and in the realization of human rights, and among them the fundamental right of the self-determination of peoples and nations.

Let me express to Amnesty International how grateful we are at the United Nations for the outstanding work it is performing to advance the ideals of the United Nations and the movement for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Amnesty International is making effectively good the rule that ‘eternal vigilance is the price of liberty’.”

Zaire Banishment for former members of parliament

President Mobutu of Zaire publicly confirmed at the end of November that six former members of the National Assembly (known in Zaire as "People's Commissioners") had been sent into internal banishment and restricted by administrative order to their villages of origin.

The banishment orders specify the restriction also of their wives and children.

The six—all formerly adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience—were among a group of 13 People's Commissioners who were originally arrested in January 1981 for having signed an "open letter" to President Mobutu criticizing his alleged failure to carry out government policies.

Although they were released at the end of 1981, 11 of the People's Commissioners were later rearrested and, in June 1982, brought to trial on charges of trying to set up a new political party, the *Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social* (UDPS), Union for Democracy and Social Progress.

Under the terms of its constitution, Zaire is a one-party state ruled by the *Mouvement populaire de la révolution* (MPR), People's Movement for the Revolution, and the attempt to set up an alternative party was alleged to have been a conspiracy to change the constitution.

After a one-day trial, the 11 and one other defendant, **Kibassa Maliba**, a former government minister, were convicted and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment.

Presidential amnesty

In May 1983 most sentenced political prisoners, as well as many who were being held without charge or trial, were released under a presidential amnesty. However, after their release **Kibassa Maliba** and many of the former People's Commissioners continued to be openly critical of the government.

During August 1983 they had a meeting in the capital, Kinshasa, with visiting members of the US House of Representatives and handed over a memorandum about the political situation in Zaire.

The former People's Commissioners attended this meeting wearing European-style suits and ties—although such clothes were banned in Zaire in 1972 by President Mobutu.

After leaving the meeting they were assaulted by members of the security forces and briefly detained. More than 50 other UDPS supporters were detained at the same time, although all but a few were released later that day.

One of those who was not released, **Bossassi Epole Bolya Kodya**, was arrested while trying to deliver another copy of the former People's Commissioners' memorandum to the US delegation. He is reported to be still in custody, being detained without charge or trial.



Lusanga Ngiele, one of the six former People's Commissioners banished by administrative order—the picture was taken after he had been assaulted by members of Zaire's security forces on 12 August 1983.

In October further arrests were reported in Kinshasa of suspected UDPS supporters, including one of the former People's Commissioners, **Kassala-Kalamba**. Five additional former People's Commissioners were arrested at their homes on 13 November, along with **Kibassa Maliba** and one other former political prisoner who had also been tried and convicted in June 1982, **Birindwa ci Birkashirwa**.

The six former People's Commissioners and two others were then taken from Kinshasa and sent to their respective regions of origin—in the centre, east and south of the country—where they were restricted to isolated villages under the terms of internal banishment orders.

No charges

No charges have been brought against them, but President Mobutu has indicated that their freedom of movement has been restricted because of their continued political activities.

More than 20 other suspected UDPS supporters arrested in October 1983 remain in detention in Kinshasa without charge or trial. They are reportedly held at the headquarters of the national security agency which, in November 1983, was renamed the *Agence nationale de documentation*, National Documentation Agency.

AI is concerned because these detainees are apparently being imprisoned on account of their non-violent political views; it is further concerned because, since the beginning of August 1983, more than 100 other people have been detained for short periods because of their suspected support for the UDPS□

Syrian lawyer released

Muwaffaq al-Din al-Kozbari, a Syrian lawyer detained without charge or trial since April/May 1980, was released in late November 1983.

The 53-year-old lawyer was one of a group of lawyers arrested in 1980 after a one-day strike by members of the Syrian legal profession on 31 March that year.

He was one of the imprisoned human rights activists featured in *AI's* October 1983 Prisoner of Conscience Week Campaign (see October Newsletter).

Other releases . . .

Technician freed in China after four years

A 39-year-old Chinese technician who had been held without trial since April 1979 is reported to have been released in the People's Republic of China after four years' detention.

Reports from Beijing say that **Ren Wanding**, prisoner of the month in December 1980, was freed in April 1983. He is said to be back working as a technician in a Beijing factory.

He was a founder of the Chinese Human Rights Alliance (CHRA), one of a number of groups established in Beijing at the end of 1978.

Ren Wanding and other CHRA members were arrested on 4 April 1979 while they were pasting up a poster on the "democracy wall" in Beijing. It criticized an article in the official paper, *The People's Daily*, justifying the ban on wall-posters and unofficial publications.

A few weeks after his arrest he was reported to have been charged with "counter-revolutionary" offences, but no report of the trial ever emerged.

Bible teacher freed on bail in Taiwan

Lin Wen-chen, aged 44, Dean of the Women's Bible Study School in Taipei, was one of four people adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience who were released from prison in Taiwan in October 1983.

She was granted bail on medical grounds on 4 October—she had been suffering from a stomach disorder and her health had deteriorated seriously over the last few months in detention. She was arrested in January 1980.

The other three prisoners were released on parole between two and four months before their sentences had expired. They are: **Yang Chin-chu**, a writer, aged 43, and two former employees of the banned opposition magazine *Formosa*, **Yu Ah-hsing** and **Chiu Chui-chen**□

Soviet Union KGB detain samizdat compiler

An internationally known mathematician who has been working in Moscow as a road-sweeper was rearrested in the Soviet capital on 17 November 1983, accused of helping to produce the unofficial human rights journal *A Chronicle of Current Events*.

Fifty-year-old **Yury Shikhanovich**—who was adopted by *AI* as a prisoner of conscience in the early 1970s—has been charged with “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda” and is now in Lefortovo KGB investigation prison awaiting trial.

If convicted, he faces a sentence of up to 12 years’ imprisonment and exile.

He was first arrested on the same charge in 1972, when over 200 individuals suspected of involvement with the *Chronicle* were interrogated by the authorities.

At that time he was examined in the Serbsky Institute of Forensic Psychiatry, where he was ruled unfit to stand trial, and subsequently spent two years confined to a psychiatric hospital against his will. His arrest provoked protests from scientists in the Soviet Union and abroad.

Yury Shikhanovich is a Master of Pedagogical Sciences and the author of numerous scholarly articles and a highly-regarded book, *Mathematics and Meta-mathematics*. Since his release in 1974, he has been unable to work in his professional capacity and has earned his living as a road-sweeper.

In recent years, he has been repeatedly questioned about his association with other prisoners of conscience and his involvement with the *Chronicle*. In February 1981 KGB officials confiscated issue No 59 of the *Chronicle*, which had been hand-written by Yury Shikhanovich and one other person.

The *Chronicle* has appeared unofficially in the Soviet Union since 1968 and is one of the oldest *samizdat* publications (privately published without official authorization). It documents allegations of human rights abuse in the USSR, surveys other *samizdat* literature and prints statements and appeals on behalf



Yury Shikhanovich

of people facing prosecution as prisoners of conscience.

In its 15 years’ existence, scores of individuals have been imprisoned for their association with the journal.

- In May 1983 **Aleksei Smirnov**, a 32-year-old computer specialist from Moscow, stood trial for his part in compiling issue No 38. He was convicted of “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda” and sentenced to six years’ imprisonment and four years’ internal exile. At his trial he alleged that he had been repeatedly beaten while in custody.

- In November 1983 a former editor of the *Chronicle*, mathematician **Tatyana Velikanova**, began five years’ internal exile in a village in the Central Asian republic of Kazakhstan, where she is working as a hospital orderly. This is the second part of a nine-year term of imprisonment and exile imposed on her in 1980 for “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda”—the sentence runs from the time of arrest, 1979. She is reported to suffer from hypertension and a chronic stomach ailment.

Despite official attempts to suppress the *Chronicle*, it has continued to appear at irregular intervals and in 1982 reached its 64th issue. An English translation of *A Chronicle of Current Events* is published outside the USSR by Amnesty International □

USA Prisoner executed after 10 years on ‘death row’

Robert Sullivan, who had been under sentence of death for 10 years, was executed in the electric chair in Florida on 30 November 1983.

The execution followed worldwide appeals for his life to be spared. Pope John Paul II had sent a message to Florida’s Governor, Bob Graham, appealing for a reprieve.

AI had initiated a number of actions aimed at halting the execution—a few minutes before Robert Sullivan died the organization got through by telephone to the Governor’s office in a last-ditch attempt to save his life. An aide said the Governor was “unavailable”.

Robert Sullivan was convicted on 12 November 1973 of murder and robbery and entered Florida’s “death row” two days later. He remained there for a decade, longer than any other US inmate currently under sentence of death.

Originally he had confessed to the murder of a restaurant manager in April 1973 but he later said he had been in a bar when the crime was committed. He spent the next 10 years trying to have his conviction reversed.

His execution followed the rejection first by the Federal Court of Appeals in Atlanta and then by the US Supreme Court in Washington of last-minute petitions for the case to be reopened.

A stay of execution was granted on 28 November while the US Supreme Court decided whether fresh evidence should be heard—but the court voted against this.

The last execution in Florida was that of **John Spenkelink**, also in the electric chair, on 25 May 1979. Eight other prisoners have been executed in the USA since the 1972 US Supreme Court decision which permitted individual US states to reinstate the death penalty according to the Supreme Court’s guidelines.

In August 1983 a total of 1,230 prisoners were under sentence of death in the USA; the sentences had been imposed in 34 of the 39 states that retain the death penalty □

UN body needs funds to help victims of torture

A worldwide call for more funds to help torture victims has been made by the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture.

In a report on this UN body made public on 23 November 1983, the UN Secretary-General says the Board believed that the fund had to provide for a “significant growth” in calls on it for help in the near future and had decided as a priority measure to solicit contributions from governments, inter-governmental organizations, private institutions and individuals.

The Board also decided to concentrate its efforts initially on supporting programs providing direct assistance for medical and psychological rehabilitation to torture victims.

It recommended support for training courses for medical personnel to enable them to treat and rehabilitate such victims.

The fund was established by a UN General Assembly resolution of 16 December 1981 to benefit victims of torture through relief and legal aid assistance.

As of 15 November 1983 a total of more than \$700,000 had been received for the fund from the Governments of Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

Applications for aid from the fund should be sent to: UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture/ c/o Mr. Kurt Herndl / Director / Centre for Human Rights / Palais des Nations / CH-1211 Geneva 10 / Switzerland.

Donations may be sent to the same address.

Human rights developments in Egypt

Information on recent human rights developments in Egypt, the repeal of some relevant laws and the promulgation of others, and AI's talks with the Egyptian Government are all described in a new publication updating AI's 1983 report *Egypt: Violations of Human Rights*.

That report, published on 16 February 1983, was based on a memorandum and recommendations submitted by AI to the Egyptian Government on 24 June 1982.

After the report had appeared, the Egyptian Government invited AI to send a mission to Egypt for high-level talks, and in May 1983 Whitney Ellsworth, a member of the organization's International Executive Committee, led a three-person mission to Cairo for this purpose.

Discussions with officials

Delegates held discussions with government and other officials, including the Ministers of Justice and the Interior, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, the Prosecutor General, the Socialist Prosecutor General and the Director of the Bureau of Prisons.

Egypt: Update to 1983 report contains the text of a memorandum which AI sent on 26 August 1983 (after its mission) to the Egyptian Government for consideration and comment. It begins with a re-examination of legal issues of concern to the organization in the light of discussions held during the mission, and takes into

consideration recent changes in legislation. Other sections in the memorandum deal with prisoners of conscience, political prisoners, allegations of torture and ill-treatment, and the death penalty.

Some of AI's concerns mentioned in the 1983 report, such as provisions allowing prolonged incommunicado detention with no judicial recourse to challenge the detention, no longer apply. However, others remain—such as the lack of adequate safeguards against torture and ill-treatment of detainees.

The memorandum closes with the following recommendations to the Egyptian Government:

- that a review be made of all legislation relating to political activity, with particular reference to Articles 19, 21 and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- that all physical restrictions imposed on the Coptic Orthodox Pope **Shenouda III** be lifted;
- that an inquiry be held into all allegations of torture and ill-treatment since October 1981, and that the findings be made public;
- that any officer found responsible for inflicting such treatment be brought to justice, and the victims compensated;
- that a review be made of the procedures followed for the inspection of prisons

and investigation of prisoners' complaints.

The second part of the update reproduces the full text of a memorandum dated 29 October 1983, prepared by the Egyptian Ministry of Justice in response to AI's memorandum and recommendations, together with a covering letter dated 30 October from Egypt's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Boutros Boutros Ghali.

In the introduction to its memorandum, the Ministry of Justice reaffirms the principles of supremacy of the law and respect for human rights as guaranteed by provisions in Egypt's Constitution, as well as international instruments to which Egypt has acceded.

Two laws abolished

The next part of the memorandum is devoted to legislation relating to political activity; it states that two such laws have recently been abolished and that other laws of concern to AI are "fully consistent with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights".

The third part deals with prisoners of conscience, and the Ministry of Justice states that the Coptic Pope is staying voluntarily at the monastery in Wadi Natroun.

Subsequent parts of the memorandum respond to AI's concerns relating to political prisoners and allegations of torture and ill-treatment.

In addition to the two memoranda, the update contains an Appendix with extracts from a letter written to the Egyptian authorities by AI's Secretary General on 26 August 1983 concerning reports received by the organization of the death of five detainees while in detention, and seeking clarification of the situation of approximately 40 juveniles who were in detention, apparently on political grounds.

The report concludes with the Egyptian Government's detailed response to AI's inquiries. The response, prepared by the Ministry of Justice, contains the results of some of the investigations already carried out into the reported deaths in detention and states that others are continuing. It adds that the juveniles have been referred to a juvenile court and have been released pending trial.

Miskito and Sumo Indians freed in Nicaraguan amnesty

A total of 307 Nicaraguans of Miskito and Sumo Indian origin who were detained at different times since December 1981 have been released as a result of an amnesty declared by the Nicaraguan Government on 1 December 1983.

AI has sent a telex message to the government welcoming the measure.

The organization had previously expressed concern because detainees of Miskito and Sumo origin held under the Public Order Law might have included prisoners of conscience. AI had also raised issues of due process of law in Public Order Law cases with the Nicaraguan authorities.

The decree granting the amnesty of 1 December 1983 states (in Spanish and Miskito) that it applies "to those Nicaraguan citizens of Miskito origin who may have committed crimes against public order and security or any other related crime from 1 December 1981 to the present".

The decree grants amnesty

both to people in detention and to those at liberty inside Nicaragua or abroad who may have faced charges for public order offences in the three-year period.

It applies also to Nicaraguans not of Miskito origin who were detained in connection with conflicts that began in December 1981 in the North Zelaya region along the Coco River (the frontier with Honduras).

In its telex message, AI sought confirmation that about 45 prisoners from the Atlantic coast area who were still in detention as of 3 December—some of them in the port city of Bluefields—would be included in the amnesty.

A statement on 1 December by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights expressed the commission's "great satisfaction" at the amnesty, and noted that "This amnesty had been insistently promoted by the Commission and figures as one of the recommendations it made to the Government of Nicaragua in its Report ... of 29 November [1983]."

Stop Press

Turkey: AI has learned that **Mahmut Dikerdem** has been moved from **Metris Military Prison** to **Cerrahpasa Hospital** (see page 2).

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 8DJ, United Kingdom. Printed in Great Britain by Shadowdean Limited, Unit B, Roan Estate, Mortimer Road, Mitcham, Surrey. Available on subscription at £5 (US\$12.50) per calendar year. ISSN 0308 6887