



Torture reported in South Korea

AI has expressed its concern to the Government of South Korea about reports of the torture and ill-treatment of prisoners in 1985.

On 4 September 1985 Kim Keun-tae was taken into custody by the Anti-Communist Bureau of the National Police and interrogated until his transfer to the Seoul prosecutor's office on 26 September. One month later he was charged with praising North Korea and organizing demonstrations feared to cause social unrest.

During his interrogation, Kim Keun-tae exercised his constitutional right to remain silent and refused to answer questions. He was reportedly tortured on some 10 occasions as well as denied adequate food and sleep. He was reportedly strapped to a table and tortured by electric shocks administered via electrodes applied to his feet; on other occasions his nose and mouth are said to have been covered with a towel and water forced through his mouth causing near suffocation.

Evidence

Kim Keun-tae's lawyers applied twice, on 2 October and 5 October, for a court order to have him examined by a judge and a doctor to document evidence of torture. On 12 October, the court ruled that there was no need for such an examination. The court did not make public the grounds for its ruling.

The authorities have denied that Kim Keun-tae was tortured. According to a statement prepared by the Supreme Prosecutor's office and made available to AI delegates visiting South Korea in late November and early December 1985: "the prosecution conducted a series of investigations to determine the truth of the matter. However, no trace of any torture was found. Kim's complexion appeared healthy and there

was no sign of torture in his walk or other physical and mental movements." AI's request for details of the investigations, such as when they were conducted, by what means, whether they included a medical examination, remains unanswered.

Concern

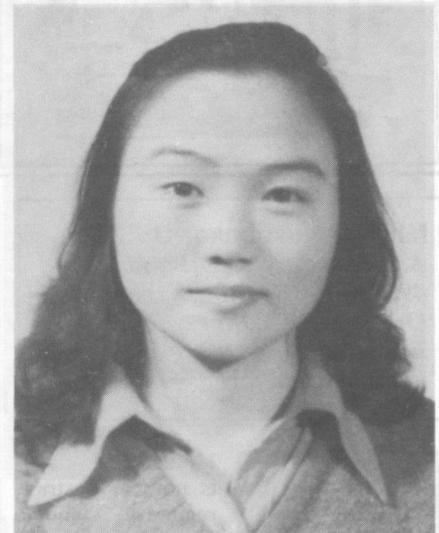
AI's concern about the reports of Kim Keun-tae's torture is reinforced by the fact that his relatives and lawyers have been denied access to him for a long period of time. Kim Keun-tae has not been able to see his wife except for a chance meeting when he was taken to the prosecutor's office on 26 September. On 7 November, a court granted a prosecution request to ban Kim Keun-tae from meeting his relatives for fear that he would ask them to remove evidence. Requests by lawyers to see him at the detention centre have been routinely refused.

Kim Keun-tae, a political economy graduate and former student leader at Seoul National University, spent some years in hiding in the early 1970s to escape arrest for his involvement in demonstrations opposing President Park Chung-hee. He later became involved in labour issues. In September 1983 he played a major role in forming the National Youth Alliance for Democracy of which he was the president until August 1985. The Alliance's stated objectives include the establishment of a democratically elected government, raising the standards of living of workers and farmers and realizing the unification of North and South Korea. The Alliance organized demonstrations, published an irregular journal and generally tried to publicize its views.

Kim Keun-tae has been detained on several occasions, since the formation of the Alliance, for his non-violent political activities. AI is studying the authorities' charges that he instigated violent student demonstrations, but believes that he may be a prisoner of conscience.

Arrested

Since June 1985, hundreds of people, mainly students, but also trade unionists, journalists, artists, clergymen and political activists have been arrested. AI has received reports that



Kim Keun-tae and his wife In Jae-Keun, who was detained briefly by the police in November 1985 because of her campaign to publicize her husband's alleged torture



some of those arrested on suspicion of being pro-communist were tortured or ill-treated during their interrogation. Three student leaders, Ahn Pyong-myon, Mun Yong-shik and Ho In-hoe were reportedly beaten, suffocated with water or otherwise ill-treated during their interrogation by the Anti-Communist Bureau of the National Police.

On 30 August and 1 September, the chief editor of the national daily newspaper *Dong-A Ilbo*, together with the head of, and a journalist from its political section, were detained by the Agency for National Security Planning and were allegedly severely beaten. They were detained in connection with an article on the crash landing of a People's Republic of China military plane in South Korea.

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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.

Mikhail Kukobaka, USSR

A former lorry-loader, now aged 49, he was due to be released in October 1984, but was given a new sentence for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda".



Mikhail Kukobaka is now in a strict regime labour camp for political prisoners in the Perm region of the Russian republic. He was first arrested in 1970 and charged with "circulating anti-Soviet slander" after he criticized the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. He spent the next six years confined to psychiatric hospitals against his will.

In 1977 Mikhail Kukobaka was twice reconfined for brief periods after he had hung a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and a photograph of Andrei Sakharov on the wall of his dormitory.

He was rearrested in 1978 on a charge of "circulating anti-Soviet slander" for sending a number of essays abroad. Sentenced to three years' imprisonment, he was sent to a labour camp for criminals at Novopolotsk in northern Belorussia.

In 1981 Mikhail Kukobaka was transferred to Lipetsk prison and faced with a new charge of "circulating anti-Soviet slander". He later wrote that convicts in the prison had beaten him up at the instigation of officials, to make him recant. When he refused he was given a further three years' imprisonment.

It was while Mikhail Kukobaka was completing this term in October 1984 that he received his third consecutive sentence as a prisoner of conscience. The exact term is not known, but AI fears it may be up to 12 years' imprisonment and exile — the maximum for a charge of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda".

□ Please send courteously worded letters urging his unconditional release to: the Procurator of the RSFSR: Sergei Yemelyanov/SSSR/RSFSR/103031 Moskva/Kuznetsky Most 13/Prokuratura RSFSR/Prokuroru, SA Yemelyanov. Please send copies to the Chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Court: SSSR/

RSFSR/103012 Moskva/ul Kuibysheva 7/3/Verkhovny Sud RSFSR/Predsedatelyu, NP Malshakov.

Joseph Pardovany, Haiti

Reportedly detained in September 1983, his whereabouts are unknown.

Joseph Pardovany was reportedly detained on 8/9 September 1983 in Port-au-Prince. Several others were detained at the same time, it is believed because of their connection with Sylvio Claude, the leader of the *Parti démocrate chrétien d'Haiti* (PDCH), Haitian Christian Democrat Party, who has himself been arrested, tortured and imprisoned on several occasions.

However, the Haitian authorities have not acknowledged the detention of Joseph Pardovany and his present whereabouts are not known. Unconfirmed reports were received in early 1984 that he was being held at the *Casernes Dessalines*, a military barracks in Port-au-Prince.

In December 1984, the governmental *Commission nationale des droits de l'homme* (CNDH), National Human Rights Commission, in response to expressions of international concern, said that it had been informed by the relevant authorities that Joseph Pardovany had never been detained, but that inquiries would continue in order to determine his "existence and eventual presence on national territory".

In April 1985, 37 political prisoners, including some whose detention had not been previously acknowledged, were released by the Haitian authorities, 36 of them as a result of a presidential amnesty. However, Joseph Pardovany was not among them and, according to the then Minister of the Interior, Dr Roger Lafontant, no other political prisoners were still being held "in the penitentiaries".

Joseph Pardovany, aged 40, is married with five children and was reportedly working as a mechanic at the time of his arrest at a factory in Port-au-Prince.

□ Please send courteous appeals for his release to: Son Excellence Monsieur Jean-Claude Duvalier/Président à Vie/Palais National/Port-au-Prince/Haïti.

Boniface Koundou, Benin

An agronomy student aged 25, he was arrested in June 1985 and is being held without charge or trial.



Boniface Koundou was detained following an identity check at the university campus of Abomey Calavi, Cotonou, on 13 June 1985. The university and schools in Benin

re-opened on 10 June; they had been closed since early May 1985 following student demonstrations in April in support of improvements in the education system, political autonomy and freedom of expression within student bodies. The demonstrations had been put down with force and violent clashes between security forces and demonstrators followed. The government accused a group of students of organizing the demonstrations in April. It claimed that they had been manipulated to do so by a group of former political detainees freed in a presidential amnesty on 1 August 1984.

Boniface Koundou was amongst those released on 1 August 1984 following five years' detention without charge or trial on account of his alleged connections with non-violent student protests in 1979. He then resumed his studies at the university, but was denied a grant. During his period of detention, he had been adopted by AI as a prisoner of conscience. AI does not believe he was involved in the student unrest in 1985. The reason for his arrest, as with at least two others, may be his previous detention.

Boniface Koundou is currently held at the central prison in Cotonou, where standards of hygiene are extremely low, causing illness to spread rapidly. No charges are known to have been brought against him. Other individuals arrested in similar circumstances are also being held without charge or trial.

□ Please send courteously worded appeals for the immediate and unconditional release of Boniface Koundou, preferably in French, to: Son Excellence le Général Mathieu Kerekou/Président de la République/la Présidence/Cotonou/Benin.

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

El Salvador: political detainees tortured

AI is concerned about the continuing allegations of torture of political detainees under the administration of President José Napoleón Duarte in El Salvador.

In October 1985, AI published extracts of testimonies by both former and current political detainees, in which they gave details of the torture they said they had been subjected to while in military or security force custody.

In interviews carried out by *Socorro Jurídico Cristiano* (independent Christian Legal Aid office) and published in July 1985, of the 342 prisoners who entered *La Esperanza* men's prison between June 1984 and February 1985, only two prisoners said they had not been tortured or maltreated.

In his interim report on the situation of human rights in El Salvador, published in November 1985, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights Special Representative, Professor Pastor Ridruego, stated that he was "concerned about the evidence that severe psychological pressure was used against political prisoners during the interrogation sessions by the security bodies".

Criticized

Auxiliary Archbishop Gregorio Rosa Chávez is reported to have criticized the Salvadorian judicial system in one of his weekly homilies, particularly "interrogations and inhuman treatment of people accused of political crimes" which he said "generally ended in statements totally divorced from reality".

Testimonies received by AI frequently refer to torture being inflicted on political detainees during the initial 15 days of incommunicado detention permitted under Decree 50 of February 1984. Decree 50 is applicable while the current State of Siege remains in force. It is also frequently alleged that prisoners are forced to sign "confessions" during this 15-day period. Often such "confessions" are simply blank pages which prisoners are forced to sign while blindfolded, under torture or threats of reprisals against their families. Under Decree 50 such declarations may be used as evidence against the detainee.

The torture methods reported to AI include the use of the *capucha* (hood impregnated with lime), electric shocks and the *avión*.

Concerned

AI remains concerned at the apparent lack of serious investigations into allegations made by both former and current political detainees that they were tortured while in military or secur-

ity force custody. The organization continues to receive such allegations regularly, although in recent months there have been indications of a greater reliance on what has been described to AI by former prisoners as psychological rather than physical torture.

President José Napoleón Duarte assumed power in El Salvador following elections held in March and May 1984. He stated in his inaugural speech on 1 June 1984 that he intended to "fight openly and tirelessly to control abuse of authority and the violence of the extremes, the death squads and all the problems of injustice and power they represent".

Statements

AI has welcomed these statements on a number of occasions, but believes that measures taken by the Salvadorian authorities to implement President Duarte's stated intentions, have remained unsatisfactory and that in the vast majority of reported human rights violations, the perpetrators have remained immune to genuine investigations and prosecution.

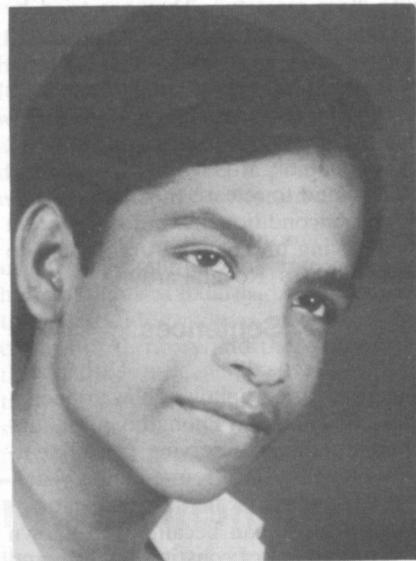
"They tied my hands behind my back and hit me hard three times in the stomach with a machete. Then they bound my feet and since I couldn't sit down they threw me face down and stood on me and jumped on me. In the evening they took me out for interrogation in the little barracks they have there and put me in the "airplane", [*"l'avión"*], suspension of the victim by the extremes of the body for long periods of time and beating] tying my hands and feet and hanging me from a beam in the roof. Then they applied electric shocks to me ... They put the mouth of a gun to my temples and playing with the trigger, said they were going to kill me ... Under torture they made me admit a number of things." Testimony of former prisoner detained in August 1985 by soldiers of the sixth Brigade of Usulután.

Bangladesh: appeals for condemned student

AI has sent urgent appeals to President Hossain Mohammad Ershad of Bangladesh for the commutation of the death sentence imposed on a student when he was 16, in contravention of international standards prohibiting capital punishment of people under 18 years of age.

Mohammad Selim, from Mirpur, Dhaka, was convicted of a murder committed in February 1985, the month after his 16th birthday. He was tried by Special Martial Law Court No. 1, Dhaka, which announced its verdict in June 1985. The decision of the court was confirmed in November, by President Ershad, in his capacity as the Chief Martial Law Administrator. There is no judicial appeal open to those convicted by martial law courts.

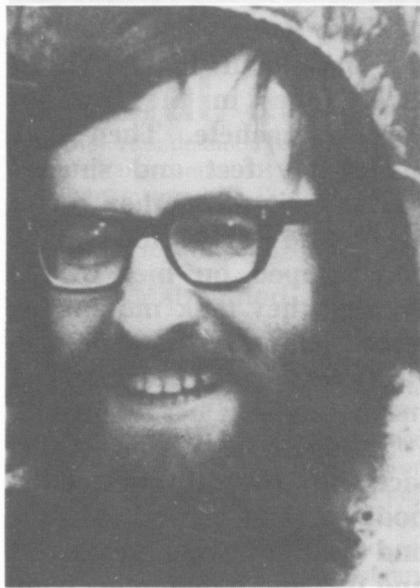
Mohammad Selim's only hope is that President Ershad may, in his presidential capacity, grant his appeal for clemency. The outcome of this appeal is not yet known. Selim is being held in Dhaka Central Jail.



Mohammad Selim, sentenced to death for a murder committed the month after his 16th birthday.

AI has consistently criticized the procedures of martial law courts, which fail to conform to international standards for a fair trial. Established following the imposition of martial law in March 1982, these courts may try a wide range of political and other offences.

Between May and October 1985, at least 20 persons charged with criminal offences were sentenced to death by special martial law courts, a marked increase from earlier months.



Soviet Jew imprisoned for 'slander'

Leonid Volvovsky, a Soviet Jew who gave private Hebrew lessons in Gorky, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in October 1985. He was convicted of lending *Exodus*, a novel by Leon Uris, to friends, and of distributing back copies of *Israel Today*, a now-defunct cultural magazine.

AI fears that Leonid Volvovsky's trial fell short of international standards of fairness. He was refused the defence lawyer he had chosen and was tried in *Leonid Volvosky (left), who is serving a three-year sentence on a charge of "circulating anti-Soviet slander"*

camera. His wife, Ludmila, was reportedly injured in a scuffle when officials physically barred her from the courtroom. Leonid Volvovsky pleaded not guilty to a charge of "circulating anti-Soviet slander" and appealed against his sentence.

Routinely

The law against "circulating anti-Soviet slander" has been used routinely by Soviet courts to punish dissenters who have distributed materials which the authorities find politically unacceptable. Of hundreds of individuals who have been brought to trial on this charge, AI knows of only one who has ever been acquitted. Leonid Volvovsky has been adopted by AI as a prisoner of conscience.

Now aged 43, Leonid Volvovsky was trained as a computer scientist in Moscow, and has been trying to emigrate to Israel since 1974. In 1980 the authorities withdrew his permit to live in Moscow and forced him to re-settle with his family in Gorky, 400 kilometres east of the capital. Shortly before his arrest in June 1985 he was actively trying to discover the whereabouts of prisoner of conscience Andrei Sakharov, who at that time had disappeared from his place of exile in Gorky, where he had been held virtually incommunicado since 1980.

AI knows of at least 15 other Soviet Jews who have been arrested since August 1984 for belonging to private study circles, mostly in the Ukraine. It is disturbed by reports that five were brutally beaten in prison and some raped at the instigation of officials while awaiting trial. Like Leonid Volvovsky, all 15 had unsuccessfully applied to leave the USSR and had subsequently become involved in studying Jewish culture.

Imprisoned

Although most of them were brought to trial for "circulating anti-Soviet slander", some were prosecuted on criminal charges that had no apparent connection to their exercise of human rights. One was Yulian Edelstein, a Hebrew teacher from Moscow, sentenced in 1984 to three years' imprisonment for possessing drugs. On the basis of documentation of his trial received by AI the organization believes that this charge was fabricated.

Death Penalty

AI learned of 64 people being sentenced to death in 13 countries and of 50 executions in eight countries during November 1985.

Thailand: appeal for five prisoners of conscience

AI continues to be concerned at the imprisonment in the Kingdom of Thailand of people arrested and convicted for the peaceful expression of non-violent political views deemed to constitute "lese majesty". They are tried by martial law courts whose procedures do not conform to international standards of fair trial. AI has adopted as prisoners of conscience five such people, all originally arrested and tried during 1983. It has repeatedly urged the Government of Thailand to release them immediately and unconditionally and has written to the King of Thailand urging him to grant them a Royal Pardon.

Sentences

Anan Seenaakhan, Rat Utthaphan, Samaan Khongsuphon, Thawan Saengkaanjanaanon and Phongtheep Manuuphaphong are serving prison sentences ranging from four to eight years.

A former major in the police force, Anan Seenaakhan became well-known as a proponent of constitutionalism and a critic of military rule and official corruption before making a vow of non-violence and entering the Buddhist monkhood for seven years.

In 1983, Anan Seenaakhan left the monkhood to support parliamentarians in a hunger-strike in protest at proposals by leading military officers to make constitutional changes that he believed would foster military control of the government. He was arrested and convicted of "lese majesty" after claiming, in speeches at peaceful public rallies, that these officers were improperly involving members of the Thai Royal



Samaan Khongsuphon, imprisoned on charges of "lese majesty"

Family in attempts to promote the military's political influence.

Rat Utthaphan was arrested and convicted of "lese majesty" after having written to the King of Thailand calling on him to abdicate and involve himself directly in the administration of the country.

Samaan Khongsuphon was an activist in the field of public health education and an organizer for the Democracy Confederation of Thailand, which was set up to campaign against the same constitutional changes that Anan Seenaakhan opposed. He was arrested and convicted in connection with the printing and dissemination of a critical history of the reigning Royal Dynasty, which called on the Royal Family to abolish the monarchy and declare a republic.

Printer

Thawan Saengkaanjanaanon, a printer, and Phongtheep Manuuphaphong, a mutual acquaintance of Samaan Khongsuphon and Thawan Saengkaanjanaanon, were arrested and convicted together with Samaan Khongsuphon.

Lebanon: arbitrary arrests, torture and executions

AI has expressed its concern about violations of human rights to the Lebanese Government and the leaders of the three main militias in Lebanon: the Shia Muslim-based Amal which controls West and South Beirut and parts of South Lebanon; the predominantly Druze Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) which has set up its own civilian administration in the Shouf mountains; and the Lebanese Forces (LF), a coalition of Christian militias which control East Beirut and the region northeast of the capital.

Arrested

Since mid-1982 over 2,000 people have "disappeared" in Lebanon, most of whom were reportedly arrested by the Lebanese Army (LA - the official armed forces of the government), or the LF during 1982 and 1983. Close links between the LA and the LF, particularly during 1982 and 1983, have made it difficult to determine which of the two was responsible for arrests and "disappearances". AI has urged President Amin Gemayel to make every effort to determine the whereabouts or the fate of all those arrested by the LA or the LF and who have "disappeared", and to provide relatives with information about them.

AI has expressed concern to the leaders of the three main militias about the widespread practice of arbitrary arrest and detention without normal legal process, prolonged periods of incommunicado detention, allegations of ill-treatment and torture and the execution of prisoners.

All are reported to hold members of rival militias or groups as hostages, and members of their own militia arrested for disciplinary reasons. Abductions and counter abductions between the LF on the one hand and the PSP and Amal on the other increased in Beirut during the latter half of 1985. Many are said to be retaliatory acts, carried out by militia members to win the release of hostages, often family members, held by the other side. Lebanese security sources estimated in October that the LF were holding up to 500 hostages.

Prisoners

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is permitted to visit a few prisoners held by Amal and the LF, but has had no access to any PSP-held prisoners since 1983. It was arrested



On 11 October 1985, an Amal militia firing squad executed Ali Hashem, an Amal member found guilty of murder by an Amal field court.

permission to see any of the hundreds of Palestinians arrested in Beirut by Amal during the "War of the Camps", the period of hostilities from 19 May to 22 June 1985 between Amal and Palestinians in three refugee camps in the southern suburbs. Although most of these detainees were later released, up to 100 are still unaccounted for and are rumoured to have been handed over to the Syrian authorities.

AI has received many allegations of torture from Palestinians arrested by Amal during May and June 1985. One ex-detainee who was examined by an AI medical team said that he was beaten on the soles of his feet, suspended from a parrot perch, subjected to mock drowning, pushed inside a tractor tyre and rolled down several ramps while receiving blows to the head until he lost consciousness, and had a nylon wire with a weight suspended from it tied around his penis. Allegations of torture and ill-treatment by the other two militias have also been received.

Executed

The PSP have executed four of their own members by firing squad since July 1984 following trials by special courts and two Amal militiamen were executed during 1985 after an Amal

field court convicted them of murder. During the "War of the Camps", many eyewitnesses reported the execution of Palestinians in the custody of Amal militiamen. They included armed combatants, civilians including women and children, medical personnel, and wounded combatants and civilians in the hospitals.

AI, in its approaches to the militia leaders, has urged that in a civil war situation where many different groups are carrying out arrests, where families often face difficulties in finding out what has happened to their relatives and where many people have "disappeared": the names of all detainees be published; an independent humanitarian organization such as the ICRC have regular access to all detainees; wounded and sick captives have regular and appropriate medical treatment; all detainees be allowed to communicate with their families by letter.

Although only governments are usually the subject of international human rights standards, AI considers that these three militias have effective control of territory and therefore have the means to implement procedures for the protection of human rights and should respect international human rights standards.

Egypt: repeated pattern of detention

Repeated short-term arrests of political opponents of the government have continued to arouse AI's concern in Egypt. AI has expressed its concern to the Egyptian authorities on many occasions that some detainees held under long-standing State of Emergency legislation are prisoners of conscience.

Between May and September 1985 hundreds of Islamic activists, part of a movement calling for the implementation of Islamic *Shari'a* law in Egypt, were arrested and held for several months without charge or trial. In October and November 1985, in the aftermath of the Achille Lauro affair, and

the interception of an Egyptian civil airliner by US warplanes, many leftist opponents of Egyptian foreign policy in regard to Israel and the USA were detained, some of them during large protest demonstrations.

Release

AI has called for the immediate and unconditional release of all detainees held solely for the non-violent expression of their conscientiously held beliefs, and urged the Egyptian authorities to discontinue the practice of repeated detention of political prisoners without charge or trial.

East Timor: reports of torture in rural areas

East Timorese detained in outlying district military commands may be subjected to torture and ill-treatment by Indonesian military personnel, according to new reports received by AI.

Maintained

The Indonesian Government has reportedly maintained that all political prisoners in East Timor are being held in the former Portuguese prison in Dili, the Comarca, and that all either have been tried or are scheduled for trial on charges of conspiracy to commit rebellion. There are indications, however, that East Timorese political prisoners are also being detained by the military outside Dili.

AI has received reports, for example, that in early May 1985, six people from Lautem District in the eastern part of East Timor were arrested on suspicion of having links to the *Frente Revolucionaria de Timor Leste Independente* (Fretilin), the armed resistance movement which has been fighting against the Indonesian military in East Timor since the Indonesian invasion of 1975. The six – Carlos Jose Marques, a teacher; Armindo Nunes, Amelio Nunes and Augusto Dos Santos, junior secondary school students; Cristavao Da Costa, a neighbourhood head; and Cornelio Amaral – were reportedly taken from the village of Irifalal to Lospalos, the district capital, and there tortured by Indonesian soldiers.

People

Five other people from the Lautem District, which has reportedly been the major area of clashes between Fretilin forces and Indonesian troops since mid-1985, were also arrested in May. Carmelinda Da Silva, 22, a teacher at the Fuiloro mission; Gil Fernandes, of Lipolo; Lamberto, from Funu; Armin-do Ribeiro, from Berekik; and Mariana Marques, from Moapitine, were all said to have been tortured by the Indonesian military during interrogation in Lospalos.

AI has urged the Indonesian Government to investigate these reports, and if they are found to be accurate, to bring those responsible to justice.

In addition to these reports there are other indications that East Timorese are being detained by Indonesian soldiers outside Dili. Most of the prisoners tried

in Dili come from outside the capital city. Since May 1985, for example, those tried include three people from Lospalos, five from Same, eight from Manatuto, and 14 from Viqueque. It is not known how long they were held prior to transfer to Dili or under what conditions.

An article in the Indonesian daily newspaper, *Sinar Harapan*, of 29 October 1985 noted that local police and prosecutors in East Timor often have to execute justice "on the spot" because of the time and expense needed to send suspects to East Timor's only court of first instance in Dili.

AI is concerned about the well-being of people detained outside Dili. In East

Timor, to the organization's knowledge, there are no lawyers available outside Dili, and regular visits by international organizations are not made to district military commands. There thus may be insufficient safeguards against torture. AI has urged the Indonesian Government to clarify that East Timorese in districts outside Dili are subject to the provisions of the Indonesian Criminal Procedure Code and that, if arrested, they are presented with an official warrant, and their families are immediately informed of their arrest and place of detention.

Urged

AI has also urged the Indonesian Government to ensure that all prisoners in East Timor, wherever detained and for whatever period, are treated in accordance with the United Nations Standard Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

Iraq: "there is no torture" says government

On 25 November 1985 AI received a letter from the Iraqi Government containing the government's comments on AI's report, *Torture in Iraq 1982-1984*, published in April 1985.

The report lists 30 different methods of torture said to be used in Iraq and contains extracts from five selected testimonies alleging torture, two of them supported by medical evidence.

The letter stated that the allegations contained in the five cases were without foundation. In the two cases where torture allegations were supported by the findings of medical examinations, the government said that the victims, Neji Bennour and Robert Spurling, "had been arrested in accordance with regulations [and] were not subjected to any form of torture during their detention".

The allegations contained in the other three cases were described as "a figment of the imagination and rely on mere allegations biased against Iraq. We regret that your organisation bases its findings on these allegations before verifying them. We take this opportunity to confirm what we have demonstrated before, that there is no torture in Iraq."

The letter further stated that AI's recommendations for the prevention of torture "are being applied in Iraq on both legislative and practical levels. There is administrative and judicial supervision responsible for ensuring that these are properly implemented."

However AI is seeking further clarification of the implementation of its recommendations and on how safeguards against torture are supervised. It re-

AI has received reports that at least 300 people, many of them Kurds, were killed in cities in northern Iraq in the second half of October 1985. There are fears that some of these may have been extrajudicial executions – political killings by the authorities. Hundreds of people are reported to have been arrested in the same period, including civilians, students, army deserters and draft resisters and members of the *Pesh Merga* forces (armed Kurdish fighters) and their families.

Additional reports alleged that in November 1985, 60 prisoners were executed in Abu Ghraib Prison in Baghdad and at least as many executed in Mosul Prison in northern Iraq. Army deserters and political prisoners, including members of the banned Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Kurdistan Socialist Party – Iraq, were said to be among the victims. AI has called upon the Iraqi government, to among other things, carry out a thorough investigation into the reports and to make public its findings.

mains concerned at the government's denial of the use of torture even in cases where allegations were supported by medical evidence and still believes that the legal prohibition on torture in Iraq's constitution continues to be disregarded in practice.

Prisoner News

AI learned in December 1985 of the release of 348 prisoners under adoption or investigation; it took up 257 cases.

Northern Ireland: call for inquiry into shootings

On 24 October 1985 AI wrote to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom expressing its concern at the government's failure to deal adequately with issues raised by a series of fatal shootings of unarmed persons by security forces in Northern Ireland since 1982.

AI called on the government to establish an independent judicial inquiry into these incidents. It urged that such an inquiry evaluate the existing mechanisms for investigating and publicly clarifying the facts surrounding the killings as well as the effectiveness of existing legislation for the prevention of the use of lethal force in law enforcement.

Since October 1982 there have reportedly been 31 fatal shootings by security forces in Northern Ireland, in 18 of which the person killed was unarmed. In some of these cases, the killings took place in conditions which could be compatible with the allegations that they were deliberately planned.

AI has attempted to investigate those cases to determine whether people had been deliberately killed on account of their beliefs, ethnic origin or race, as a matter of government policy. AI was not able to reach a firm conclusion on these allegations but believes that the mechanisms used to investigate these incidents, such as police investigations, inquests, criminal proceedings, have not produced sufficient evidence to eliminate the possibility of unlawful use of lethal force by the security forces. AI is also concerned that the laws and regulations governing the use of lethal force in law enforcement offer less protection against its unjustified use than do international standards.



Dr Sishayi Nxumalo (right) former Finance Minister, who was detained without trial for over a year, and former deputy commissioner of police Edgar Hillary (above).



Swaziland: five prisoners of conscience released

Five prisoners of conscience were released on 31 December 1985 by order of Swaziland's Acting Head of State, Queen Regent Ntombi, who acknowledged that they had been wrongly imprisoned.

Minister

Those freed were Dr Sishayi Nxumalo, a former government minister, the former army commander and his deputy and the former commissioner of police and his deputy.

AI had adopted all five as prisoners of conscience and in early December had appealed publicly to Prime Minister Bhekimpfi Dlamini to set them free.

They had all been held by the repeated imposition of 60-day detention orders against which there is no right of appeal.

Former Finance Minister Dr Sishayi Nxumalo had been detained since his arrest in November 1984, soon after he had been dismissed for alleging top-level involvement in customs fraud.

Mangomeni Ndzimandze, the former army commander, and Major Abednego Dlamini, had also been detained without trial since November 1984. Titus Msibi, the former commissioner of police, and Edgar Hillary, the former deputy commissioner, had been held since their arrest early in January 1985.

Officials

The senior army and police officials were officially charged with subversion but charges were withdrawn shortly before their trial was due to commence in April 1985. Treason charges were then brought against them, and later against Dr Nxumalo, but no detailed indictment was ever produced and no date was set for their trial. A court ruling that four of them should be granted bail and a *habeas corpus* action brought by Dr Nxumalo were both circumvented by the government's use of 60-day detention orders, which are imposed administratively by the Prime Minister and provide no opportunity for appeal.

Welcoming

In a telex to the Prime Minister welcoming the releases, AI called for an urgent review of the 60-day detention law and for it to be amended so that it should not again be used as a legal basis for human rights violations.

CSSR: human rights activist released

Rudolf Battek, a 60-year-old Czechoslovak sociologist and former spokesperson of the unofficial Czechoslovak human rights movement, Charter 77, who had been serving a five-and-a-half year prison sentence, was released on 30 October 1985, six weeks before the expiry of his sentence. He is reported to be in good health. Technically, his sentence was "interrupted" and "suspended" for two years on the recommendation of the prison director.

Rudolf Battek, who has a long history of harassment by the authorities, detentions, and imprisonment for his dissenting and human rights activities, had been convicted of "subversion in collusion with foreign powers ... and on a large scale" and "causing an injury". The charges were brought on account of letters he had written to foreign Socialist Party leaders and because he had allegedly struck a policeman and knocked off his cap.



Seychelles: exiled leader killed

The murder of exiled Seychellois opposition leader Gérard Hoarau outside his home in London, England on 29 November 1985 was the latest in a series of incidents in which at least nine opponents of the government of President Albert René are reported to have been murdered or have "disappeared".

The current Government of the Seychelles came to power following a coup d'état in June 1977. The following August, Hassan Umarji Ebrahim, a 45-year-old businessman and known government critic, "disappeared". He left his house after receiving a phone call from an unknown person. His empty car was discovered an hour later with the engine still running. His shoes were found nearby. AI later received detailed allegations suggesting that Hassan Umarji Ebrahim had been abducted and killed by members of the security forces because of his political views. A former police officer told AI that police files on the case had vanished from the archives as a result of an intervention by senior officials.

Strange

In October 1982 and July 1983 a further four people died in strange circumstances. The two victims in 1982 were Simon Desnousse, a Seychellois student leader, and Mike Asher, a South African, said by the authorities to have blown themselves up with a home-made bomb. In July 1983 Michael Hoffman, a former policeman, and Tony Elizabeth, were killed after their car was attacked at night by unknown assailants. A third man, Brian Victor, was left for dead but subsequently recovered and claimed that he and his companions had been attacked by members of the security forces. AI has received reports that all of these killings were carried out for political reasons by members of the security forces who had tried to disguise them either as accidents or as the work of common criminals.

Victims

The latest "disappearances" reported in the islands occurred in August and September 1984. The victims were Jean Guillaume, a 22-year-old labourer, and Alton Ah-Time, a known government opponent. AI again received reports that both had been abducted and killed by members of the security forces because of their actual or suspected political activity. Their bodies are said to have been dumped at sea.

On 3 October 1984 Alton Ah-Time's mother, Simone Ah-Time, wrote an open letter to a local newspaper in



Alton Ah-Time (left), who "disappeared" in 1984 and Simon Desnousse (right), killed in 1982

which she claimed that her son had been followed and intimidated by security officers on several occasions in the previous eighteen months. Since then, at least two members of the Ah-Time family have been detained and allegedly beaten by security officers.

AI has appealed a number of times to the Seychellois authorities to establish an impartial inquiry into this series of deaths and "disappearances" but without response.

Leader

Shortly before he was killed, Gérard Hoarau, leader of the exiled Seychelles National Movement, claimed that the Seychellois Government had planned to kill him in France. He alleged that the French police had been informed of the plan: that it was to have been carried out by a professional gunman hired by an associate of President René, and that the weapons for the assassination were to have been smuggled into France in the diplomatic bag.

Gérard Hoarau was a former immigration officer in the Seychelles. In November 1979, he was one of about 80 people detained on suspicion of organizing an underground opposition movement which had circulated literature criticizing the government. The authorities also claimed that Hoarau was involved in a plan to overthrow the government by force, although he was never charged with any offence. He was released untried after eight months' detention. In March 1980 Hoarau was one of several detainees visited by an AI delegate, Kenyan lawyer Amos Wako, who recorded a conversation with Hoarau in prison.



Gérard Hoarau (above), leader of the Seychelles National Movement, who was killed outside his north London home on 29 November 1985. Hassan Umarji Ebrahim (below), businessman and known government critic who "disappeared" in 1977



Human rights in Iran

AI submitted a written statement to the hearing on human rights in Iran held by the Political Affairs Committee of the European Parliament in Brussels on 28 November 1985.

The statement expressed AI's concerns over prisoners of conscience, unfair trials, torture and the death penalty. It included a figure of 399 executions AI had recorded for 1985 by the end of October, a figure which had risen to 456 by the time the hearing took place. The actual number of executions may be considerably higher.

AI called upon European governments and institutions to use all appropriate opportunities "... to impress upon the Iranian authorities their obligation to adhere to international legal human rights standards".