

India

The trial for which Archana Guha has waited 18 years finally began in February 1994, after charges of assault were brought against two police officers in Calcutta.

Archana Guha was headmistress of a high school in Calcutta when she was taken into custody by police in July 1974, aged 33. She was detained in place of her brother, whom the police believed to be involved with the *Naxalites*, a left-wing armed opposition group.

During three years in custody, without charge or trial, she was beaten with sticks, kicked, burned with cigarettes and threatened with rape. As a result of torture her legs were paralysed and she left jail in a wheelchair in May 1977. Intensive medical treatment in Denmark helped her to walk again.

In December 1978 a magistrate committed five policemen to stand trial on various criminal charges in a sessions court. The officer in charge, who has since been promoted, used every legal avenue to keep the case out of court. Since then three of the police officers allegedly involved have died, one has retired, and one remains in service.

In 1988 the Calcutta High Court dropped the case on the grounds that it had exceeded the time limit during which criminal cases may be brought to court. Archana Guha had still had no opportunity to give evidence. She appealed against the ruling and the appeal was upheld. In February 1994, when still no court date had been set, the Supreme Court expressed concern at the delay in the trial and ordered the courts to proceed with it.

Charges of assault were finally brought against two policemen by a magistrate in Calcutta in December 1994 and the trial began. The two policemen, one of whom is a former deputy commissioner of city police, both denied the charges of assault. The trial continues and Archana Guha is yet to give her evidence.

AI is greatly concerned at the attempts of the police to shield the alleged torturers from being brought to justice and is closely monitoring the progress of the trial. (For further details of the case prior to the trial see *Archana Guha - 16 years awaiting justice: the lack of speedy and effective redress mechanisms for torture victims* AI Index ASA 20/08/94, March 1994)

Bahrain

Amnesty International is seriously concerned by the deteriorating human rights situation in Bahrain, following widespread disturbances last December. Between December 1994 and February 1995, at least five protestors, including Hani 'Abbas Khamis and Hani Ahmed al-Wasti, were shot dead by members of the armed security forces. In January two others, including Hussain Qambar, died as a result of torture. Mass arrests and numerous forcible deportations occurred during this same period; many detainees, including al-Sheikh 'Ali Salman, the Imam of al-Khawaja Mosque, were allegedly tortured following their arrest.

The demonstrations were sparked off by arrests made in connection with the signing of a petition calling on the Amir of Bahrain to reinstate parliament, which was suspended in 1975. Hundreds of people, some of whom may be prisoners of conscience, are now believed to be held in incommunicado detention under provisions of the State Security Law.

On 4 January 1995, AI called for independent investigations to be carried out into the circumstances of the killings and for all those currently detained to be granted access to a lawyer of their own choosing. The organization also called on the government to allow its representatives to conduct a fact-finding visit, but to date no response has been received. Despite repeated requests for a fact-finding visit to Bahrain, AI delegates have not been able to visit the country since 1987.

South Africa

As South Africa prepares for local government elections in October there are concerns that violence will escalate in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, jeopardising the final stage of the transition to democratic government. At least 120 political killings were recorded during January 1995.

In KwaZulu-Natal, where the provincial government and legislature is controlled by the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), political violence has continued since the April 1994 elections amidst allegations of politically motivated human rights violations by members of the security forces.

The lack of a widely accepted, impartial security force lies at the heart of the situation. Delays in the integration of the former KwaZulu "homeland" police force into the national South African Police Service (SAPS), have left the "homeland" force still operating autonomously and led by officers some of whom are suspected of involvement in "hit-squad" killings of African National Congress (ANC) members and other perceived opponents of the IFP. Certain units of the SAPS Internal Stability Division have also been involved in violence against ANC members, while some members of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) have been implicated in human rights violations against IFP supporters.

Tensions have developed over the structure and function of the proposed local government bodies. Some IFP-aligned traditional chiefs (amakhosi) in the north of the province, backed by members of the former "homeland" police force and paramilitaries, have forced families perceived to be ANC supporters or involved in local government changes to flee their homes.

In an incident illustrating the consequences of a lack of effective policing, 15 residents of Gcilima, a village regarded as ANC supporting in the south coast area, were killed when about 100 heavily-armed men attacked their homes on 27 October 1994. Although the police had been warned several days earlier that an attack was likely, they took no steps to protect residents. On 20 January 1995 four IFP members were granted bail by the Durban Supreme Court after being charged with the murders.

In another incident 10 supporters of the IFP were tortured by members of the SANDF, who arrested them on charges of possession of unlicensed firearms in the Midlands town of Loskop in January. The SANDF members beat the young men with heavy wire, belts and rifle butts, forced them to run three kilometers to the police station, and then subjected them to strenuous exercises. The victims have laid charges of assault against the SANDF members involved.

AI has appealed to the national and provincial authorities to ensure that the security forces act impartially towards all

residents and that perpetrators of human rights violations are brought promptly to justice.

Iraqi Kurdistan

AI has accused the Kurdish administration and political parties of committing wide-ranging and serious human rights abuses against their own people over the past three years. These include unlawful and deliberate killings; executions after summary "trials"; the use of the death penalty; torture and ill-treatment; and the detention of suspected political opponents, among them possible prisoners of conscience.

In a major report on the human rights situation in Iraqi Kurdistan published on 28 February 1995, AI said: "For years the Kurdish people suffered terribly from human rights violations perpetrated by the Iraqi Government, and now their fundamental human rights are being abused by their own political leaders they feel a deep sense of betrayal as it becomes clear that their leaders' promises to uphold and respect human rights were nothing more than hollow gestures."

In October 1991, six months after the mass uprising in Iraq, government forces withdrew from most areas of Iraqi Kurdistan, which have since remained under the control of Kurdish opposition forces. Initially, a number of positive measures were adopted to ensure the better protection of human rights in the region. However, the human rights situation began to deteriorate as the political crisis in Iraqi Kurdistan deepened, triggered in part by the failure of two main political parties, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), to agree on a system of power-sharing.

AI's 140 page report is based on research carried out over the past three years, including five fact-finding visits to the region. The evidence gathered is based on interviews with scores of detainees and former detainees; relatives and friends of victims of human rights abuses; torture victims; eye-witnesses; and human rights activists. The report contains medical evidence to support claims of torture. During these visits the organization also held talks with political leaders and administration officials.

AI attributes responsibility for the majority of human rights abuses to the KDP and PUK, which hold the reins of power in the region. Forces acting under their authority have tortured people held in secret detention, assassinated political opponents, and carried out other killings with impunity. Similar abuses have been perpetrated by the Islamic Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan (IMIK), the third political force in the region.

Both the PUK and KDP have prevented effective investigation into a wide range of abuses. Several members of the judiciary were assassinated and others threatened with death. No one has been brought to justice for any of the crimes cited in AI's report.

During and after widespread armed clashes between the Kurdish political parties in December 1993 and May 1994, many cases of detainees being tortured and combatants killed in custody were reported. Civilians were also arrested because of their political affiliation and tortured.

The Kurdish administration is also responsible for the torture of both common law and political detainees held in the custody of civilian police and the internal security forces. At

least 34 death sentences have been handed down by the criminal courts since March 1992, and the scope of the death penalty widened to include two new offences.

AI urges Kurdish political leaders to end the rampant abuse of human rights and to ensure that those responsible be brought to justice. The organization also asks political parties to end the practice of secret detention and disband their assassination squads.

Ecuador/Peru

Journalists covering the armed conflict between Ecuador and Peru, which broke out in January 1995 over a long-standing territorial dispute, were reported to have been the target of human rights abuses in separate incidents involving the military from both countries.

On 7 February 1995 Peruvian journalists José Mariño Lanyi and Carlos Mauriola Martínez, in the Ecuadorian capital Quito, were attacked outside the state Telecommunications Company by eight men who punched them and beat them with sticks. Since their arrival in the city they and other accredited Peruvian journalists had been constantly watched and followed, and José Mariño had received a threatening anonymous note. Two of their attackers had earlier shown Ecuadorian military identity cards when challenged by José Mariño.

Five days later Ecuadorian journalists Ramiro Cueva and Pablo Reyes were taken into custody at a Peruvian military check-point near Puerto Pizarro, department of Tumbes. They were then transferred into the custody of the Peruvian marines who allegedly tortured them. They were handcuffed and buried in sand up to their necks and later put in plastic bags and told they were to go to be "thrown into the sea". Blindfolded, they were taken to a cell and beaten. Prior to being released both had firearms held to their heads, apparently to make them say they worked for the Ecuadorian intelligence services.

AI has written to the governments of both countries calling for a prompt, full and independent inquiry into these incidents and asking that the findings be made public and that those found responsible be brought to justice. The letters stressed AI's strict impartiality over the conflict, but urged both parties to fully respect fundamental international human rights and humanitarian standards designed to protect civilians and members of the armed forces who are *hors de combat*.

WORLDWIDE APPEALS

Mexico

BISHOP SAMUEL RUIZ and other Catholic clergy in the Mexican state of Chiapas are reportedly facing increasing harassment and intimidation, including death threats and physical attacks, because of their promotion and protection of the rights of the indigenous population of Chiapas. Members of the Catholic church, led by Bishop Ruiz, have been promoting and protecting the rights of the indigenous people in Chiapas for many decades, but have encountered frequent opposition from local authorities and wealthy landlords because of their efforts.

Bishop Ruiz of San Cristóbal de las Casas has played a fundamental role in recent peace negotiations between the

Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) and the Mexican government. Last February hundreds of landowners and non-indigenous people demonstrated against Bishop Ruiz. They hurled abuse, threw stones and threatened him. He also received death threats in 1994.

Others threatened or harassed have included Father Javier Velazco, who is reported to have had his mass interrupted by members of the Federal Judicial Police (PJF) and was then interrogated by them about his alleged links with armed opposition groups. José Alberto Paniagua Mijangos, a seminarist, is also experiencing harassment. He has allegedly been told he will suffer "misfortunes" if he continues his pastoral work, and has reportedly been followed by individuals in an unmarked car who are believed to be members of the PJF.

PLEASE WRITE, expressing concern for the safety of Bishop Samuel Ruiz, Father Javier Ruiz Velazco, Alberto Paniagua Mijangos and other members of the Catholic Church in Chiapas, urging the authorities to take immediate measures to guarantee their safety and bring those responsible for the threats to justice, to: Lic. Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León/ Presidente de la República/ Palacio Nacional/ 06067 México DF/ México, or Lic. Esteban Moctezuma Barragán/ Secretario de Gobernación/ Secretaría de Gobernación, Bucareli 99, 1er. piso/Col. Juárez/ 06699 México DF/ México.

South Korea

KIM SAM-SOK, AGED 28, an anti-nuclear campaigner and pacifist, is serving a four-year sentence in Taejon prison, South Korea, for alleged offences under the country's National Security Law.

Kim Sam-sok was arrested in September 1993 and convicted in February 1994 for leaking "state secrets" and contacting an alleged pro-North Korean group in Japan. AI adopted him as a prisoner of conscience on the grounds that these charges were unfounded.

There have since been allegations that Kim-Sam-sok's conviction and sentence were based on false evidence provided by South Korea's intelligence service, the Agency for National Security Planning (ANSP). In October 1994, a former ANSP employee claimed he was told by the ANSP of plans to fabricate a case against Kim Sam-sok and his sister, Kim Un-ju. Kim Un-ju had been arrested at the same time as her brother under similar allegations but was released in February 1994.

Kim Sam-sok said he was beaten, stripped and sexually assaulted during his interrogation by the ANSP. Kim Un-ju, too, reported being repeatedly kicked, slapped and deprived of sleep while she was being interrogated. To AI's knowledge, the South Korean authorities have made no independent inquiry into these allegations.

Kim Sam-sok is being held in a cell without sunlight and is under constant pressure to "convert" (renounce his real or alleged communist beliefs. Please write to: President Kim Young-sam/ The Blue House/ 1 Sejong-no/ Chongno-gu/ Seoul/ Republic of Korea, and Mr Ahn Woo-mahn, Minister of Justice/ 1 Chungang-dong/ Kwachon-myon/ Shihung-gun/ Kyonggi Province/ Republic of Korea, calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Kim Sam-sok, imprisoned for the non-violent exercise of his rights to freedom of expression and association, and calling for an independent investigation into the circumstances in which the ANSP allegedly

provided false evidence to convict Kim Sam-sok and Kim Un-ju.

Chad

AI is concerned that Mahamat Koty Yachoub, who was arrested in July 1994 by members of the Chadian secret police, [**for trans.** Agence Nationale de Sécurité] (ANS) and the Republican Guard [**for trans.** Garde Republicaine] [GR], was ill-treated and tortured while in custody.

A medical examination following his release -- in a presidential amnesty in December 1994 -- revealed partial paralysis of his right hand. He still bears the scars from being tied-up and beaten.

Mahamat Koty Yachoub was held in incommunicado detention by members of the ANS for 45 days. In the days after his arrest he was reportedly beaten with a stick until he lost consciousness. During this time he was held in a prison cell that had been a toilet. His hands were tied behind his back and only untied for a few minutes every three or four days to allow him to eat.

It appears Mahamat Koty Yachoub was arrested solely because he is the brother of Abbas Koty, former president of the National Council of Redress [**for trans.** Conseil National de Redressement] (CNR), an armed opposition group. Mahamat was accused of working for the CNR. His brother, who had renounced violence in an agreement with the government in August 1993, was extrajudicially executed by the Republican Guard in October 1993.

Mahamat Koty Yachoub is one of many people who have been arbitrarily detained and tortured in the custody of the ANS and the GR. AI is calling on the Chadian authorities to make these agencies comply with international standards for the treatment of prisoners and to bring those suspected of violating prisoners' rights to justice.

NIBS

Early this year, Burmese soldiers seized hundreds of civilians to use as porters in their offensive against the Karen National Union, Mynamar's largest ethnic minority armed opposition group. Porters are forced to carry supplies during the army's counter-insurgency operations, and frequently fall ill with malnutrition and malaria. AI is calling on the Burmese military authorities to immediately release all those arbitrarily seized for portering.

Gregorio Ordóñez, the spokesman for the Popular Party in the Basque country and a member of AI's death penalty appeals network in San Sebastian, was shot at point-blank range by a hooded gunman in January. The armed Basque group ETA claimed responsibility. Gregorio Ordóñez had done invaluable work promoting measures to abolish the death penalty under the Spanish Military Penal Code. There are currently three draft measures for abolition in the Parliament. AI unreservedly condemns abuses by armed political groups such as deliberate and arbitrary killings, which contravene international humanitarian standards.

In November and December 1994 an AI delegation visited Cambodia to carry out research into the human rights situation and to meet

with high-level government officials. Our findings were published in March in a report which describes the deterioration of the human rights situation since the government came to power in September 1993. See next month's issue for more details of the visit.

AI has renewed its calls to the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnian Serb political and military leaders to bring to justice those responsible for the abduction of 38 Serbian and Montenegrin citizens in 1992 and 1993. In October 1992, 17 Muslims were abducted from a bus by armed and masked men operating in Serb-controlled Bosnian territory. Five months later, 20 Muslims and a retired Yugoslav army officer of Croat origin were abducted from a train as it briefly crossed into Bosnian territory also under the control of Bosnian Serb forces. The fate of all those abducted in these two incidents remains unknown.

Six civilians are reported to have been killed by members of the Border Security Forces (BSF) in Jammu and Kashmir on 10 February, apparently in retaliation for an attack by an armed Kashmiri group. Eye-witnesses said the BSF dragged shop-keepers out and killed them in cold blood while they pleaded for their lives. AI is calling on the Indian Government to order an independent impartial investigation into the killings and make its findings public.

APRIL FOCUS - TRADE UNIONS

The workers at the Misr Weaving and Textile Company in Kafr al-Dawwar, Egypt, began a sit-in on 27 September 1994. They were protesting at management decisions to change working conditions -- particularly relating to sick-leave, public holidays, bonus pay, and altering procedures for applying penalties -- and demanded the resignation of the chairman of the board. The sit-in was apparently orderly and peaceful.

In the early morning of Sunday 2 October, families of the workers heard reports that security forces had stormed the factory. This turned out to be untrue, but many families gathered on a bridge close to the building. The security forces apparently fired into the air to try to break up the gathering, then opened fire on them. Several people were injured.

Later that morning the families of the workers attempted to deliver food to the strikers. The security forces refused to allow the families into the factory and reportedly threw the food into a nearby canal. A demonstration and clashes followed. Stones were thrown at the security forces, who responded by storming the neighbourhood, firing rubber bullets and tear-gas canisters indiscriminately. Mohammad 'Izzat Foda, aged 9, was killed. Security forces reportedly entered the factory and beat people inside it. After leaving the factory they apparently fired rubber bullets indiscriminately at the assembled crowd: Abd al-Hamid Shayboub, aged 32; Mohammad Mahrous, aged 38; and 'Abd al-Qadir 'Abd al-Mun'im, aged 28, were killed. Dozens of others were injured and nine people who received wounds to their eyes were left in danger of losing their eyesight.

Later that day most of the workers' demands were accepted and they ended their sit-in. Four people had been killed and dozens injured.

At least 70 people were arrested and held for several weeks before they were released on bail.

This is an example of the human cost of conducting industrial relations by force. It is not an isolated one. Trade unionists are often victimized because they fight for the rights of fellow workers. Faced with exploitation in the workplace they organize to defend themselves and to win decent pay and conditions. They are often the only force standing between ordinary workers and rapacious employers, backed by the power of the state. But when they take up the struggle for their rights, they are sometimes seen as a threat by those in power. This can mean they lose their jobs -- it can also cost them their freedom or even their lives. International organizations like AI have to take collective responsibility to defend trade unionists in all parts of the world against human rights violations. We must speak out when workers' leaders are falsely imprisoned, tortured, "disappeared" or killed. We must put pressure on governments to defend - not attack - those organizing to defend legitimate social and economic rights.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) is an agency of the United Nations which attempts to ensure that minimum working standards are met throughout the world and defends basic trade union rights. There are two ILO conventions which, if ratified and implemented, can help protect trade unionists and workers from human rights violations: one (No. 87) on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, and the other (No. 98) on the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining.

AI supports these conventions, and is calling on all member states of the ILO to ratify them if they have not already done so, and to take immediate steps to implement them if they have.

Every year AI documents cases of human rights violations against trade unionists. Overleaf are some of the names and cases of those who have been targeted by the authorities in the last year because of their political beliefs or their peaceful activities in support of their fellow workers. AI is urging members to take action on behalf of these victims.

C H I N A

Despite suffering relentless persecution labour activists in China have not been deterred. In 1994 an independent labour rights group the League for the Protection of the Rights of Working People (LPRWP), was set up. The League's founders intended, among other things, to establish a nationwide information network to promote the protection of labour rights, and provide a popular mediation organization to help settle labour disputes. However, a few days before they sought legal registration in March, 1994, several of the League's founders were secretly arrested by police.

Yuan Hongbing, a law lecturer at Beijing University and a principal sponsor of the LPRWP, was secretly detained on 2 March 1994. Zhou Guoqiang, a lawyer, and a sponsor of the LPRWP, was taken into custody a day later; Liu Nianchun, another founder, was detained in May and held for four months without charge before being released. Yuan Hongbing was still held without charge in early 1995, while Zhou Guoqiang was sentenced in September 1994 to three years of "re-education through labour", a form of administrative detention imposed without charge or trial.

Zhang Lin, a labour activist and key member of the LPRWP in Anhui Province, was arrested in May 1994 and sentenced in September to

three years of "re-education through labour". In a letter smuggled out of the labour camp where he is held, he reported that he had been kicked and punched by a guard and subjected to electric shocks. He is reportedly in poor health and has been refused medical treatment.

Wang Zhongqiu, a co-founder of the LPRWP and a postgraduate law student from Beijing University, was taken into custody at the end of May 1994. According to some sources, he was conditionally released in October 1994 and subsequently went into hiding. His present whereabouts are unknown.

Xiao Biguang, another sponsor of the LPRWP, was detained in April 1994 for "shelter and investigation", a form of administrative detention, because of his "illegal activities". According to his wife he was weak and in poor health before his arrest. He has not been allowed family visits.

Liu Huanwen was arrested in July 1994, reportedly for his association with dissidents involved in unofficial labour activities. He was sentenced in August, without charge or trial, to two years of "re-education through labour" for "hooliganism". AI believes these prisoners have all been detained solely for the peaceful exercise of their fundamental right to freedom of expression and association, including their involvement in independent labour rights groups.

COLOMBIA

Paramilitary forces in Colombia were originally set up and trained by the armed forces. Although their legal basis was removed in 1989, they continue to operate with impunity. In July 1994 a paramilitary group calling itself COLSINGUE *Colombia sin Guerrilla* - "Colombia without Guerrillas" issued a communique in which it declared war against "the members, politicians and combatants of subversive groups in the country", and went on to declare that just as guerrilla forces did not respect non-combatant opponents, "neither will we respect their political and trade union cadres". On 10 October 1994 Hernando Cuadros, a trade union leader of the Tibú branch of the oilworker's union, *Unión Sindical de Obreros*, USO, was abducted from his home and killed. At the same time, unsuccessful attempts were made to abduct other members of the same union. It is believed that paramilitary groups operating in collaboration with the armed forces in the region carried out the killing.

On 17 November 1994 Rodrigo Flórez was killed by gunmen when they opened fire on the headquarters of the *Unión Patriótica* (UP), Patriotic Union and the *Partido Comunista Colombiano* (PCC), Colombian Communist Party. Because of the threats against UP and PCC members, the building had been under police guard until 30 October 1994 when the guard was withdrawn without explanation. Rodrigo Flórez was a construction worker, trade unionist and political activist.

AI is urging the Colombian government to protect the lives of trade unionists and to take immediate steps to dismantle paramilitary groups.

SOUTH AFRICA

K W A Z U L U - N A T A L

Bheki Ntuli, Chairperson of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and Chairperson of the African National Congress (ANC) for the North Coast region of KwaZulu-Natal is one of a number

of trade unionists who have been targets of assassination attempts in this South African province.

His life has been under threat since at least August 1992 when his home in Eskihawine township was attacked by gunmen linked to the KwaZulu "homeland" police force. Although under South Africa's new constitution the "homelands" no longer exist, the former KwaZulu "homeland" police force continued to operate after the April 1994 elections as an independent entity until February 1995. As a consequence of the August 1992 attack and other threats against him he has been forced to live in hiding. Other members of his family have come under attack as well.

On 18 January 1995 Bheki Ntuli's mother, Grace, was killed when armed men attacked the family kraal (homestead) in the Mtubatuba area. Eighteen-year-old Thulani Mbatha, who had taken refuge in the house, was also killed. JJ Ntuli, Bheki Ntuli's brother and Chair of the Mtubatuba ANC Branch, was seriously injured in the attack, which occurred five days after both Bheki and JJ Ntuli had participated in a peace meeting in Mtubatuba on 13 January 1995. People who had been at the meeting said that JJ Ntuli was shouted down by a group of hecklers, reportedly Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) supporters, who explicitly threatened his life.

Although police officials and the Provincial Minister for Safety and Security were present, they made no attempt to intervene.

In the Mtubatuba area, since South Africa's first non-racial elections in April 1994, a group of heavily armed young men, identifying themselves with the IFP, has embarked on a campaign to force anyone perceived to be sympathetic to the ANC out of the area. These men have been acting allegedly with the support of certain members of the local KwaMsane police station, which is still under the control of the former "homeland" police.

The Ntuli family home had been attacked once before on the night of 21 December 1994, when about a dozen houses in the Mtubatuba area were burned or damaged and their occupants forced to flee. The attack occurred not long after a meeting in the area at which speakers threatened ANC supporters or anyone sheltering them.

Officers of the former "homeland" police present at this meeting took no steps against those who made the threats. When armed men surrounded the Ntuli home on 21 December and opened fire, JJ Ntuli attempted to defend the house by returning fire with a licensed firearm. After the attackers moved off, members of the KwaZulu police and the South African Police Service's (SAPS) Internal Stability Unit based in Mtubatuba entered the Ntuli home, confiscated licensed firearms, and arrested JJ Ntuli and four companions.

The police took those arrested to KwaMsane police station. Members of the KwaZulu police allegedly assaulted the detainees, calling them "Mandela's children". All those detained were charged with possession of unlicensed weapons and ammunition and JJ Ntuli was charged with attempted murder. The detainees were released on bail by 23 December. The police refused to return the licensed firearms. Although members of SAPS arrested a suspect in connection with the murder of Grace Ntuli and Thulani Mbatha and the wounding of JJ Ntuli on 18 January, the suspect was later released on bail. On 10 February armed men again attempted to attack the Ntuli home in Mtubatuba. Bheki Ntuli and other members of the family present survived the attempt without injury.

AI remains concerned for the safety of the Ntuli family and others in the Mtubatuba area vulnerable to attack by gunmen acting with impunity.

KOSOVO PROVINCE - FORMER REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA

Since November 1994 over 200 former police employees, all ethnic Albanians, have been arrested in Kosovo province and some 130 remain in detention for investigation on charges of setting up a "parallel" police force with the aim of obtaining Kosovo's secession from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by means of force. Their lawyers have repeatedly complained that these men have been tortured by police following arrest or that significant breaches of procedure have taken place which have undermined their right to defence. So far no trials have started.

On 27 October 1994 Bilall Idrizi, a member of the Independent Trade Union of Police Employees of Kosovo Province, and a leading member of the Pristina branch of the union was stopped by three state security officers in the street and forced into a car. He was taken to a building where he was asked about his reasons for resigning from the police force, his motives for becoming a member of the trade union and about its activities. His interrogators then beat and punched him with a rubber truncheon and also, allegedly, with an electric truncheon.

In the early hours of the morning Bilall Idrizi was allegedly forced to sign a declaration that was dictated to him. He "confessed" to having made preparations to assassinate Dr Ibrahim Rugova, leader of Kosovo's ethnic Albanians, and to collecting information to pass on to Albania's secret services.

His interrogators told Bilall Idrizi they were going to kill him. He was driven, blindfolded, to a field where they staged a mock execution. They abandoned him in the field and eventually he made his way back to Pristina. Bilall Idriz filed a suit against three named and three unnamed officers.

At the end of December 1994 it was reported that Bilall Idrizi had fled the country, together with his wife, children and brother, in order to avoid further persecution by the police. On three occasions in December police reportedly came to his home in Priština, looking for him and his brother Gazmend (also a member of the Independent Trade Union of of Police Employees of Kosovo and threatened their mother.

In Turkey Münir Ceylan was released on 29 January 1995. Münir, the president of the petroleum workers' union in the city of Batman in southeastern Turkey, was arrested for speaking out against political killings in that region. The security forces are implicated in many of these killings, and the victims included members of the petroleum workers' union. He had been convicted of incitement to "enmity and hatred" and was sentenced to 20 months' imprisonment from June 1994.

When Liu Jingsheng was featured in last year's Focus on trade unions he was awaiting trial in China, charged with "organizing and leading a counter-revolutionary group" and "carrying out counter revolutionary propaganda and incitement". In December 1994 he was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment. AI believes that Liu Jingsheng is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned for his peacefully held beliefs. Liu Jingsheng was a founder member of the Preparatory Committee of the Free Labour Union of China (FLUC), and also took

part in pro-democracy activities.

In Indonesia the struggle to bring Marsinah's killers to justice continues. Marsinah, 25, was abducted, brutally raped and murdered after taking part in a strike at the watch factory where she worked. Nine civilians were sentenced to terms of up to 17 years in prison for Marsinah's murder, and a military officer received a nine-month sentence for failing to report the crime to his superiors. However, serious irregularities in the civilian trials, including the use of torture to extract confessions, gave rise to doubts about their fairness, and the military authorities believed to be responsible for the murder were not punished. In December 1994, following the overturning of the guilty verdict against the main suspect, Judi Susanto, by the East Java High Court, the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights called for the police to reopen the investigation of Marsinah's murder.

There is no further information on the killing of M'Bailo Mianbe, a leading trade unionist, in Chad. Neither has there been any news of Abdelhaq Rouissi, an activist in the Moroccan Labour Union, who "disappeared" from his home in Casablanca more than 30 years ago. In Colombia, Wilson Monsalvo Navarro continues to receive death threats and to be harassed by the security forces.

However, exerting pressure on the authorities by writing to governments and asking for an end to human rights violations does produce results. Below is a list of addresses to send letters to concerning the cases featured in this Focus:

Egypt

Write to: H.E. Muhammad Hosni Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, `Abedine Palace, Cairo, Egypt, urging the government to investigate the deaths of the four people who were killed at the Misr Textile and Weaving Company factory in Kafr al-Duwwar, to make the findings public and bring the perpetrators to justice. Ask the government to uphold the right to strike and the right to peaceful assembly.

China

Write to: Premier Li Peng, Guowuyuan (State Council), 9 Xihuangchenggenbeijie, Beijingshi 10032, People's Republic of China, or to the Chinese Embassy in your country, expressing concern that the prisoners mentioned above have been arbitrarily detained for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression and association, calling on the authorities to release them immediately and unconditionally.

Colombia

Write to Señor Presidente Ernesto Samper Pizano, Presidente de la República, Palacio de Nariño, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia, asking for an immediate and thorough investigation into all cases of suspected or attempted political killings, threats or harassment by the security forces or paramilitary groups, making the results public and bringing those found responsible to justice. Ask for measures to be taken to protect the lives of trade union leaders and for steps to be taken to dismantle paramilitary forces.

KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

To raise awareness and as a means of expressing concern about the situation in South Africa, please pass copies of the Focus article to South African Government representatives in your country and to your own elected representatives.

Kosovo - Yugoslavia

Write to: Zoran Sokolovi, Ministar unutrašnjih poslova Republike Srbije, Kneza Milosa 101, 11000 Beograd, Yugoslavia, expressing concern that a number of members of the Independent Trade Union of Police Employees of Kosovo Province, including Bilall Idrizi, have been arrested and tortured by police officers in Kosovo following their arrest.