



UN Congress denounces extra-legal executions

A strong resolution deploring and condemning extra-legal executions was adopted by the Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, which took place in Caracas, Venezuela, from 25 August to 5 September.

The Congress, attended by governmental and non-governmental delegates and observers, affirmed that "the practice of killing and executing political opponents or suspected offenders carried out by armed forces, law enforcement and other governmental agencies, or by para-military or political groups acting with the tacit or other support of such forces or agencies. . . constitutes a particularly abhorrent crime, the eradication of which is a high international priority."

Noting that "enforced or involuntary disappearances" were frequently related to "murder committed or tolerated by governments", the Congress resolution said such murder was condemned by "general principles of law" and violated the UN Declaration against Torture.

The resolution also called on all governments to take effective measures to prevent extra-legal killings and executions and urged all relevant organs of the UN to take all possible action to bring such acts to an end.

The resolution was adopted without dissent; Argentina, Chile, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, The Philippines and Uruguay abstained.

The death penalty was another important question on the Congress agenda (see box). (Earlier *AI* had held a seminar on the death penalty which was attended by about 300 Congress participants.)

The subject of torture was also dealt with by the Congress. It asked the General Assembly to request the Commission on Human Rights to con-

DEATH PENALTY

After informal discussions, the delegations of Austria, Ecuador, the Federal Republic of Germany and Sweden produced a draft resolution declaring that "further restriction in the application of capital punishment and its eventual abolition would be a significant contribution to the strengthening of human rights, in particular the right to life."

The draft ran into considerable opposition from certain countries that retain the death penalty. As there was not enough time to complete discussions the issue was referred back to the UN General Assembly this autumn.

Addressing the Congress on the topic, *AI* pointed out that in the previous three months—June, July and August 1980—some 600 people had been sentenced to death and a similar number executed.

tinue to give priority to completing the draft convention against torture and to examine "all the proposals that

would ensure the effective application of the convention."

The Congress also came out in favour of the General Assembly's adoption of the Draft Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons Under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment and of the Draft Code of Medical Ethics. Both documents are now before the General Assembly.

The Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials was the subject of a number of recommendations and the Congress urged governments to ensure the observance by all law enforcement officials of the principles contained in it.

The Congress further recommended that the UN Committee on Crime Prevention and Control should be invited to consider how Procedures for the Effective Implementation of the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners could be finalized.

All these recommendations were consistent with written or oral presentations *AI* had made to the Congress □

Death sentence for S. Korean opposition leader

A South Korean military court sentenced opposition leader **KIM Dae-jung** to death on 17 September after a trial that failed to meet internationally recognized standards of fairness.

In a news release afterwards *AI* said it was appalled at the sentence.

Kim Dae-jung and 23 co-defendants, who received prison sentences, were not permitted to

present a proper defence and there was evidence that they were threatened and ill-treated during pre-trial detention (September 1980 *Newsletter*).

Kim Dae-jung was held incommunicado for three months after his arrest on 17 May. He told the court he had been questioned for up to 15 hours a day in an underground room during the first two months of detention, sometimes stripped of his clothes.

Defendants' families were unable to retain counsel of their choice and Kim Dae-jung is reported to have met his government-appointed lawyers for the first time the day before the trial began. None of the defendants were allowed to call defence witnesses.

The sentence has been confirmed by the Martial Law Commander. It has still to be confirmed by the Military Appeal Court and the Supreme Court □

Bolivia

Eyewitness report of army 'rampage'

Eyewitness accounts have reached *AI* from Bolivia of troops rampaging through the town of Caracoles, killing and abducting inhabitants 18 days after military leaders seized power on 17 July 1980.

Caracoles, 266 kilometres south-east of the capital, La Paz, is in a mining region whose people are suspected of political opposition to the new rulers. Up to 900 people were reported missing after the attack; most had fled or were in hiding but relatives fear some may have been taken prisoner. It is not known how many died or were in military custody.

The eyewitness accounts were among the most detailed of a number of reports describing military violence against unarmed civilians in Bolivia's tin and copper mining areas, where there were attempts to organize strikes opposing the military take-over.

According to the accounts the army's Max Toledo Regiment used planes, artillery and tanks to bombard Caracoles. Miners were reported to have resisted attacking troops with stones. People who tried to escape

were pursued by soldiers and a number are reported to have been killed.

Eyewitnesses said corpses had been loaded into three army trucks. A miner was said to have had gunpowder put in his mouth and then to have been blown up in the town centre. Soldiers are reported to have raped women and young girls.

AI has received the names of eight men known to be dead, 18 missing and 13 said to have been held at Army High Command headquarters (the *Estado Mayor*) in La Paz. Troops are reported to have disposed of many bodies, throwing some down wells.

Other reports from mining centres spoke of random executions by soldiers in Siglo Veinte and of the killing and wounding of civilians in Huanuni. The authorities' clampdown on communications and press reporting has made it difficult to get more information on such reported attacks by soldiers in Bolivia.

AI has appealed to the country's new leaders to release all political prisoners and to make public a list of people killed or imprisoned □

Poland

Activists freed after strike

AI has welcomed the release of human rights activists detained in Warsaw and other centres on and after 19 August 1980 because of their activity in collecting and issuing information about strikes in Poland. They were freed on 1 September.

Their release had been included in the 21 demands listed by the Inter-Factory Strike Committee in Gdansk.

The strikers had also called for the release of three other prisoners of conscience adopted by *AI*, Edmund ZADROZYNSKI, Jan KOZLOWSKI and Marek KOZLOWSKI; they had been sentenced to terms of imprisonment earlier in the year.

AI has since learned that Jan

Kozlowski and Marek Kozlowski (not related) were freed, but does not know what has happened to Edmund Zadrozynski, sentenced in March 1980 to three years' imprisonment on what *AI* believes were false criminal charges.

Among those detained on and after 19 August were Jan LITYNSKI, Jan CYWINSKI, Ludwig DORN, Urszula DOROSZEWSKA, Sergiusz KOWALSKI, Dariusz KUPIECKI, Witold LUCZYWO, Jacek KURON, Adam MICHNIK, Zbigniew ROMASZEWSKI, Miroslaw CHOJECKI, Wieslaw KECIK, Andrzej BULC, Kazimierz SWITON, Henryk WUJEC and Leszek MOCZULSKI □

URUGUAY

Alfonso Avelino FERNANDEZ CABRELLI, of Uruguay, a 61-year-old historian, journalist and municipal lawyer, who was a prisoner of the month in February 1979, was released provisionally on 13 April 1980, after more than three and a half years' detention □

YUGOSLAVIA

Reports reaching *AI* say that Nikola NOVAKOVIC, prisoner of the month in July 1980, is recovering well from an operation last autumn. He is still detained in Foca prison, serving a 12-year sentence he received in 1977.

Angola

Hunger-strike prisoners freed

Ten prisoners of conscience in Angola adopted by *AI* were released in mid-August 1980 after between two and three and a half years' detention. They were accused of belonging to either the Organization of Angolan Communists or the Joseph Stalin Group

Seven of them, held at São Paulo prison in Luanda, went on a 28-day hunger-strike in July 1980 protesting against their detention without trial and demanding their release. The other three, held at Tari detention camp near Quibala, southeast of Luanda, went on a work-strike.

The 10 detainees are believed to have been the last group to be freed of more than 70 people, mostly teachers and students, arrested between 1976 and 1978 on suspicion of belonging to banned left-wing groups □

Morocco

Call for King to extend amnesty

In a cable to King Hassan II sent on 23 July 1980 *AI* welcomed amnesty measures which had led to the release of about 90 political prisoners; *AI* groups had been working on behalf of 20 of them.

The July releases were accompanied by press reports suggesting that a general amnesty for political prisoners might be announced soon afterwards.

On 3 September *AI* sent a second cable to the King saying it was disappointed at how limited the amnesty measures had been, leaving many political prisoners still in prison, including more than 150 for whom *AI* groups were working.

AI called on the Moroccan Government to extend the measures to include the release of all prisoners of conscience and thus to progress towards implementing the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Morocco ratified in 1979 □

Prisoner releases and Cases

The International Secretariat learned in August of the release of 129 prisoners under adoption or investigation; it took up 109 new cases.

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.

Ulrick DESIRE, Gustave COLAS, Emmanuel NOEL, Robert-Jacques THELUSMA, *Haiti*

Held for 18 months without trial, these four Haitian political prisoners were sentenced to nine years' imprisonment on 21 August 1980 in the country's first public political trial in 20 years.

Ulrick DESIRE, former head of customs in Saint-Marc, Gustave COLAS, a tailor, Emmanuel NOEL, a mechanic, and Robert-Jacques THELUSMA, a book-keeper, were arrested in January and February 1979. They were eventually brought to court on 28 July 1980, charged with "attack on the internal security of the state." The prosecutor accused them of having hatched a plot to overthrow the government and to "provoke a massacre".

All four defendants denied the accusations and one, Robert-Jacques Thelusma, alleged that he had been tortured with electric shocks during detention.

The defence lawyers contested the competence of the court because, among other irregularities, there was only one judge instead of the legally required panel of three. They also noted that no evidence of an attack or of collusion to carry one out had been produced and that the court had not produced the person who had allegedly reported the "plot".

The prosecution produced as material evidence six pistols, some ammunition and small explosive devices—but it did not connect them adequately with the defendants.

AI considers the circumstances of the four defendants' detention and trial confirm its view that action was taken against them for their political views rather than because of any alleged plot by them.

Please write courteously worded letters appealing for the immediate release of the four to: Son Excellence Jean-Claude Duvalier,

Président à Vie, Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Joseph Vermond TCHENDO, *Central African Republic (CAR)*

Former journalist, aged about 35, married with two children; detained in October 1979 as a supporter of one of the main opposition political parties and subsequently sent into internal exile.

Joseph TCHENDO was first imprisoned for political reasons in 1970 when the CAR was ruled by Emperor BOKASSA. He subsequently went to live in Belgium, where his family still resides.

In October 1979, after President David DACKO had replaced the overthrown Emperor Bokassa, he returned to the CAR as a journalist and supporter of a leading politician opposed to the new President—Ange PATASSE, leader of the *Mouvement de libération du peuple centrafricain* (MLPC)—Movement for the Liberation of the Central African People.

Joseph Tchendo was arrested on 25 October 1979, accused of sending "false and subversive reports" out of the country. He was released within a week but was rearrested on 2 November, following an anti-government riot which the authorities said had been inspired by the MLPC.

After another release and rearrest he was sent into internal exile at Yalinga military camp, 700 kilometres northeast of the capital, Bangui.

Since his arrival there in January 1980, his health has deteriorated seriously. He has lost weight, cannot obtain adequate medical attention and has little money for food.

AI believes Joseph Tchendo is being detained for his political support of the MLPC and for expressing his own opinions.

Please write courteously worded letters, preferably in French, asking for his release to: Son Excellence Monsieur Dacko, Président de la

République, Palais de la Renaissance, Bangui, Central African Republic.

Viktoras PETKUS, *USSR*

Aged 52, a founding member of the unofficial Lithuanian group set up to monitor Soviet compliance with the Helsinki Accords; serving a total of 15 years' imprisonment and internal exile.

Viktoras PETKUS was arrested nine months after helping to found the monitoring group in 1976. He was charged with "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda", tried in Vilnius in July 1978 and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment to be followed by five years' internal exile. The imprisonment was to be made up of seven years in a "corrective labour" colony and three years in a prison—the latter being the most severe form of imprisonment in the Soviet Union, where it is rare for convicted people to be sentenced to a term in an actual prison.

Viktoras Petkus is at present in Chistopol Prison in the Tatar Autonomous Republic. During transfer there he was said to have been beaten with rubber truncheons by prison officials.

Chronic malnutrition, hard physical labour and inadequate medical care in the prison give rise to concern for his health—since his arrest he is reported to have lost 25 kilograms.

He is one of 34 Helsinki monitors now imprisoned or exiled for their human rights activities and adopted as prisoners of conscience by AI.

Please write courteously worded letters appealing for the release of Viktoras Petkus to: The Director of Chistopol Prison, Colonel MALOFEYEV, SSR, g. Moskva, p/ya 5110/1—UE, Polkovniku Malofeyevu, and to: The Procurator of the USSR, R.A. RUDENKO, SSR, g. Moskva, ul. Pushkinskaya 15a, Prokuratura SSSR, Genralnomu Prokuroru, Rudenko R.A.

There have been persistent allegations of prisoners being ill-treated in Israel and the territories occupied by it since 1967—the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Golan Heights. The Israeli authorities have always denied any systematic or deliberate ill-treatment. An *AI* delegation, including the then Secretary General, Martin Ennals, visited Israel in June 1979 and concluded that changes were needed in the procedures under which people suspected of security offences are held until they are released or tried.

Change needed in Israeli procedures

AI has called on the Israeli Government to set up a public and impartial inquiry into complaints of brutality used against people arrested on suspicion of security offences in the Occupied Territories. It urged the government to change its procedures immediately to strengthen safeguards for preventing the ill-treatment of suspects.

AI's recommendations were originally made in a detailed memorandum to the Israeli authorities in October 1979. They were published on 2 September 1980 in a 74-page report, which also contained a detailed reply from the Israeli Attorney General, *AI*'s comments on the reply and a renewed appeal to the Israeli Government.

The main conclusions in the report are that:

- There is sufficient *prima facie* evidence of ill-treatment of security suspects to warrant the establishment of a public inquiry.
- The present administrative procedures do not enable the Israeli authorities to bring forward conclusive evidence to refute allegations of ill-treatment.
- The lack of such conclusive evidence is directly related to the extended period of incommunicado detention.
- Certain legal provisions and practices enhance the possibility of ill-treatment. These include: restrictions on the role of defence counsel in preparing the defence; frequent reliance on uncorroborated confessions as the effective basis for conviction; absence of effective opportunities for judicial appeal.
- The machinery for investigating complaints of ill-treatment is inadequate.

The Occupied Territories are subject to military rule, including emergency regulations originally promulgated by the British and hundreds of regulations issued by regional military commanders.

This framework provides punishment for purely political non-violent acts as well as for violence. It provides for trial by military courts, imprisonment without trial ("administrative detention"), house arrest, deportation, curfews, destruction of property, bans on political demonstrations and meetings, and censorship.

According to the Military

RECOMMENDATIONS

The report recommends that a public and impartial committee of inquiry should be established to investigate the allegations of ill-treatment in their totality and the administrative and legal procedures and practices relevant to the arrest, confinement, interrogation and trial of security suspects. The committee's findings, conclusions and recommendations should be made public.

Pending the establishment and reporting of such an inquiry, immediate steps should be taken to ensure that security suspects under interrogation are protected against ill-treatment.

These steps should include access to family, lawyer and independent medical doctor promptly after arrest, and at regular, brief intervals thereafter.

Government in the West Bank 2,473 security prisoners were held in January 1979. In June 1979 the Military Governor said 1,500 Palestinians, mostly between 16 and 23 years of age, had been arrested in the area over the previous six months.

The allegations of ill-treatment dealt with in *AI*'s report relate to security suspects, and particularly to the period when they are under interrogation. Similar allegations have been analysed in previous reports by other international organizations and *AI* has found their most frequent conclusion to be that there is evidence of prisoners being ill-treated.

Major press reports have also brought forward allegations of ill-treatment. One such report was based on cases collected by a former United States consular official in Jerusalem, who drew attention to the "possibility that the use of brutality in the interrogation of Arab political prisoners is a systematic practice."

Another major report, published by the London *Sunday Times* in 1977, cited 44 cases of alleged ill-treatment. The Israeli authorities disputed the report but *AI* found that their response did not provide a convincing refutation.

The *AI* report reproduces four recent testimonies illustrative of allegations made in recent years—three were received by *AI*, the fourth being taken from press reports. They have in common accounts of severe beatings, of prisoners forced to stand, in some cases for days at a time, tied to a water pipe, and of other abuses intended, according to former prisoners, to elicit confessions.

In its critique of the administrative procedures applied to security suspects, *AI* pointed out that in the West Bank there is no legal limit to the length of time arrested security suspects may be denied access to a lawyer. The practice has been for months to elapse before the first substantive meeting between lawyer and client takes place. (Visits by family members are subject to similar discretionary control.)

According to the report examinations by prison doctors are not of a

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

One of *AI*'s main reasons for publishing the report was to encourage informed public discussion—especially inside Israel—of the basic issue: the need to guarantee the humane treatment of arrested people and to ensure that their treatment could be properly evaluated by impartial observers.

In addition, *AI* believes that stronger safeguards would provide better protection for law enforcement officials who, under the current deficient procedures, are unable to defend themselves convincingly against unfounded allegations of torture and ill-treatment.

nature which could substantiate or refute allegations of ill-treatment and requests for visits by private doctors are often not granted for months.

The report discusses the arrangement between Israel and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); *AI* found that a large number of prisoners were not visited by the ICRC during their interrogation period, a crucial time in terms of allegations of ill-treatment.

AI also found inadequacies in legal procedures. In military courts made up of three military officers, only one of them is required to have legal training. The court may decide, for security reasons, to hold a trial in secret and that the defendant must select counsel from an approved list, which excludes several of the best known and most sought after lawyers.

Lawyers are hampered in preparing the defence case since counsel does not see the accused before a confession is elicited and in many instances the charge sheet is given to the lawyer only a short time before the trial, sometimes only on the actual day of the trial.

Confessions are often the main evidence on which convictions are based in military trials in the Occupied Territories. To be admissible in court the confession must, in principle, be obtained in accordance with the Judges' Rules—that is, freely, without fear and without hope of advantage. *AI*'s delegates found substantial support for the view that there are serious deviations from the Judges' Rules.

The Israeli system requires that "something else" be adduced to support the confession but the "something else" need not be independent evidence. It may, for instance, be the actual existence of persons named in a confession.

No judicial appeal is open to residents of the Occupied Territories convicted by military courts. They may apply to the Supreme Court for certain legal remedies but the Court has taken a restricted view of its ability to challenge decisions taken on security grounds. When investigations into allegations of ill-treatment are carried out they are more than likely to be undertaken by the very sectors of the administration charged with committing the offence.

Summing up *AI*'s investigation, the report says that in any country prolonged incommunicado detention, especially of persons suspected of offences against state security, greatly enhances the likelihood of ill-treatment.

Taken together, the procedures and

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S RESPONSE

Among the points raised by the Israeli Attorney General, Professor Itzhak ZAMIR, in his detailed reply to *AI*'s memorandum are human rights in the context of politically motivated violence and *AI*'s use of sources.

Attorney General: "*Nowhere (in the report) is there so much as an attempt to put the issue of civil rights in its appropriate context, taking into consideration the flagrant violations of all civilized norms by... terrorist groups.*"

AI: "*Amnesty International does not condone violence in any form... (it) recognizes the obligation of a government to protect its citizens from the dangers of violence... (but) every government must do so in a manner compatible with respect for and protection of the fundamental human rights... (Article 4 of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) stipulates that there may be no derogation from states' obligation to respect and protect the right to freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*"

Attorney General: "*...the sources upon which Amnesty relies... and the imbalanced manner in which these sources are presented... raise questions about the credibility and impartiality of the findings.*"

AI: "*The Attorney General mistakes the use to which the sources... are put... they are used as an indication of the nature of alleged ill-treatment and of the inadequacy of official rebuttals, not as sources of verified, proven instances of ill-treatment... the common conclusions... (of reports made by other organizations on allegations of ill-treatment in Israel/Occupied Territories)... is that instances of ill-treatment occur too frequently... (Their) conclusions show a sufficient level of consistency to warrant serious concern.*"

The Attorney General and *AI* express their different views on the effectiveness of the Israeli arrange-

ment with the Red Cross and aspects of procedure, including rules governing access to lawyers and doctors, interrogation, the role of military courts and the rules of trial and evidence.

The Attorney General argues that "in the light of Israel's exceptional security dilemma" security suspects are afforded "reasonable" rights. He concludes that there is no need for the committee of inquiry recommended by *AI*, and that the Israeli Government will ensure "the civil rights of security detainees" and will continue to investigate "specific allegations of maltreatment which are properly presented".

Among *AI*'s concluding remarks are the following: "The Attorney General has rejected in whole *AI*'s critique and recommendations for improvement... (and) has repeatedly appealed to concepts such as the "survival of the state" to justify restrictions imposed on the rights of individuals... Missing from the Attorney General's reply is any clearly reasoned statement explaining how the prospects for the survival of the state would be changed by... instituting a set of administrative procedures which would provide greater protection for detainees from ill-treatment..."

• **In a letter to *AI* dated 27 August 1980 the Acting Attorney General, writing on behalf of his superior, criticized the report in terms that did not add substantially to the Attorney General's earlier comments on the memorandum. *AI* is sorry to note in the letter that the Israeli Government does not intend setting up the committee of inquiry it recommended** □

The full text of the report, *Report and Recommendations of an Amnesty International Mission to The Government of the State of Israel 3-7 June 1979*, including the Government's response and Amnesty International comments, is available from Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, England. Price: £2.00.

practices currently in operation in the Occupied Territories make any external control over the prisoner's treatment impossible and increase the likelihood that ill-treatment may occur. They allow a situation to endure where the conclusive evidence necessary to either refute or substantiate any prisoner's

allegations of ill-treatment cannot be obtained and where, with deficient procedures at every stage of the process leading from arrest to conviction, security suspects may be denied routinely their right both to the safety of their person, and to the fair and impartial administration of justice □

Iran Wave of executions — 290 die

More than 290 people are known to have been executed in Iran in July and August 1980. This includes 90 people said to have been executed for involvement in an alleged coup attempt in July. More than 300 people were arrested in connection with the alleged attempt and Ayatollah KHOMEINI has called for the death penalty for all those convicted.

On 19 August 1980 *AI* sent an appeal to Iran's newly appointed Prime Minister, Mohammed Ali RAJAI, to halt executions and the imprisonment of people for their beliefs or origins.

In a letter to the Prime Minister *AI* said it had been saddened to see continued human rights violations after the Revolution, especially the large number of executions which had taken place. People brought before

Islamic Revolutionary Courts had been consistently denied fair trials.

AI also expressed concern that the Iranian authorities were increasingly tending to imprison people they saw as opposing them, including members of the *Majlis* (parliament). In many cases those imprisoned had been foremost in the opposition to the government of the Shah and had suffered imprisonment at that time for their political beliefs.

"The imprisonment of Baha'is, Jews and, most recently, Christians brings into question the spirit of religious tolerance which we understood would exist following the Revolution and which was reflected in the new Iranian Constitution," the letter said. Some of these people had been held for long periods without charge or trial and some had been sentenced to death □

Czechoslovakia More dissenters detained

Five people are reported to have been imprisoned or detained in Czechoslovakia in recent months for exercising their right to freedom of expression.

Vaclav UMLAUF, a 20-year-old miner preparing for theological studies, was sentenced on 23 May 1980 to three years' imprisonment: at his place of work he had complained that equipment in the mines was inadequate and he had also openly condemned the Soviet military action in Afghanistan. Another accusation was that he had sent a letter to a priest in Britain in which he criticized the Prague trial in October 1979 of six members of the Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS).

Adrian DOBROVODSKY, aged 26, a Charter 77 signatory, was sentenced

at the end of July to 18 months' imprisonment for copying and disseminating "anti-state" writings and for "influencing" other people to take part in these activities.

Rudolf BATTEK, aged 56, a sociologist member of VONS and a representative of Charter 77, is in pre-trial detention after being arrested on 14 June, accused of assaulting a public official and of a breach of the peace. *AI* believes that the charges are a pretext for prosecuting him.

Two musicians, Jindrich TOMES and a songwriter and Charter 77 representative, Karel SOUKUP, were remanded in custody in mid-1980. They were charged with singing songs with "anti-socialist content" at a private wedding party.

All five men have been adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience □

Colombia Government sent torture report

AI has sent the Colombian Government conclusive evidence of widespread arbitrary arrest and systematic torture of political prisoners by government forces.

In a 258-page report, submitted to the authorities on 27 August 1980, *AI* documents abuses in Colombia with hundreds of names, dates and places, in support of its recommendations to the authorities last April (May, June 1980 *Newsletters*).

Much of the evidence was compiled by an *AI* mission which visited Colombia in January 1980.

The report cites more than 600 individual cases and deals with many of them in detail. It emphasizes that a quasi-permanent state of siege—in effect in Colombia almost continuously for 30 years—had facilitated widespread violations of human rights.

AI's mission found that peasants, Indians and trade unionists suffered particularly from indiscriminate political murders. Doctors, lawyers and others trying to uphold professional codes of conduct were also seized and tortured.

The report is studded with details of beatings, burnings, the use of drugs, electric shock, rape, near-drownings and other systematic tortures. It includes a list of 35 military centres where torture was practised.

Thirty of the examples cited were cases studied by a medical doctor who took part in *AI*'s mission. They included 27 people whom the doctor was able to examine physically and psychologically. He concluded that in most cases there was clear evidence that torture had taken place; in others he found evidence compatible with the allegations of torture.

Submitting the report, *AI* again called on the Colombian Government to act to re-establish the protection of human rights in the country. It said the government should consider the need to lift the state of siege and to repeal security decrees □

FORMER URUGUAYAN SENATOR, AGED 77, HELD INCOMMUNICADO

According to reports reaching *AI*, Dr José Pedro CARDOSO, aged 77, a former senator and former Secretary General of the Uruguayan Socialist Party, was taken from his home in Montevideo by members of the Uruguayan security forces on 22 August 1980.

Dr Cardoso, a distinguished psychiatrist, who suffers from a heart condition, is said to have been held incommunicado and interrogated for two days before being taken to the intensive care unit of a military hospital; he was then said to have been taken to another hospital and kept incommunicado,

with soldiers posted at his bedside.

The authorities have given no reasons for arresting Dr Cardoso. *AI* believes he may have been detained because of his political views, possibly in connection with the national referendum on the constitution due to be held in November 1980 □



amnesty international

campaign for the abolition of torture

Repeated torture reports from Kinshasa

Despite government claims that there are no prisoners of conscience in Zaire and that torture is not used in Zairean detention centres, *AI* has received repeated reports during the past nine months that political prisoners in the capital, Kinshasa, have been subjected to torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

Beatings and starvation are the most frequently reported forms of ill-treatment at most prisons and detention centres in Kinshasa. It is routine for political detainees to be beaten.

Methods of torture include whippings with electric cable, beatings with various blunt instruments, hanging prisoners upside down and beating them, submerging their heads underwater for long periods, and burning them. Women are reported to have been raped.

The places where torture is reported

to have been used include the headquarters of the national security police, the *Centre national de recherches et d'investigations* (CNRI), in Gombe district, where several hundred prisoners are held; and another CNRI prison, "B2", situated behind the Gendarmerie headquarters in Gombe district.

Prisoners are reported to have been tortured at N'Dolo military prison and at special detention centres in the *Cité de l'OUA* (Organization for African Unity City), an estate in Kinshasa near the President's residence.

Prisoners who have been tortured include students and teachers, workers striking for higher wages, and people suspected of organizing political opposition to the government.

Between May 1979 and May 1980 doctors representing *AI* examined 80 former prisoners who had left Zaire and found evidence that 60 had been

tortured.

In recent months *AI* has appealed on behalf of a number of prisoners reported to have been tortured or ill-treated, among them: LANDU Pholo, arrested in March 1980; ASSUMANI Bilimba, arrested on 26 May 1980; and NTAMBU-wa-Ntambu, a gendarme arrested in February or March 1980 in Kinshasa. All three prisoners of conscience are believed to be still in prison.

Please write courteously worded letters, in French if possible, appealing for urgent measures to end the practice of torture and for an inquiry into the use of torture in Kinshasa detention centres to: Citoyen MOBUTU Sese Seko, Président-Fondateur du MPR, Président de la République et Commissaire d'Etat à la Défense nationale et à la Sécurité du Territoire, La Présidence, Kinshasa 2, Republic of Zaire.

Zaire

Suicides as prison conditions 'get worse'

Prison conditions for political detainees in Argentina are reported to be getting worse and *AI* has learned of three men committing suicide in recent months, bringing the number of suicides by political prisoners reported since October 1979 to five.

- On 19 August 1980 Raúl Luis COMINOTO, a political prisoner being held under "administrative detention", hanged himself in La Plata Prison after he had spent a month in a special punishment cell.
- Gabriel Francisco DE BENEDETTI killed himself in Rawson Prison, in the southern province of Chubut, on 20 June, after serving seven years of a 23-year sentence.
- Eduardo José SCHIAVONE hanged himself in Caseros Prison in Buenos Aires on 10 July; he had been given a four-year sentence but had been in prison for seven years.

In the early hours of 9 July 1980, prisoners in block 16 of Caseros Prison were ordered out of their cells and forced to run, naked, with their hands

behind their backs. Those who fell were beaten and then sent to the punishment cell for a minimum of 30 days.

During this period no visits or newspapers were allowed. The diet was poor and prisoners were allowed only one blanket each at night—in the middle of the Argentinian winter.

Also on 9 July, a number of prisoners were transferred by military plane from Rawson to Caseros Prison. They were chained during the journey and were forced to crouch with their heads between their knees. They were said to have been beaten constantly. After landing they were blindfolded and some allegedly dragged to the prison by their hair.

AI is concerned that long periods of detention in a number of prisons, notably Caseros, may harm the psychological and physical health of detainees.

Prisoners known to be in poor psychological health include Carlos ECHEGOY (who cut his wrists the same day Eduardo Schiavone committed suicide), Eduardo FOTTI,

Argentina

Argentino CABRAL, Ricardo Enrique KACJMAHOR, Tiburcio PADILLA, Horacio Valentin VOLPE, Luis NOCETTO and Carlos Alberto SANJUESA.

Please write courteously worded letters appealing for the release of Carlos Echevoy and the others on humanitarian grounds to: President Jorge Rafael VIDELA, Casa Rosada, Balcarce 50, Buenos Aires C.F., Argentina.

HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

A detailed report on human rights in Argentina by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) is to be considered at the general assembly of the Organization of American States in Washington from 19 to 28 November 1980.

Council call for UN move on death penalty

At the end of its International Council in Vienna *AI* called on the United Nations (UN) to declare the death penalty a violation of fundamental human rights.

AI's supreme governing body, meeting in the Austrian capital from 11 to 14 September, urged its national sections and members to seek public and governmental support for such a declaration by the current session of the General Assembly.

The council welcomed a statement earlier in the month by the UN Secretary General, Kurt WALDHEIM, that capital punishment "violates respect for the dignity of every person and the right to life as stated in the basic postulates of the

United Nations."

The council noted that the death penalty also took the form of "disappearances" and extra-legal executions, and it concluded that *AI* had not succeeded in effectively communicating the scale of such attempts to eliminate political opponents. The meeting therefore decided to commit the movement to a long-term program of action on these abuses.

The council also decided to intensify efforts to expose and halt torture. Activities are to include support for a UN Convention Against Torture that would include provision for inspecting all places of detention throughout the world.

On the question of finances, the council adopted revised guidelines for accepting funds, ruling out donations from governments, except for humanitarian relief to prisoners

or their families, and prohibiting any contributions that would "incur financial dependence, real or apparent, upon any political or interest group."

AI's budget for 1980/81 was set at £2,092, 810 (sterling), an increase of 21 per cent over 1979/80. All funds are to be contributed by the fund raising programs and donations of the membership.

• The council elected to its International Executive Committee: Stelios NESTOR (Greece), Suriya WICKREMASINGHE (Sri Lanka), Edy KAUFMAN (Israel), and Andrew BLANE (United States of America). Stelios Nestor, a lawyer who was tortured and imprisoned under the former military regime in Greece, joins the committee for the first time □

Iraqis charged with poisoning prisoners

Detailed evidence on three people alleged to have been given slow-acting poison while in custody in Iraq has been received by *AI*. Two of those involved were examined by doctors in the United Kingdom (UK) after they left Iraq—one died in the UK, and the other was said by medical sources to be recovering. The third person, a woman, is reported to have died in Iraq.

The evidence comes against a background of reports from Iraq since last May alleging that political suspects were being given poison in custody.

According to the reports, a number of people arrested on suspicion of political opposition became ill after their release from custody. Some are said to have died. The victims were said to have been given liquids such as fruit juice or yoghurt to drink shortly before release.

The two patients examined in the UK were found to be suffering from thallium poisoning. Thallium, a heavy metal, is used commercially as rat poison. In humans it often causes severe digestive problems, including diarrhoea and vomiting, before affecting the nervous system to cause muscular paralysis; it becomes increasingly difficult for the victim to breathe or swallow. A characteristic symptom is for the hair to begin falling out.

DEATH PENALTY

AI has learned of 173 people being sentenced to death in seven countries in August 1980, and of 166 executions in six countries □

Thallium poisoning can lead to a slow and painful death.

The man who died in the UK was Majidi JEHAD. He arrived in May and died on 16 June. Before his death he is reported to have said he had been detained in Iraq in the past for political reasons.

He is also quoted as having said that when he went to a police station to collect his passport he was given orange juice and believed this was when he was poisoned.

At an inquest into his death in London, evidence was given that a substantial amount of thallium was found in his body. According to press reports the coroner concluded that it was most likely that he had been deliberately poisoned, outside the UK.

Another Iraqi, a member of the Shi'i community, was said to have spent time in prison, to have become ill after his release in April and to have visited the UK for treatment in late May. Analysis showed thallium poisoning, but medical sources said he was recovering.

Another alleged victim, a Shi'i woman arrested for political question-

ing, was said to have refused food during most of her three days in detention—but to have accepted yoghurt just before her release. Shortly afterwards she was reported to have been admitted to hospital, after suffering from diarrhoea and vomiting. According to reports her limbs became paralysed, she was unable to swallow or breathe, and her hair began to fall out before she died this year. These symptoms are consistent with thallium poisoning.

AI has received a number of less detailed allegations of political suspects being poisoned in Iraq and has called on President Saddam HUSAIN to open an inquiry □

STOP PRESS

According to the latest reports from Warsaw, the Polish authorities have released Edmund ZADROZYNSKI (see article on page 2) □

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, England. Printed in Great Britain by Hill and Garwood Ltd., Fourth Way, Wembley, Middlesex. Available on subscription at £5 (US \$10) per calendar year.