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**ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARIES 1992**

**AN OVERVIEW OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT**

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**WORLDWIDE SUMMARY**

**Highlights of Amnesty International's annual report covering events from January to December 1991**

Governments around the world are fuelling human rights violations by letting their forces get away with murder, "disappearances", torture and other serious abuses.

In its latest annual report - detailing human rights violations in 143 countries - Amnesty International said many governments ignore past human rights abuses, pass sweeping amnesty laws, let investigations drag on for years, and often don't take action against violators even when there is evidence against them.

The organization said that governments breed contempt for human rights by not bringing the perpetrators of gross abuses to justice - inevitably leading to more violations of those basic rights in future.

Some of the gross human rights violations detailed in its global survey of 1991 include:

- the extrajudicial execution of 1,000 or more people in Burundi against a backdrop of ethnic tensions
- the "disappearance" and extrajudicial execution by security forces of at least 360 people in Peru and widespread atrocities by the Partido Comunista del Perú (Sendero Luminoso), Communist Party of Peru (Shining Path opposition group)
- the execution of at least a thousand people, but probably several times more, in China.
- the torture, extrajudicial execution and other arbitrary, deliberate killings of civilians by all sides in the armed conflict in Yugoslavia
- the mass "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions in Iraq and Kuwait, particularly following the popular uprisings in Iraq and the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

**The 311-page annual report covers Amnesty International's concerns including the holding of prisoners of conscience, detention of political prisoners without charge or trial or after unfair trials, torture and execution of prisoners, political killings by governments outside the law and "disappearances" after detention by security forces.**

**HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS WORLDWIDE**  
**DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1992**

**PRISONERS**

- Prisoners of conscience - jailed solely for the peaceful exercise of their basic human rights - were held in some 65 countries. Possible prisoners of conscience were held in 27 countries.
- The number of known prisoners of conscience in those countries totalled 3,200.
- At least 294,000 political prisoners in total were detained without charge or trial or under administrative detention in more than 60 countries.

**UNFAIR TRIALS**

- More than 1,300 political prisoners were imprisoned after unfair trials in at least 18 countries.
- Political prisoners in 17 countries were still in prison after unfair trials in previous years.

**TORTURE/ILL-TREATMENT**

- Detainees were tortured or ill-treated in prisons, police stations or secret detention centres in at least 104 countries.
- More than 500 people died apparently as a result of torture or inhuman prison conditions or in "suspicious" circumstances in some 40 countries.

**EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS**

- Suspected government opponents, members of targeted ethnic groups or people living in opposition strongholds were apparently victims of extrajudicial execution in 45 countries.

**"DISAPPEARANCES"**

- At least 1270 people were reported to have "disappeared" after arrest by security forces in some 20 countries and many others remained "disappeared" in at least 26 countries after "disappearing" in previous years.

**DEATH PENALTY**

- Prisoners are known to have been executed in 33 countries and others were sentenced to death or remained on death row from previous years in more than 50 countries.

**- By the end of 1991, 44 countries were abolitionist in law for all crimes, 16 restricted the penalty to exceptional offences and 21 others had abolished the death penalty in practice. 106 countries retain the use of the death penalty for ordinary crimes.**

**VICTIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS DETAILED**  
**IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1992**

**GOVERNMENT OPPONENTS**

- Real or suspected government opponents - including members of legal opposition groups - were victims of human rights violations in 90 countries.

**RELIGIOUS GROUPS**

- Leaders or members of religious groups were targeted for human rights violations in 22 countries.

**Relatives**

- Relatives of government opponents were jailed, tortured or killed by government forces in 18 countries as a means of getting to the actual opponent.

**WOMEN**

- Women were victims of a range of human rights violations, including rape by security forces, in 29 countries.

**CHILDREN/JUVENILES**

- Some 39 countries violated the basic human rights of children and juveniles.

**LAWYERS/JUDGES**

- Lawyers and judges, especially those involved in defending human rights, themselves faced human rights violations in at least 16 countries.

**HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS**

- Human rights activists were imprisoned, tortured, "disappeared" or killed in at least 14 countries.

**TRADE UNIONISTS**

- Governments in some 16 countries targeted trade unionists for human rights violations.

**ACADEMICS/STUDENTS**

- Academics and students in more than 26 countries were victims of human rights violations.

**JOURNALISTS**

- Journalists, sometimes those writing about government abuses, became victims of violations in 25 countries.

**ARTISTS**

- Governments violated the human rights of artists expressing dissent in six countries.

**ETHNIC GROUPS/INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

- Members of ethnic or indigenous groups were victims of human rights violations in more than 40 countries.

## AFRICA

### Highlights of Amnesty International's annual report covering events from January to December 1991

Momentous political developments in Africa in 1991 brought about immense changes in the human rights situation in many countries in the region.

Reformist governments came to power either after "national" conferences in French-speaking countries such as Congo, Niger and Togo, or after elections as in Zambia. Repressive governments elsewhere were swept away as a result of popular uprising in Mali or the victory of armed opposition groups in Ethiopia and Somalia.

Political reform led to the ending of most of the continent's one-party states such as Kenya and Rwanda, which held multi-party elections for the first time. Only Burundi, Tanzania and Malawi remained formal one-party states at the end of 1991 and only in Malawi were there no plans to change to a multi-party system.

Political change ended some entrenched patterns of human rights abuses. In Zambia, for example, semi-permanent emergency laws allowing detention without trial were lifted and in Ethiopia hundreds of prisoners of conscience and other detainees were released following the overthrow of the government which had practised systematic arbitrary detention.

At the same time both the activities of the pro-democracy movements and the revival of competitive party politics led to new human rights violations. Demonstrators demanding political reform were shot down in Cameroon, Madagascar, Mali and Zaire and opposition party supporters were detained in many states. Extrajudicial executions were reported in countries like Chad and Mali whose new governments had come to power only a few months earlier pledging to respect human rights.

One characteristic of almost all the countries that experienced political change was their difficulty in coming to terms with violations of human rights committed by previous governments, both by bringing those responsible to justice and introducing reforms to prevent any future abuses.

In some countries officials of past governments were detained in connection with human rights abuses and other offences. In Ethiopia, for example, where past human rights violations were confirmed following the change of government, thousands of former government officials were detained. Elsewhere, government-backed investigations into past human rights abuses were initiated as, for example, in Chad and Niger. In none of these countries had anyone been brought to justice by the end of year.

In many countries where governments changed there were no investigations whatsoever and officials responsible for killing or torturing prisoners in the past benefited from a practice of impunity. In Congo, for example, a decision by the national conference that no one should be brought to justice for "political offences" was interpreted to mean that those responsible for past human rights violations should also be immune from prosecution.

There appeared in general to be a reluctance to learn from the past and to introduce reforms which would prevent abuses, perhaps because the governments feared the reaction of security forces if curbs were placed on their activities. Even so, before the end of 1991 soldiers in Togo had attacked the prime minister's residence to protest at attempts by a civilian transitional government to hold the army accountable for its actions.

In 1991, the most widespread human rights violations in the region continued to be the extrajudicial executions and "disappearances" of government opponents, members of targeted ethnic groups and rival political organizations. In Burundi 1,000 or more extrajudicial executions were committed against a backdrop of ethnic tensions. Many of the 300 black political prisoners whose

extrajudicial execution became known in Mauritania in 1991 and some 150 members of the Tuareg ethnic group who were shot dead by soldiers in Mali were killed because of their ethnic origin.

Killings by rival political groups continued in Liberia - although on a lesser scale than in 1990 - and in Somalia many of the thousands who died were victims of deliberate and targeted killings because of their clan origin. In South Africa, hundreds of government opponents, often members of the African National Congress, were victims of politically-motivated killings carried out with the acquiescence or collusion of the government's security forces - and sometimes with their direct involvement.

Government opponents continued to be tortured throughout the region in 1991, when there were reports of former torture centres being reopened and new evidence emerged of torture under ousted governments. Until President Mengistu's overthrow, political detainees in Ethiopia continued to be tortured in interrogation centres and "safe" houses. In Sudan torture was a daily occurrence in detention centres known as "ghost houses". In Chad some of the previous government's torture and illegal detention centres - including a converted swimming pool - were reportedly reopened. In those countries, and others including Burundi, Cameroon, Djibouti, Malawi, and Mauritania, torture methods included beatings on the soles of the feet, burnings with coals, electric shocks, near drownings, partial suffocation and starvation.

Political prisoners or detainees, including prisoners of conscience, continued to be held often on a large scale in many countries, despite some prominent releases of detainees. In Uganda, hundreds of suspected opponents of the government, including members of parliament, were detained during counter-insurgency operations; many were detained unlawfully in military barracks for months. In Kenya, hundreds of pro-democracy activists were imprisoned for short periods. In Ghana, at least 50 suspected government opponents continued to be held in administrative detention without charge or trial: some had been held for more than eight years.

Large-scale releases of political detainees occurred during the year. In Angola some 2,000 prisoners were freed following the signing of a peace agreement and in Rwanda several thousand prisoners detained in 1990 were released in April 1991. More than 300 prisoners of conscience were released in Sudan, although hundreds of other suspected government opponents were arrested there during the year. Eighty political detainees were freed in Malawi; however more than 20 other political detainees remained in custody, including one held for over 25 years. Five prisoners of conscience were released in Swaziland on the eve of an Amnesty International visit to the country to press for their release.

Throughout the year, suspected government opponents continued to face unfair trials in a number of countries such as Kenya and Sudan. In Sudan more than 40 defendants were sentenced after trials that lasted only a few minutes and where they weren't allowed to have lawyers. Special security court trials that fell short of international standards continued to take place in Rwanda, but similar courts were abolished in Mali.

Executions took place in a number of countries, some after unfair trials. In South Africa a moratorium announced in 1990 on carrying out death sentences formally came to an end but continued in practice; 420 prisoners remained on death row in Pretoria, but there were no executions there. However, two people were executed in the nominally independent Venda "homeland". Executions also took place in Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania and Sudan, where at least a dozen people were sentenced to be publicly crucified.

Armed opposition groups were also responsible for torture and deliberate, arbitrary killings throughout the year. The National Patriotic Front of Liberia was responsible for widespread killings in Liberia and the arrest and killings of hundreds of civilians following its invasion of Sierra Leone. Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) forces were reported to have deliberately and arbitrarily killed hundreds of civilians, decapitating or mutilating some of them. One faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Army killed more than 2,000 civilians following a split in the organization.



**HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN AFRICA**  
**DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1992**

**EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS**

- Several thousand people were victims or possible victims of extrajudicial execution by security forces in 26 countries, including Burundi, Madagascar, Mali, South Africa and Zaire.

**"DISAPPEARANCES"**

- Some 60 people were reported to have "disappeared" in four countries and the fate of close to 500 others from eight countries was still unknown after their "disappearance" in previous years. The countries included Angola, Mauritania and Mozambique.

**TORTURE/ILL-TREATMENT**

- Detainees were tortured or ill-treated in prison, police stations or special secret detention centres in 34 countries, including Burundi, Chad, Ethiopia, and Malawi.
- More than 340 people died apparently from beatings and other torture in some 14 countries, including Djibouti and Mauritania.
- Prisoners in at least eight countries including Cameroon and Togo had to endure harsh prison conditions which amounted to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

**PRISONERS**

- Prisoners of conscience or possible prisoners of conscience, detained solely for the peaceful exercise of their human rights, were held in more than half the countries in the region.
- A total of more than 200 prisoners of conscience were held in 24 countries including Ghana, Kenya and Sudan.
- A further 50 possible prisoners of conscience were held in 10 countries including Equatorial Guinea, Senegal and Sierra Leone.
- More than 5,300 people were held in administrative detention - without charge or trial - in some 26 countries, including Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Sudan, Uganda, and Zaire.
- More than 8,000 political prisoners, including some prisoners of conscience and others held without charge or trial, were released in 22 countries, including Angola, Mauritania, Rwanda and Sudan.

**UNFAIR TRIALS**

- More than 1,000 political prisoners were imprisoned after unfair trials in six countries, including Ghana and Kenya.
- A couple of dozen political prisoners were still held after unfair trials in previous years in four countries, including Kenya, Malawi and Sudan.

**DEATH PENALTY**

- More than 60 people were executed - by hanging, firing squad or other method - in seven countries, including Sudan and Uganda.

**- More than 1,000 people in 18 countries including Kenya, South Africa and Zambia, were on death row, either after death sentences passed in 1991 or previous years.**

## **AMERICAS**

### **Highlights of Amnesty International's annual report covering events from January to December 1991**

Impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of human rights violations continued to be a serious obstacle to the prevention of abuses throughout most countries in the Americas, where the vast majority of those responsible for torture, "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions were not brought to justice and investigations were not carried out.

Amnesty laws passed in Honduras and Nicaragua during 1991, ostensibly to promote national reconciliation, provided further obstacles to the investigation of human rights violations. In other countries wide ranging amnesties passed in previous years prevented investigations into human rights violations committed before those amnesties were adopted, with the result that many of those in the security forces responsible for systematic torture and thousands of "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions continued in their posts.

On the rare occasions where perpetrators were brought before civilian courts, the judiciary, through intimidation, lack of political support or lack of resources, often failed to secure convictions. In one rare, highly-publicized case in El Salvador a colonel was convicted of the murder of six Jesuit priests and two university staff - but thousands of other human rights violations in the country remained uninvestigated.

In Colombia and Peru military justice effectively operated a system of institutionalized impunity even in those rare cases where members of the security forces accused of human rights violations were brought to trial. Impunity and avoiding accountability were also facilitated by recourse to "death squads" and other so-called paramilitary groups working in close collaboration with the security forces. Death squads were active in Brazil where they claimed hundreds of victims, including scores of street children, and also in Colombia, Peru and Guatemala.

In Brazil, for example, hundreds of street children and adults were killed by death squads. In Colombia hundreds of civilians were killed by security forces and paramilitary groups working with them. Dozens more were killed by urban "death squads", believed to have links to the national police. "Death squads", security forces and civil groups under military control were responsible for hundreds of extrajudicial executions in Guatemala. In Peru, over 300 people "disappeared" and at least 60 people were extrajudicially executed by security forces or so-called paramilitary groups allegedly operating with their support.

Opposition groups were responsible for human rights abuses in the region. In Peru the Partido Comunista del Perú (Sendero Luminoso), Communist Party of Peru (Shining Path), were responsible for widespread atrocities, including targeted killing of government

officials and civilians. In El Salvador, the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) were responsible for several execution-style killings.

Torture continued to be endemic in the region, another feature of the impunity granted to human rights violators in the Americas. In Mexico torture and ill-treatment were daily facts of life. In 1991, detainees in Mexico were routinely beaten and many suffered other forms of torture such as electric shocks and near asphyxiation. In most cases, medical treatment was inadequate or unavailable, and confessions extracted under torture were commonly accepted in court. At least 20 complaints of torture were presented to courts in Chile in 1991, but none of those responsible were brought to justice. In Ecuador a government-appointed commission found evidence of torture and ill-treatment by members of the Servicio de Investigación Criminal, Criminal Investigation Service. In September the force was dissolved. In Uruguay several cases of torture and ill-treatment were reported, including those of a 17-year-old and an 18-year-old who were allegedly beaten, kicked and hooded by police during interrogation. In Haiti too there were widespread reports of torture, including severe beatings, and torture victims were refused medical help. Conditions in detention centres were very harsh, and ill-treatment was common. Inmates suffered from malnutrition and children as young as 11 were held in adult prisons under these very severe conditions.

Arbitrary detention was also a serious concern in Haiti, where more than 300 people, including many prisoners of conscience, were arrested by the military, in the aftermath of the coup that overthrew the government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in September.

In Cuba there were scores of prisoners of conscience and perhaps two or three hundred other possible prisoners of conscience, many of them human rights activists or critics of the government. Some had been arrested for trying to leave the country. Trials of political prisoners fell far short of international standards - they were sometimes held within days of arrest, and prisoners had little or no access to defence lawyers. Prisoners of conscience were also a concern in the United States of America, where at least 32 members of the armed forces were imprisoned for refusing to participate in the Gulf conflict on conscientious grounds. There were also concerns raised about ill-treatment of people in prisons and police custody in various parts of the USA.

More than 2,500 people remained on death row in the USA and 14 prisoners were executed. The USA is now one of only six countries in the world that sentence juvenile offenders to death. The death sentence was imposed in several countries in the Caribbean, including the Bahamas, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Executions were carried out in Cuba, Antigua and Barbuda and St Vincent and the Grenadines. In Grenada, however, 22 people, including 14 former military and government officials, had their death sentences commuted to life imprisonment.

**Amnesty International was also concerned about the United States authorities' interception of asylum-seekers fleeing Haiti after the coup in September and the procedures used to identify those who might be at risk: this screening procedure lacked important safeguards required by international standards and could have led to people at risk of human rights abuses being forcibly returned to Haiti.**

**HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE AMERICAS**  
**DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1992**

**"DISAPPEARANCES"**

-People "disappeared" or remained unaccounted for in 14 countries. Hundreds of people "disappeared" in Colombia, Guatemala and Peru, thousands more in total remained unaccounted for from past years in countries including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Honduras and Mexico.

**EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS**

-At least 900 people were apparently extrajudicially executed by government security forces or by "death squads" said to be linked to them in 11 countries, notably Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Haiti and Peru.

**TORTURE OR ILL-TREATMENT**

-Torture or ill-treatment of prisoners were reported in 22 countries, including Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Haiti and Mexico.

-In nine countries, including the Dominican Republic and Panama, people died in custody, apparently as a result of torture.

-Women were allegedly raped or sexually abused by security forces in four countries, Brazil, Chile, the USA and Uruguay.

**PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE**

-Prisoners of conscience, jailed solely for the peaceful exercise of their human rights, were held in at least five countries, including Cuba and the USA.

**UNFAIR TRIAL/DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL**

-Political prisoners were held in several countries. In three countries including Cuba they were held after unfair trials. In six countries including Haiti they were held without charge or trial.

**DEATH PENALTY**

-The death penalty was imposed in 12 countries, and thousands of people remained on death row, notably in the USA, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

**-Some 18 executions were carried out in four countries in the region, 14 of them in the USA.**

**ASIA/PACIFIC****Highlights of Amnesty International's annual report covering events from January to December 1991**

Government officials who have committed torture, political killings, "disappearances" and other grave human rights violations enjoy impunity in a number of countries in the Asia/Pacific region. In some cases, impunity is explicitly provided by special laws; in other countries, impunity is effectively practised through institutional attitudes or official policies that result in a failure or refusal to investigate human rights violations properly or a lack of determination to bring perpetrators to justice.

The government of Sri Lanka, while announcing some measures to improve human rights protection, has refused to repeal the Indemnity (Amendment) Act. Under this law, members of the security forces and others are granted immunity from prosecution for acts done "in good faith" between August 1977 and December 1988. During this period tens of thousands of people "disappeared" or were extrajudicially executed.

In the Philippines, despite the government's stated commitment to human rights and legal and constitutional guarantees, violations continued to occur in 1991 and virtually none of the perpetrators were brought to justice. Amnesty International believes that only five members of the security forces or paramilitary groups have been convicted for extrajudicial executions since 1986; Amnesty International has documented some 550 such killings between 1988 and the end of 1991. The government's failure to investigate human rights violations adequately and its policy of leaving the prosecution of perpetrators to the military, has led those who commit human rights violations to believe that their actions are condoned or that they are beyond the reach of the law.

In India impunity for human rights violations is provided both legally and informally. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, currently in force in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and certain other states, gives the security forces powers to make arrests and to shoot to kill. It also guarantees, in advance, that security forces are immune from prosecution. In other parts of the country, security forces act with effective impunity because of an informal but pervasive system of official complicity in covering up the widespread practice of torture.

Another common human rights violation in India is the detention without charge or trial, again under special laws, of many thousands of political prisoners, including some prisoners of conscience.



Indeed, across the region, prisoners of conscience continued in 1991 to be imprisoned solely for the non-violent expression of their beliefs and people were arrested arbitrarily, held without charge or trial and sentenced after unfair trials. In China hundreds of thousands of people were held without charge under various forms of administrative detention, some of them political or religious dissidents, notably Catholics in North China and Buddhist monks in Tibet. Thousands of political prisoners, including hundreds of prisoners of conscience, remained in prison, many of them in connection with the 1989 pro-democracy protests. Many were held without charge or trial and some were serving prison sentences imposed after unfair trials. More than 1,500 possible prisoners of conscience were held in Myanmar (Burma) - a fraction of the thousands of political prisoners believed to be held there. Some, like opposition leader and 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, continued to be held without charge or trial. Others were serving sentences after grossly unfair trials.

In the Republic of Korea (South Korea) hundreds of people were arrested for political activities, including allegedly praising North Korea, supporting strikes or engaging in peaceful demonstrations. At least 50 prisoners of conscience were imprisoned during the year, some of them serving lengthy prison sentences. More than 80 known and possible prisoners of conscience remained in prison in Viet Nam, and at least 15 more were arrested. One of them, Nguyen Dan Que, was a member of Amnesty International: he was sentenced to 20 years in prison followed by five years house arrest for "activities aimed at overthrowing the People's Government". Over 100 former military personnel were held without trial for "re-education" for much of 1991, some of them detained since 1975. In Afghanistan hundreds of political prisoners, including possible prisoners of conscience, were still held without charge or trial: some had been held for nine years. Other suspected government opponents were serving sentences after unfair trials before special courts.

Unfair trials were common in many countries, with hundreds of political prisoners facing lengthy sentences after unfair hearings. In Indonesia, more than 150 possible prisoners of conscience were in prison, most serving lengthy sentences for subversion. A further 200 political prisoners were still serving sentences after unfair trials in previous years.

In Cambodia, hundreds of political prisoners, including at least six prisoners of conscience, were released under the terms of the internationally-backed peace process. However, in December government officials admitted they still held 1,260 political prisoners and prisoners of war. There were also releases in Bhutan, where the King ordered the release of over 1,000 political prisoners, including three prisoners of conscience, at the end of 1991.

Both political detainees and criminal suspects in parts of Asia were subjected to sometimes horrifying torture, for example in India, Pakistan and Myanmar. The most frequently reported methods were beatings, electric shocks and rape.

Government forces were also responsible for many "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions in the region, particularly in countries in which armed opposition groups were active, such as the Philippines and Sri Lanka. In Indonesia hundreds of people were

extrajudicially executed by government forces in Aceh, East Timor and North Sumatra. About 100 people were killed in one incident in East Timor alone, when troops opened fire on a peaceful demonstration at a cemetery. In Sri Lanka hundreds of people were extrajudicially executed and several hundred "disappeared, and in the Philippines scores of people were believed to have been extrajudicially executed and dozens reportedly "disappeared" in police or military custody.

As well as the hundreds of people executed extrajudicially, thousands more faced death at the hands of the executioner. In China, the increase in the use of the death penalty continued: Amnesty International documented more than 1,050 executions and 1,650 death sentences in 1991, but believes the real figures to be significantly higher.

In Pakistan about 200 death sentences were passed, some of them after trials before special speedy courts, and one man was executed by stoning. In Malaysia at least 67 people received death sentences and in Taiwan 50 people are reported to have been executed.

Only one government took positive action against the death penalty: Hong Kong voted to abolish the death penalty and to bring in legislation quickly. In the Philippines, a vote to bring back the death penalty was postponed.

In several countries opposition groups were also responsible for human rights abuses. In Sri Lanka, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were responsible for widespread killings of civilians and were believed to have held over 2,000 prisoners and to have executed more than 30 of them. The New People's Army (NPA) in the Philippines was believed to be responsible for dozens of killings. In India too armed opposition groups were responsible for human rights abuses: in Punjab hundreds of civilians were killed by separatists, and opposition groups in Assam and Jammu and Kashmir held dozens of people hostage, in some cases killing them.

**HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**  
**DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1992**

**PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE**

-Thousands of prisoners of conscience, jailed solely for the peaceful exercise of their human rights, were held in at least 15 countries including Myanmar and China, and were possibly held in a further two.

**ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION**

-Sixteen countries between them held hundreds of thousands of political prisoners without charge or trial, particularly China and Sri Lanka.

**RELEASES**

-Thousands of political prisoners and/or prisoners of conscience in total were freed in nine countries, notably in Bangladesh.

**UNFAIR TRIALS**

-In at least five countries, including China, Indonesia, Myanmar and Pakistan, political prisoners were held after unfair trials this year and in at least five countries, including Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia and Viet Nam, after unfair trials in previous years.

**"DISAPPEARANCES"**

-Hundreds of people "disappeared" in total in seven countries including India, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, a figure which includes those who "disappeared" in previous years and who are still unaccounted for.

**EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS**

**-People were apparently extrajudicially executed by government security forces or by "death squads" said to be linked to them in 11 countries, particularly India, Indonesia/East Timor, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.**

#### **TORTURE OR ILL-TREATMENT**

**-Torture or ill-treatment of prisoners were reported in 16 countries, such as China, India, Myanmar and Pakistan.**

**-In six countries - Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Pakistan and Thailand - people died in custody, apparently as a result of torture.**

**-Women were raped or sexually abused by security forces in five countries - Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan and the Philippines.**

#### **DEATH PENALTY**

**-The death penalty was imposed in 12 countries, and thousands of people remained on death row.**

**-Executions were carried out in nine countries in the region. In China alone, Amnesty International knows of over 1,000 executions in 1991 and of over 1,600 people on death row.**

## **EUROPE**

### **Highlights of Amnesty International's annual report covering events from January to December 1991**

During 1991 political changes already under way in the USSR gained momentum. The failed coup in August spurred the demands of the former republics for independence which by the end of the year had led to the resignation of President Gorbachev and the dissolution of the USSR.

Although in many respects the human rights situation improved in the wake of these changes, notably with the drop in prisoners of conscience, inter-ethnic violence in the southern republics resulted in hundreds of deaths and alleged torture and ill-treatment of detainees.

In Yugoslavia political developments also took place rapidly, resulting in dramatic changes and serious human rights violations. Armed conflict broke out in the republics of Croatia and Slovenia following their declarations of independence on 25 June which were opposed by the Republic of Serbia and its allies. The fighting in Slovenia came to an end in July, but continued in Croatia for the rest of the year - the result was large-scale human rights violations, including massacres of civilians.

Political change in other countries as well had human rights implications. In Albania all remaining political prisoners were released, in Lithuania the death penalty was reduced in scope and in a number of countries human rights protections were built into new constitutions.

In the rest of Europe, certain entrenched patterns of human rights violations continued, with police and prison guards ill-treating or torturing detainees in many countries and conscientious objectors to military service continuing to be imprisoned in the hundreds in some countries.

Reports of torture and ill-treatment ranged from allegations of widespread and systematic torture to what appeared to be isolated incidents. However, Amnesty International was aware that the number of reports of torture and ill-treatment probably reflected only the tip of the iceberg in many countries, particularly when the victims were immigrants with no legal status who were unlikely to make official complaints.

Last year, an increasing number of the people who said they had been tortured or ill-treated were immigrants from outside Europe. In an Italian prison, most of the allegations of ill-treatment by prison guards were made by prisoners of North African origin and reports of ill-treatment in police custody in France also often concerned immigrants or French citizens of North African origin.

The alleged torture or ill-treatment in Europe differed in scale and severity, but a common feature was the apparent reluctance of governments in most cases to carry out impartial and effective investigations into the allegations, bring to justice the torturers and take steps to prevent such abuses in future.

More often than not governments denied that the ill-treatment had taken place, said that internal inquiries had established that it had not happened, produced unlikely explanations for how injuries had been received or how deaths in custody had occurred and questioned the motives of those making the complaint or pursuing it.

In Greece an administrative inquiry into the death in custody of a criminal suspect, allegedly tortured by members of the drug squad, concluded that the police had acted in self-defence. In Turkey the government attributed the death of a medical student detained on political grounds to "heart disease caused by malnutrition" although a fellow detainee reported that he had listened to his cries while being

tortured for four days and nights. In Norway a police officer was ordered to pay a fine following an investigation of alleged ill-treatment of a Palestinian student by the Special Committee for the Investigation of Police Conduct, but was subsequently acquitted by the Oslo Municipal Court, although its decision did not resolve the question of how his injuries had been sustained. In the United Kingdom, internal investigations "substantiated" only a handful of ill-treatment cases in Northern Ireland, despite the hundreds of allegations each year -- in 1991, the United Nations Committee Against Torture itself expressed serious concerns about the interrogation and detention procedures in Northern Ireland. In Austria, France, Italy, Portugal and Spain judicial inquiries into complaints of torture and ill-treatment in a number of cases dragged on for years without resolution or ended inconclusively.

Political prisoners faced unfair trials in several countries during 1991, and sentences from unfair trials in previous years were overturned. In Turkey, hundreds of Kurdish political prisoners remained in prison after trials that did not meet international standards and in the United Kingdom the court of appeal quashed convictions in a number of controversial cases, some dating back to the mid-1970s, because of police misconduct and falsification of evidence.

Reports of extrajudicial executions were received from several countries including Turkey, the USSR and Yugoslavia. In Turkey the killings were concentrated in the mainly Kurdish population of the southeast and in Yugoslavia there were reports of killings of civilians and unarmed soldiers by all sides in the conflict. Here again investigations of the killings appeared to be perfunctory or non-existent. Several people were killed in suspicious circumstances by the security forces in Northern Ireland and Amnesty International concluded that investigations into these killings did not meet minimum requirements set out in international standards.

The imposition and use of the death penalty continued to be a concern in Albania, Latvia and Estonia, where some 12 people were executed and 30 sentenced to death. In the USSR figures were released in 1991 covering the previous year, when some 200 people were executed and 400 sentenced to death.

Many prisoners of conscience were held in prisons throughout Europe, most of them conscientious objectors to military service. Hundreds of conscientious objectors, mostly Jehovah's Witnesses, were imprisoned in each of France, Greece and Switzerland. Conscientious objectors were also imprisoned in Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Norway and Spain. In the USSR there were 14 known prisoners of conscience at year end; most were conscientious objectors; there was also one possible prisoner of conscience who was reportedly sentenced solely for consenting homosexual activity between adults. And in the United Kingdom during the Gulf War 90 Arab nationals, mainly Iraqis, were detained on national security grounds - Amnesty International believed many were prisoners of conscience detained solely because of their nationality.

In the USSR, short-term "preventive detention" and "administrative arrest" continued to be used to detain scores of people seeking to exercise their human rights, particularly before the August coup attempt. Several hundred ethnic Albanians in Yugoslavia were administratively sentenced and imprisoned for up to 60 days for peacefully expressing nationalist views.

There were also significant releases of prisoners during 1991. All political prisoners in Albania were released in the first half of the year, including hundreds of prisoners of conscience. In Turkey, dozens of prisoners of conscience were among the 29,000 prisoners released under a new anti-terror law passed in April.

During 1991, armed opposition groups were also responsible for deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians. The number of killings of civilians in Northern Ireland by both Republican and Loyalist armed groups increased, with about 28 such killings by the Irish Republican Army and other republican groups and about 38 such killings by various Loyalist groups. In Turkey, there were many reports of Kurdish secessionist guerillas killing civilians, taking hostages and executing prisoners.

**HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EUROPE DETAILED**  
**IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1982**

**TORTURE/ILL-TREATMENT**

- Detainees were tortured or ill-treated in prison, police stations or other detention centres in 19 countries, including Italy, Turkey and the United Kingdom.
- More than 20 people died apparently from beatings by police and other torture in some six countries.

**PRISONERS**

- A total of some 700 prisoners of conscience or possible prisoners of conscience were held in more than half the countries in the region, including Greece, France, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The majority of them were conscientious objectors to military service.
- Thousands of people were held in administrative detention, mostly in Yugoslavia.
- Hundreds of political prisoners, including some prisoners of conscience, were released in seven countries, including Albania and Turkey.

**UNFAIR TRIALS**

- Hundreds of political prisoners remained imprisoned after trials that didn't meet international standards in Turkey.

**EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS**

- Extrajudicial executions were reported in three countries - Turkey, USSR and Yugoslavia.
- Killings by security forces in disputed circumstances took place in Albania, Spain and the United Kingdom.

**DEATH PENALTY**

- Hundreds of people were executed or sentenced to death in the USSR; about a dozen executions took place in three other countries - Albania, Estonia, Latvia - and a further 30 were sentenced to death or remained on death row in those countries.

## **MIDDLE EAST**

### **Highlights of Amnesty International's annual report covering events from January to December 1991**

At the start of 1991 world attention was focused on Iraq's dismal human rights record and the atrocities being committed by Iraqi troops following their invasion of Kuwait. The war which ensued led to the withdrawal of Iraqi troops and the restoration of the sovereignty of Kuwait in February; however, in the immediate aftermath of the war human rights continued to be violated in both countries on a massive scale.

In Kuwait the end of the occupation was greeted with a wave of arbitrary arrests, torture, "disappearances" and killings. Reprisals against suspected "collaborators" continued unchecked for months and were later followed by trials before a martial law court whose procedures fell short of international standards for fair trial.

The atrocities committed in Kuwait during the seven-month occupation which shocked the world community were repeated with even greater brutality as mass uprisings in Iraq in March and April were crushed. Over 1.5 million Iraqis fled their country in less than one month in the wake of widespread arbitrary arrests, torture, "disappearances" and mass extrajudicial executions. Action taken by the international community and the United Nations (UN), including the setting up of "safe havens" in the north and of humanitarian centres in the rest of the country, provided some protection for civilians in Iraq and may have prevented further large scale killings and reprisals. However, Amnesty International believed these measures alone were not enough to address the critical human rights situation in Iraq and the organisation called for the establishment of a UN human rights monitoring operation in Iraq.

The impunity with which Iraqi forces continued to violate human rights after the war, maintaining a record of abuse that went back a decade, was not unique in the Middle East. In Syria, despite the release of over 2000 political prisoners by the end of the year, no investigations had been initiated into violations which have included long-term detention without trial, torture and deaths in custody.

The same was true of Morocco, where long-term political prisoners and prisoners of conscience were released, including some imprisoned unfairly since the mid-seventies; hundreds of "disappeared" re-emerged after up to 18 years' incommunicado detention; but at least 30 prisoners had died over the same period as a result of torture and harsh prison conditions at a secret prison located at Tazmamert. A similar failure or reluctance to investigate past or present abuses was evident in other countries including Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, Libya and Saudi Arabia.

The effectiveness of official investigations into human rights violations as a deterrent or a safeguard against a repetition of such violations has often been undermined by governments' reluctance to carry them out in public or to bring the perpetrators to justice. In Tunisia a commission was established to look into human rights violations, but the full findings were never made public nor were the names or actions of any perpetrators. The authorities in Algeria have accepted that many of those detained following the 1988 riots were tortured and it has gone as far as establishing rates of compensation for the victims. The torturers, however, have not been brought to justice.



In Israel and the Occupied Territories, several soldiers and police officers have been convicted or disciplined for offences related to the intifada (uprising), yet investigations rarely result in prosecutions and those found guilty have received punishments which often don't appear commensurate with the offences committed.

During 1991, extrajudicial executions and "disappearances" continued throughout the region. People were killed when security forces used excessive force in Algeria - where more than 50 people were killed during widespread anti-government protests - and in the Israeli-Occupied Territories - where some 90 Palestinians, including children, were shot dead by Israeli forces. Some of those killings were possible summary executions or appeared to be unjustifiable. Several Iranian government opponents were killed abroad, mostly in France, in circumstances suggesting they might have been extrajudicially executed.

Information was received about some 2,000 people in Lebanon whose fate remained unknown following their abduction or detention by militias between 1975 and 1983. While the Moroccan government released several hundred Sahrawis who "disappeared" in previous years, hundreds of other Moroccans and Sahrawis were still unaccounted for.

Torture continued unabated in most countries in the region, often part of a pattern of violations that included lengthy detention and unfair trials. Widespread beating, punching, burning and electric shocks of suspected opponents continued in the 10th year of Egypt's state of emergency, and torture escalated in Tunisia as the government cracked down on Islamic opponents. In Israel and the Occupied Territories Palestinians were systematically tortured or ill-treated during interrogation, and methods may have been consistent with secret official guidelines allowing "a moderate measure of physical pressure". Detainees were also tortured in Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Syria and Yemen.

Unfair trials were often the next step for people who had been tortured into making confessions. In Tunisia, courts ignored reports of torture when people were tried and convicted; in Morocco more than 1,000 people arrested after riots in December 1990 were sentenced after unfair trials and hundreds more were still in prison after flawed trials in previous years. In Iran, hundreds of people remained in prison after unfair trials in previous years, and nine prisoners of conscience were sentenced after trials held in camera and without any defence lawyers present. Unfair trials were also reported in Bahrain, the Israeli-Occupied Territories, Jordan and Kuwait.

The problem of detention without charge or trial continued to be widespread in virtually every country in the region, with many people detained under state of emergency laws. Thousands of suspected supporters of Islamic movements were detained in Egypt and more than 1,200 suspected government opponents in Algeria were detained without charge or trial during a two-month state of seige. There were new arrests of government opponents in Syria, along with thousands still detained from previous years under the state of emergency, and administrative detention was imposed on some 2,000 Palestinians in Israel and the Occupied Territories. People were also detained without charge or trial in Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya and Tunisia.

In a number of countries prisoners of conscience were among those detained. They were among hundreds of people in prison from previous years in Iran and those imprisoned after unfair trials in Morocco.

Death sentences continued to be handed down and executions carried out in the Middle East. At least 775 people were executed in Iran, many of them sentenced for drug trafficking. Executions resumed in Saudi Arabia after the Gulf War, with 29 people publicly beheaded during the year.

Armed opposition groups were also responsible for the torture or deliberate and arbitrary killing of civilians. In Iraq, the Kurdistan Front allegedly killed some 60 Iraqi soldiers who had been captured and disarmed. In the Israeli-Occupied Territories, about 170 Palestinians were killed apparently by other Palestinians, some after having been tortured: most were suspected of collaborating with the

**Israeli authorities. At the Kham detention centre in South Lebanon, at least 200 detainees were still detained by the South Lebanon Army, many after having been tortured.**

**HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST**  
**DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 1992**

**EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS**

- Hundreds if not thousands of people were victims or possible victims of extrajudicial execution by security forces in six countries, including Algeria, Iraq and Kuwait both before and after the Iraqi occupation.

**"DISAPPEARANCES"**

- Close to 300 people were reported to have "disappeared" in three countries, including Iraq/occupied Kuwait and Kuwait.  
 - The fate of more than 2,200 others was still unknown after their "disappearance" in previous years in countries including Lebanon and Morocco

**TORTURE/ILL-TREATMENT**

- Detainees were tortured or ill-treated in prison, police stations or special secret detention centres in virtually every country in the region including Egypt, Israel and the Occupied Territories and Tunisia.  
 - More than 50 people died apparently from beatings and other torture in four countries, including Kuwait, Morocco and Tunisia.

**PRISONERS**

- Prisoners of conscience or possible prisoners of conscience were held in at least 15 countries in the region: more than 200 prisoners of conscience in 10 countries and a further 1,400 possible prisoners of conscience in five other countries.  
 - More than 8,500 people were held in administrative detention - without charge or trial - in at least 14 countries in the region.  
 - Almost 2,500 political prisoners, including some prisoners of conscience and others held without charge or trial, were released in nine countries.

**UNFAIR TRIALS**

- Political prisoners were imprisoned after unfair trials in five countries, including Iran, Jordan and Kuwait.  
 - Some 1,100 political prisoners were still held after unfair trials in previous years in six countries, including Bahrain, Libya and Saudi Arabia.

**DEATH PENALTY**

- More than 800 people were executed - by hanging, firing squad or other method - in eight countries, including Iran and Saudi Arabia.  
 - More than 200 people in five countries including Algeria and Morocco were on death row, either after death sentences passed in 1991 or previous years.