

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Media Advisory

AI Index: POL 30/008/2004 (Public)
News Service No: 029
10 February 2004

Refugees: A dream of protection turned into nightmare

As long as people's human rights are being violated, the world will have a "refugee problem". And whenever there is a refugee problem, the people who will suffer the most are the refugees themselves.

In January 2004, tens of thousands of Sudanese civilians who have fled a forgotten civil war are living in conditions unfit for human habitation in Chad, in danger of being attacked in cross-border raids. While in the United Kingdom, the entire asylum decision-making system is coming under attack after an Amnesty International report exposed dangerous flaws in the process - decisions that are, literally, a matter of life and death for those seeking asylum.

These two countries could hardly be more different. There is, however, a common denominator - they are both failing to protect the vulnerable.

In a series of features, **news.amnesty** will look at a number of different aspects of the situations facing refugees and asylum seekers around the world. With one feature a week through February and the beginning of March, we shall look at issues such as the coverage of the issue in the British media, the controversial detention policy in Australia, the asylum processes and more.

The first feature puts the issue into context, looking at the trends in relation to the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers internationally over the years.

<http://news.amnesty.org/mav/index/ENGPOL30100220042004>

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