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Colonel Nilendra Prasad Aryal
Head of Army Human Rights Cell
Army Headquarters
Singha Durbar
Kathmandu
Nepal

15 April 2004

Dear Colonel

Open letter on “disappearances”

I am writing to you to express concern at the reported arrests of Raj Kumar Pariyar, Nawa Raj Rijal, and Santosh Rijal in two separate incidents on 11 January and 31 March 2004. We have recently received reports that these three men were arrested by the security forces, and that their families have been unable to obtain any information from the authorities about where they are now being held, or the reasons for their arrests. Amnesty International is concerned that these men may have “disappeared”.

- **Raj Kumar Pariyar** was reportedly arrested on 11 January, at 9am. The 24 year old garment worker originally from Jeetpur Phedi, in ward no.4 of Kathmandu district, had recently been living at Basundhara, as he worked for a garment factory in Kathmandu municipality. Witnesses report that he was approached by a group of plain clothes security forces personnel when he was at the New Bus Park in Kathmandu. They arrested him, and he was taken away. His family have not heard any news of him in the past three months.
- Truck driver **Nawa Raj Rijal**, and his assistant **Santosh Rijal** (both of Dhading district) were reportedly arrested by soldiers posted at the Nagdhunga highway check post outside Kathmandu, at 7pm on 31 March. The two men were employed driving a TATA tipper-truck that belonged to **Kedar Prasad Bidari**, who “disappeared” following his arrest by the security forces on 7 March 2004. Nawa Raj, and Santosh Rijal were held at the check point until 2 April, when they were reportedly taken to Jaga Dal Gan barracks, in Chhauni army camp, Kathmandu. It is suspected that Kedar Prasad Bidari is also being held at the same place. Relatives have tried to visit all three men at the camp, but the army has denied their detention there. The truck that Nawa Raj and Santosh Rijal had been driving was also taken by the army, and on 11 April witnesses saw it being used to transport equipment and foodstuffs for Chhauni army camp.

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of the above four men. We call on the authorities to make public their whereabouts, and to grant the men immediate access to their relatives, lawyers, and any medical attention they may require. We further urge that they be treated humanely whilst in

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custody, and not tortured or ill-treated in any way. Finally, we call for Raj Kumar Pariyar, Nawa Raj Rijal, Santosh Rijal, and Kedar Prasad Bidari to be released immediately and unconditionally, unless they are to be charged with a recognisably criminal offence.

We look forward to receiving your response to our concerns for these individuals.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, for their information.

Yours sincerely

Ingrid Massage

Interim Director, Asia & Pacific Regional Program