



**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**

ANNUAL REVIEW 2000

## A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Pierre Sané, Secretary General of Amnesty International, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, January 2001.



Photo by STR. © Reuters 2001

**Amnesty International was founded 40 years ago, at the height of the Cold War. Since then the world has come a long way.**

The death penalty is in its final throes. A handful of countries now account for the vast majority of all executions. Torture has been outlawed. Heads of state are no longer immune from prosecution, and the world is on its way to having an international criminal court to try crimes against humanity on a universal basis. The number of prisoners of conscience is dwindling: eastern Europe, Latin America and southern Africa no longer hold vast numbers. As democratization continues to progress around the world, you are less likely to be arrested for having ideas and expressing them. That is the good news.

However, the killing and the suffering continue unabated on a massive scale because of gaps in human rights law and practice. In response, Amnesty International has increasingly turned its attention to such questions as the indivisibility of rights, the rights of women, human rights in situations of armed conflict, and the impact of economics on human rights.

The evolution of international human rights law saw an artificial separation of civil and political rights from economic, social and cultural rights, reflecting a world polarized by the ideological and strategic conflict of the Cold War. We should now redress the imbalance. In a "globalized" world, the perspectives of our organization must be informed by the social reality of those whose existence is most threatened – the poor and oppressed. Amnesty International is committed to

paying more attention to economic, social and cultural rights in the coming years.

While the UN Charter affirms the equal rights of men and women, in practice gross violations of women's rights have often been ignored. These range from female genital mutilation to rape, from battery to murder. Yet such abuses of women's rights have been treated as separate from other human rights violations and taken less seriously by governments. When the state fails to protect its citizens from harm by others, it shares responsibility with the perpetrators. Amnesty International is actively testing ways in which both states and private actors can be influenced to change the traditions that have allowed violations against women to escape scrutiny.

In many countries, armed conflict rages. In some, the state has collapsed and competing warlords control a patchwork of territory. Media coverage of recent conflicts has brought home the terror of war and the fact that the brunt of the suffering is increasingly borne by civilians. A sense of powerlessness in the face of such recurring calamities has prompted Amnesty International to review its role in armed conflict situations and to search for creative strategies to prevent and respond to abuses committed in such conflict.

The restructuring of the world economy has increased the influence of international financial institutions and global corporations. Businesses have a direct responsibility to ensure the protection of human rights in their own operations. Their workforces are entitled to rights such as freedom from discrimination, the right

to life and security, freedom from slavery, freedom of association, including the right to form trade unions, and fair working conditions. Amnesty International believes that the business community has a responsibility to use its influence to promote all aspects of human rights. The silence of powerful business interests in the face of injustice is not neutral. International financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization must also ensure that human rights are taken into account in the development of their policies and projects.

Global consciousness about human rights and their violations has both widened and deepened. As part of the ever-growing coalition of human rights activists worldwide, Amnesty International confronts a broader spectrum of challenges than it has ever faced before. It is actively finding ways to address these in a far more complex world than the one into which it was born. If the vision of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is finally to be achieved, what is needed now is not only to save victims, but to transform the world itself.

As I am about to leave my functions as Secretary General, after two terms in office, I am confident that Amnesty International has now identified the right challenges. Why not join forces with Amnesty International and be part of the changes we all want to see?



Francisco Branco (right), released prisoner of conscience, with his family.

©Photo

## FRANCISCO BRANCO — FREED PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE

When Indonesia invaded East Timor in 1975, many of Francisco Branco's family fled but he remained. He worked in the Indonesian civil service, but was secretly a member of the independence movement, striving for self-determination for his people. After the massacre of hundreds of East Timorese students by the Indonesian army at the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili in 1991, Francisco was arrested, interrogated and kept in solitary

confinement for many months. He was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment for subversion. Later, he was transferred to Java, 1,000 kilometres from his home. His wife was unable to visit him more than twice a year.

Amnesty International adopted Francisco as a prisoner of conscience, and groups around the world worked for his release and wrote to him in prison. *"The letters I received from my friends at Amnesty International helped me through times of great crisis and threat,"* he said.

Although the prison authorities stopped much of his mail, two letters from Amnesty International members got through to him in prison in August 1994. Francisco was not allowed to reply. He and other East Timorese prisoners went on hunger strike and persuaded the authorities to let them have visits from local Christians. One of these visitors, Sister Caritas Pi, regularly carried letters in and out for the prisoners, at great personal risk. Her actions allowed them much needed contact with the outside world.

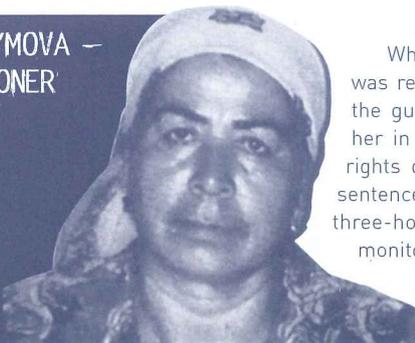
In 1998 an East Timorese surgeon who used to visit Francisco in prison was able to tell an Amnesty International member, by e-mail, of the release of two of Francisco's cell mates the day it happened. Friends smuggled a mobile telephone into his cell, which enabled him to keep in touch with his home in Dili. This meant that in September 1999, during the violence following the vote in favour of independence for East Timor, Francisco knew of his family's escape to safety into the hills and under cover of darkness.

A few weeks later Francisco was finally released after eight years in prison, returning home on 10 December, Human Rights Day. In October 2000, he paid an emotional visit to Amnesty International's offices in London. He said, *"When I decided to work for East Timor I knew Amnesty International would defend me if anything happened. This knowledge enabled me to defend the truth. I had the strength and courage to live through these difficult times because of the solidarity and support of my friends."*

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## MAKHBUBA KASYMOVA — RELEASED PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE

Makhbuba Kasymova, released prisoner of conscience in Uzbekistan



When 55-year-old Makhbuba Kasymova was released from prison in December 2000, the guards gave her 40 letters addressed to her in prison. A teacher and leading human rights defender in Uzbekistan, she had been sentenced to five years in prison in 1999 after a three-hour trial described by human rights monitors as a "farce". Amnesty International and other human rights groups campaigned for her release.

**"My soul was calm while I was in prison because I knew that I was innocent and that human rights organizations were supporting me."**

**Amnesty International works for a world in which everybody will benefit from the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, in order to be effective, Amnesty International works within a precise mandate.**

## OUR MANDATE

### Who we are...

Amnesty International is a membership organization open to anyone. It was launched in 1961 by British lawyer Peter Benenson after he read about two students in Portugal who had been sentenced to seven years in prison for raising a toast to freedom.

Amnesty International has more than one million members and supporters in over 160 countries and territories. There are nationally organized sections in 56 countries and more than 4,000 local groups, as well as many thousands of school, university and professional groups. Members are encouraged to take part in the organization's activities and also play a key role in the organization's democratic and decision-making processes.

In 1977 Amnesty International was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. At the time, the organization had 168,000 members in 107 countries. Today, as in 1977, we believe that peace is not measured by the absence of conventional war but should be constructed on the foundations of justice. We still believe that the protection of the rights of the individual to freedom of conscience, expression, association and assembly is essential to the preservation of world peace.

### How we work...

We work through individuals, local groups, regional action networks and special interest groups, such as teachers, lawyers, etc. We do not work in isolation, but collaborate with other non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Our main activities are to research and publicize information about human rights violations, and to lobby governments and intergovernmental organi-

### The main focus of our campaigning is:

- 1 To free all prisoners of conscience. These are people detained anywhere for their political, religious or other beliefs, or because of their ethnic origin, sex, colour, language, national or social origin, economic status, birth or other status, who have not used or advocated violence.
- 2 To ensure fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners.
- 3 To abolish the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- 4 To end "disappearances", political killings, and other unlawful killings in armed conflict.
- 5 To end human rights abuses by political armed groups.

zations to adopt constitutions, conventions and other measures to guarantee the rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We campaign for change, including the release of individual prisoners and detainees, and for changes in the law. Our campaigning activities include letter-writing, Urgent Actions, and drawing public attention to human rights issues by staging high-profile events, giving interviews, issuing press releases and other media activities.

We also provide relief to prisoners of conscience and victims of torture, protect human rights defenders under threat, and work on behalf of refugees. We promote understanding and awareness of human rights issues to the widest audience possible.

### Amnesty International: Leading the way in innovative campaigning techniques

In 2000 Amnesty International paved the way in innovative campaigning techniques through the [www.stoptorture.org](http://www.stoptorture.org) website, winning the *Revolution 2001 Award* for best use of e-mail and the Internet. The site alerts subscribers by e-mail and mobile phone text message every time someone known to Amnesty International is put at risk of torture, and gives supporters the option to dispatch an automated appeal message with one click. The site provides a new channel to reach out to supporters and for individuals around the world to help fight human rights abuses - in the first five months following the site's launch, 20,000 people subscribed from 188 countries.

Take a step to stamp out torture - visit [www.stoptorture.org](http://www.stoptorture.org)

## MEMBERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

OTPOR! = RESISTANCE, a non-violent Serbian students movement striving for freedom and democracy. Amnesty International members around the world worked on Action Files on their behalf.



©Boris Spivak/Reuters

Amnesty International's strength as a campaigning organization rests in its 1.2 million members. Each and every one can make a difference to the lives of those suffering human rights abuses, no matter where they are in the world.

Groups of members may be allocated "Action Files" which allow them to work long-term on the cases of individuals or groups of people. They write to the relevant authorities and publicize the cases.

Youth and student groups make up approximately half of Amnesty International's membership and are organized into about 3,500 groups around the world. In 2000, Amnesty International's Youth and Student Network became involved in an action which focused on the ill-treatment and harassment by Serbian police of the members of OTPOR! (Resistance), a non-violent Serbian students movement striving for freedom and democracy. Members of OTPOR! have written about their work with Amnesty International.

### OTPOR! Bringing about change in Serbia by Sonja Papak and Boban Jakovljevic, OTPOR! activists

"Last year, if anybody had told me that in one year's time there would be no Milošević and that a group of teenagers would have played a decisive role in removing him, I would not have believed them.

"One year ago OTPOR! was one year old, with about 2000 activists. One year later we have more activists than any political party in Serbia and a lot of influence on public opinion.

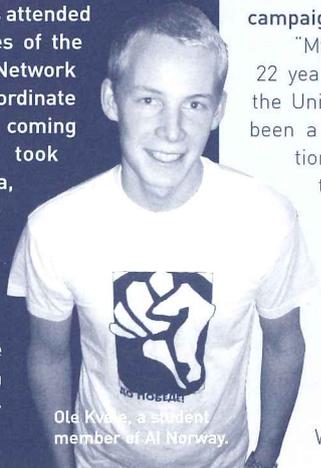
"Many of us have been tortured. Our human rights were violated so many times that we considered minor violations normal. We wanted to show people what was wrong in our lives and the state we lived in, to make them aware of what was happening to us all and the fact that they could do something to change it. Many Serbs who had left the country because of constant wars, hardship and repression and

dreamed of returning to their homeland when the situation improved, saw in us the hope of their dreams come true. Other people admired our courage and wanted to help us. They realised that we also needed help and protection from 'outside'.

"This is why Amnesty International began to help us. They opened an Action File on OTPOR! We made good contacts with Amnesty International members, and shared our experiences of campaigning at a summer workshop with Palestinian students in Gaza, who had been campaigning on our behalf for a year.

"Having worked very closely with Amnesty International, now whenever there are severe human rights violations we know who to contact to report them to, so the organization can react as soon as possible. We will not forget what everybody at Amnesty has done for us: they helped us in our fight and enabled us to look forward to a future in peace, and with respect for everybody's rights."

Amnesty International's second International Youth Meeting, held in Slovenia in 2000, was attended by 35 representatives of the Youth and Students Network whose aim was to coordinate their work over the coming year. Youth camps took place in South Africa, attended by young people from 15 African countries, the Philippines, and Gaza allowing young people to discuss human rights and take practical action.



Ole Kvale, a student member of AI Norway.

### Ole Kvale, a student member from Oslo University, speaks of his experiences campaigning on behalf of AI:

"My name is Ole Kvale, and I am 22 years' old. I am a law student at the University of Oslo, Norway. I have been a member of Amnesty International for about one year, and at the moment I am the leader of a group concerned with 'disappearance' and torture.

"Amnesty International seemed a very interesting organization to join, with the opportunity to work on extremely important matters. It is very easy for us living in the Western world to shut our eyes

but some matters are just too important to keep our ears and eyes shut.

"Working with the OTPOR! action file made me realize more deeply that torture and fear were a part of many people's everyday lives – people like myself, students and my age group.

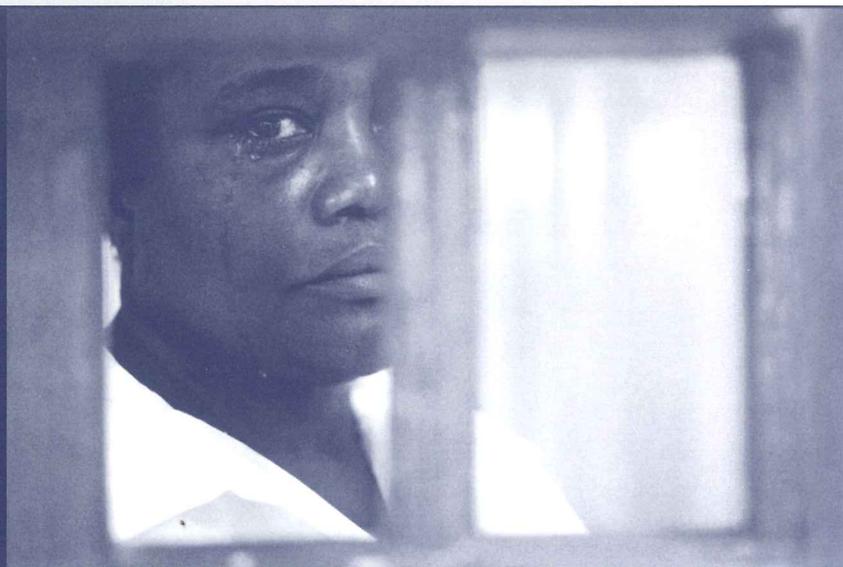
"We kept sending letters, hoping that they would not end up unread. At the end of November I received a letter from Minister Bozo Prevelic, thanking me for telling them about an incident in which some OTPOR! activists were tortured by police, and assuring us that the authorities would uphold the law. It was really a good feeling to get this letter, and for me it was evidence that our actions really do matter."

©Private

## TAKE A STEP TO STAMP OUT TORTURE

A GLOBAL EFFORT TO ERADICATE TORTURE

A woman fleeing torture in Togo waits for news of her asylum application in a US jail.



©Associated Press/The Dallas Morning News

The year 2000 marked the beginning of *Take a Step to Stamp out Torture*, Amnesty International's third campaign against torture. The organization's 1.2 million members, together with community

groups, trade unions and religious organizations, started a global challenge to governments to commit themselves to eradicate torture and create Torture Free Zones in their areas of responsibility.

The campaign, lasting 14 months, was launched in October 2000 with a rolling program of media events in Tokyo, Beirut, Nairobi, London and Buenos Aires. National launch events were organized in most of

## CRISIS ALERT IN ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Palestinians fleeing as Israeli soldiers open fire near Khan Younis in the Gaza Strip, October 2000.



©Reuters/Amrard Jarallah

In response to the escalation of human rights violations in Israel and the Occupied Territories since 29 September 2000, resulting in more than 300 deaths – most of them Palestinians – and thousands of injuries, Amnesty International declared a "Crisis Alert".

Crisis Alert is a mode of action employed when there is a risk of a dramatic upsurge in human rights violations. It allows the team to bring in additional human and financial resources to deal rapidly with an exceptional and urgent situation.

In order to speak authoritatively and accurately about the emerging situation Amnesty International sent three separate delegations to the area between October and December, which included a specialist

in riot policing, experienced AI researchers and members from Norway and the USA.

The first delegation, composed of an Amnesty International researcher and a former senior United Kingdom police officer experienced in policing public disorder, focused on the policing of selected demonstrations which had resulted in killings of protestors. They found that Israeli security forces had repeatedly breached international standards as well as their own rules of engagement regarding the use of lethal force. This first presence in the field was important at a time when there was an enormous amount of misinformation. The combination of an experienced researcher and an authoritative police voice meant that the impact of this report was significant both for the media and in UN lobbying

activities undertaken by the researcher in Geneva.

We sent our second delegation to examine the patterns of arrests and to ascertain whether any official investigations were being conducted into human rights violations. The delegates also talked to Israeli and Palestinian officials, and ensured our message reached the media effectively. A report was issued on mass arrests and police brutality.

In November a third delegation monitored new developments in the human rights situation and observed trials of people arrested for public order offences. It held meetings with officials and consulted local non-governmental organizations on future strategy. Amnesty International continues to monitor the situation.

the countries where the organization has a section, attracting great public and media interest. With the main aim of raising public awareness on the issue of torture, Amnesty International sections organized scores of events. These ranged from a marathon in Peru to a motorbike tour in Nepal, a students' march in Canada to a campaign launch at the Durban Central Police Station, South Africa.

Government officials, including prime ministers and police officers, endorsed Amnesty International's campaign by confirming their willingness to fight against torture in their countries. Celebrities such as Chinese writer and winner of the Nobel Prize for literature Gao Xingjiang and Lebanese-French singer and composer Marcel Khalifa helped highlight the issue.

*Take a Step to Stamp out Torture* is an innovative and interactive campaign which makes use of high-tech communication such as the Internet and mobile telephones along with more traditional campaigning methods.

The [www.stoptorture.org](http://www.stoptorture.org) website was

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set up to give people the opportunity to take immediate action for prisoners at risk of torture. For the first time, Amnesty International was able to send notification of Urgent Actions to mobile telephones using "SMS" text messages.

**2001 activities – still to come**

Torture involves the dehumanization of the victim. This process of dehumanization is made simpler when the victim comes from a disadvantaged social, political or ethnic group. Discrimination can foster torture. In 2001 Amnesty

International will lobby for action at the UN World Conference against Racism, and will work to end the torture of children and women as well as highlighting the torture of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people.

The law is unequivocal: torture is absolutely prohibited in all circumstances. Governments can implement procedures, laws and international conventions to reduce the occurrence of torture. Amnesty International is calling on all governments worldwide to implement measures to prevent torture in custody.

Torture is illegal and must not be tolerated. But all too often the perpetrators are not brought to justice and this sends the wrong message – that torturers can get away with it. In 2001 Amnesty International will also be renewing its appeal to governments to end impunity for those responsible for torture.

Take a step to stamp out torture by contacting your national Amnesty International section or registering at [www.stoptorture.org](http://www.stoptorture.org)

**ACTION ON SAUDI ARABIA**  
WORKING TO END  
SECRECY AND SUFFERING

AI activists demonstrate in the Philippines. A large proportion of those flogged and executed in Saudi Arabia have been migrant workers, including from the Philippines.



*"My mother wrote to Amnesty International... and you responded to her letter. I am free now. I thank you for responding to her letter and trying to help me... You took it seriously and called my home all the way from London and talked to my father about my case. May God bless you for trying to help me and my friend... I will extend my support and help to you in any way I can."*

This is just one of the many messages of support and thanks that Amnesty International received in response to its campaign against human rights violations in Saudi Arabia.

In 2000 AI's worldwide membership campaigned for an end to the secrecy surrounding serious human rights violations in Saudi Arabia, and an end to the suffering of countless victims. Three major reports

discussed Saudi Arabia's human rights record: *A Secret State of Suffering*, *A Justice System without Justice*, and *Gross Human Rights Abuses against Women*. A pamphlet entitled "Saudi Arabia: Open for Business" provided recommendations for the business community on human rights and their responsibilities for preventing human rights violations within their field.

Throughout the year, Amnesty International advocated reforms to the criminal justice system and greater protection of women's rights. Its campaign stimulated – and contributed to – an intense and unprecedented debate within the Saudi Arabian media on a range of human rights issues, which continued throughout the year.

In September officials announced the important step of Saudi Arabia's accession

to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The government announced that new legislation was being drafted which would increase freedom of expression, allow the creation of professional press associations and regulate the legal profession and women's employment laws.

These are welcome steps in the right direction. However, the real challenge is to translate commitments into clear legal provisions in line with international human rights standards – and to implement them. Amnesty International will continue to monitor developments closely.

*"I hope that you will continue your efforts... Remember that you are the only hope for the oppressed and tortured victims... in Saudi Arabia."*

## PROTECTING THOSE WHO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS

Some of the 300 human rights defenders who monitored potential human rights abuses during anti-government demonstrations in Peru, July 2000.



IVC

For many years, Amnesty International has worked to protect human rights defenders: the men and women who risk their lives on a day-to-day basis in defence of the rights of others.

Human rights defenders play a vital role in holding states to account in respect of their promises and obligations to protect the rights of their citizens. All over the world, they face persecution because of their efforts to expose human rights violations and to support the victims. They endure arrests and torture, receive death threats, and risk their lives and those of their families.

### Vera Stremkovskaya

Vera Stremkovskaya is a lawyer who has been repeatedly targeted by the authorities in Belarus in an attempt to silence and punish her for her human rights work. In 1999, while receiving a human rights award from the American Bar Association, she was facing up to five years' imprisonment in Belarus. She had allegedly defamed a public official while defending a former prisoner of conscience at his trial. This was the third time Vera Stremkovskaya had faced criminal charges on account of her work for human rights. In all cases, charges were subsequently withdrawn. A significant number of human rights activists in Belarus have come under increasing pressure for defending the rights of their fellow citizens. In 2001, Amnesty International will continue to highlight the plight of human rights defenders in Belarus, including lawyers, human rights activists and journalists.

### Defending the defenders

In Latin America, Amnesty International works closely with local and international

organizations to develop and apply national programs of protection. In 2000 Amnesty International conducted a workshop in Mexico, attended by over 40 human rights defenders, on security measures for defenders and the application of the UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

**In 2000 Amnesty launched a one-year campaign on Colombian human rights defenders who continue to work despite alarming dangers. The campaign emphasized that while security measures offered by the authorities for human rights defenders at risk are welcome, they fail to address the root causes or complexity of the problem of military and paramilitary threats and attacks.**

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In Africa, reports, Urgent Action appeals and news releases issued by Amnesty International have brought to

public attention the killing, ill-treatment and harassment of human rights defenders in several countries in West Africa, including Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mauritania, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. In June 2000, Amnesty International held an international meeting in Ghana to discuss how active partnerships can be formed between human rights defenders, Amnesty International and other non-governmental organizations to develop protection work for human rights defenders at risk. A campaign on human rights defenders in West Africa will follow in 2001.

### Working in partnership

The human rights movement in India is huge and diverse, comprising thousands of organizations working on many different issues, such as the protection of children, religious minorities, women and other groups. Many have limited resources and face harassment from the authorities and powerful local interest groups.

Throughout 1999 and early 2000, Amnesty ran a series of regional workshops which brought together activists working on economic, social, civil and political rights. The workshops culminated in a national meeting of human rights defenders, where a joint program of action was adopted by the delegates, and a set of recommendations sent to the government calling for better protection for human rights defenders. Amnesty International also published a report on human rights defenders, which was submitted to the government.

Defence of the defenders is a high priority for Amnesty International, and the organization is committed to ensuring that those who work for the rights of others can do so without fear.

***“Es falsa la posición de quienes sostienen que la verdad y la justicia tienden a abrir las heridas. Las heridas están abiertas.”***

(It is wrong to say that truth and justice open old wounds... The wounds are still open).

Victoria Marina de Avilés,  
Procurator for Human Rights  
in El Salvador 1995-1998

## COMBATING IMPUNITY IN LATIN AMERICA

The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo demonstrate outside the Naval Mechanics School in Buenos Aires, Argentina, notorious as a torture centre in the 1970s and early 1980s.



©Associated Press

Combating impunity – the failure to bring to justice and punish those responsible for human rights violations – has been a high priority for Amnesty International throughout its 40-year history.

In the year 2000, Amnesty International renewed its efforts to address the legacy of impunity in Latin America left by military governments. Subsequent governments since the 1980s have refused to investigate gross crimes against humanity, often passing laws which grant amnesty to the perpetrators.

### El Salvador

El Salvador is still reeling from the effects of a 12-year civil war which saw human rights violations on an enormous scale. Amnesty International documented thousands of cases of torture, “disappearance” and extrajudicial killing in the period from 1980 to 1991. It is estimated that there were around 75,000 victims – men, women, and children – for the most part civilians with no direct involvement with the conflict. Whole villages were targeted by the armed forces and their inhabitants massacred.

Amnesty International is calling for a full, impartial, prompt and effective investigation by the authorities, to ensure that those responsible do not benefit from any amnesty, and for the 1993 Amnesty Law to be rendered null and void.

### Peru

Impunity was legalized in Peru in 1995, when two amnesty laws came into effect and closed investigations into human rights violations between 1980 and 1995. Thousands of people were “disappeared”, killed and tortured by members of the security forces in this period. Only a hand-

ful of perpetrators were convicted for these crimes, and they were subsequently granted amnesty and released.

However, the recently formed government of President Valentin Panigua has shown positive signs of seeking to protect and promote human rights. His government has involved members of civil society and the church as well as government officials in the establishment of a Truth Commission. Amnesty International will be reminding the authorities, in the course of the creation of the Truth Commission, of their obligations under international law to investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of war crimes, to disclose to the victims and their relatives the truth about the violations they suffered, and to offer adequate reparations.

### Guatemala

Guatemala has failed to deal with the legacy of long-term internal conflict after it was formally ended in December 1996. Many human rights pledges made in peace accords between the government and the former armed opposition have not been fulfilled. The Historical Clarification Committee established that over 200,000 people had been victims of “disappearance” or extra judicial execution during the years of conflict, the majority of these gross violations being committed by the Guatemalan army and civil defence patrols.

Amnesty International supports Guatemalan human rights groups, survivors and relatives of victims in their search for justice and compensation for past human rights abuses. It has established a Trial Observation Project, which has enabled observers to attend a number of legal proceedings regarding specific massacres or cases. Amnesty International also supports exhumation programs,

which are often the first step towards initiating proceedings against those responsible for massacres. Experts believe that there are currently more than 800 clandestine cemeteries containing the bodies of massacre victims. This work offers a practical way to break the cycle of impunity and supports those who suffered most – the Mayan people.

### Argentina

In Argentina, Amnesty International has been supporting the work of relatives, lawyers and non-governmental organizations for victims of human rights violations committed under military rule between 1976 and 1983. Two such organizations are the Mothers and the Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, who have been campaigning in Argentina and abroad on behalf of their “disappeared” loved ones. They include children kidnapped by the security forces with their parents or born in secret detention centres, whose parents remain “disappeared” and who were subsequently adopted. The Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo have so far located 70 “disappeared” children – over 150 more have yet to be accounted for. For many years Amnesty International groups worldwide have been campaigning and publicly endorsing the victims’ families right to information concerning the fate and whereabouts of their relatives in their quest for justice.

### Why is it important to continue our work on impunity?

In order to protect the human rights of the population as a whole, by ensuring that human rights violations and impunity do not become part of the future. The struggle for the dignity of past victims is also a commitment to the victims of today.

## DIAMONDS FOR ARMS IN SIERRA LEONE

A young victim of the brutal war in Sierra Leone.



100

One of the most horrifying images of the conflict in Sierra Leone is of children whose arms have been cut off.

Armed opposition groups fighting in Sierra Leone are notorious for their systematic campaign of terror against the civilian population and their extensive use of children in warfare. Since internal armed conflict started in 1991, tens of thousands of unarmed civilians have been killed, raped, mutilated and abducted by rebel forces.

Government allied forces and West African peacekeepers have also committed human rights abuses. More than half the population of about four million has been internally displaced or has sought refuge in neighbouring countries.

In July 1999, a peace agreement was signed by the government of Sierra Leone and the armed opposition Revolutionary United Front (RUF). The scale of abuses declined significantly. From October 1999, however, the previous pattern of human rights abuses again emerged.

An investigation by non-governmental organizations showed that the illicit trade in diamonds from rebel-held areas of Sierra Leone was financing military assistance to the RUF, enabling it to continue fighting which lead to widespread abuses against civilians. As a result of this investigation, human rights organizations from around the world joined to campaign for immediate action by the international community and the diamond industry.

**Amnesty International's campaign also sought a verifiable, tamper-proof certification system to identify "conflict diamonds" from Sierra Leone. Its aim was not a consumer boycott of all diamonds or of any specific diamond company, but to cut revenue to the RUF so that it could not acquire the weapons to continue its reign of terror.**

This campaign sought effective enforcement of a 1997 arms embargo imposed by the UN Security Council. It also pressed for an independent investigation into diamond trading from West Africa, and for regulation and control of the diamond industry so that diamonds from rebel-held areas of Sierra Leone could be identified and the illicit trade stopped.

Amnesty International lobbied for a UN ban on the illicit import of diamonds from rebel-held areas of Sierra Leone. This was imposed by the Security Council in July 2000. A UN investigation into the role of the illicit diamond trade in Sierra Leone's con-

flict resulted in a ground-breaking report in December 2000. It established the involvement of neighbouring governments and made recommendations for effective implementation of the bans on illicit diamond trading and arms transfers.

Amnesty International's campaign also sought a verifiable, tamper-proof certification system to identify "conflict diamonds" from Sierra Leone. Its aim was not a consumer boycott of all diamonds or of any specific diamond company, but to cut revenue to the RUF so that it could not acquire the weapons to continue its reign of terror. A key contribution to the campaign was the pressure from Amnesty International members around the world on all levels of the diamond trade, from jewelry shops to the Diamond High Council. The organization's Canadian, US, Israeli and Norwegian sections targeted the retail sector of the diamond business, seeking information about the source of their diamonds as part of a consumer education campaign.

This campaign proved one of the most successful aspects of Amnesty International's work on Sierra Leone. While the industry, some governments and the international community have taken significant steps, much remains to be done. It will not happen overnight, but firm foundations have been laid and Amnesty International's worldwide membership continues to play an important role in ensuring that the diamonds-for-arms trade is ended.

**Sending two delegates on a mission to Freetown, Sierra Leone for 23 days costs an average of £8,500 (US\$12,287)**

## WORKING FOR THE RIGHTS OF REFUGEES

Refugees from Kosovo head towards the Macedonia border, March 1999.



©UNHCR/Lamyne

As governments around the world continue to violate the rights of citizens, millions have been forced to flee their homes to try to reach a place of asylum. Many perish on the way, fall victim to traffickers and smugglers or have to walk through conflict zones in their attempts to escape those seeking to violate their most fundamental human rights. Increasingly, those who do reach a place of safety are spurned at frontiers by controls aimed at keeping people out rather than identifying those in need of international protection; or they are detained for months while their asylum claims are being determined; or they languish for years in refugee camps where they are at continued risk of human rights violations.

Over the past 40 years Amnesty International has intervened on behalf of tens of thousands of asylum-seekers and refugees who deserve and need international protection. Through Amnesty International offices and volunteer networks across the world, those pursuing claims to international protection are assisted with advice, advocacy on key legal and policy issues, and information about human rights abuses. Refugee specialist researchers continue to be part of Amnesty International's "Crisis Response" teams. They interview people forcibly displaced as a result of civil

**Governments claim there are "too many" refugees and consistently cast doubt on them by labelling them as illegal, criminals and abusers of asylum systems... Amnesty International will continue to intervene in the cases of those many individuals who do not receive the protection the world's governments agreed to provide.**

wars, genocide, ethnic cleansing and other serious human rights violations to gather information for Amnesty International reports. The lack of protection for refugees will continue to feature in the increasingly vigorous international debate over the obligations of countries to host those in need of international protection, and not to send anyone home until it is safe for them to return.

In the past year, Amnesty International refugee workers took action to stop the forcible return of hundreds of individual refugees. Refugees have increasingly called on the organization to intervene in countries new to asylum adjudication

where there are no other non-governmental organizations to assist them. A growing area of concern has been the increased detention of asylum-seekers, in violation of all agreed international standards. Through its continued field presence in major refugee crisis areas such as Sierra Leone, Amnesty International continued to lobby governments to keep their borders open in situations of mass influx and not to repatriate refugees by force. At the UN level, the organization continued to promote respect for the human rights of refugees and to call governments to account for violating rights that, as members of the international community, they agreed to uphold.

It is clear that governments are now seeking to redefine their international obligations as host countries. They claim there are "too many" refugees and consistently cast doubt on them by labelling them as illegal, criminals and abusers of asylum systems. Amnesty International will continue its work at the national, regional and international level in efforts to stop governments from abandoning their legal duties. Most importantly, Amnesty International will continue to intervene in the cases of those many individuals who do not receive the protection the world's governments agreed to provide.

AT THE START OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM ABOUT ONE OUT OF EVERY 269 PERSONS IN THE WORLD WERE OF "CONCERN" TO THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES. THIS REPRESENTS A TOTAL POPULATION OF ABOUT 22.3 MILLION DISPLACED PEOPLE, WHO ARE MAINLY IN AFRICA, ASIA AND EUROPE. IN ADDITION, THERE ARE SOME 20 TO 25 MILLION INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN THE WORLD.

## MISSION HIGHLIGHTS

During 2000 Amnesty International sent some 133 missions to more than 70 countries and territories. Such missions involved meetings with government officials, observations of trials and inquests, conferences, contacts with non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, and the documentation of human rights violations through interviews with victims and other witnesses.

### Next Steps in the Balkans: late 1999 to December 2000

The *Next Steps in the Balkans* project was established to consolidate and continue Amnesty International's crisis response in Kosovo. After the end of NATO's Operation Allied Force, the withdrawal of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serb military, police and paramilitary forces from Kosovo, and the return to Kosovo of ethnic Albanians who had fled or been forcibly deported, two Amnesty International researchers began work in Pristina in late 1999.

As well as addressing human rights violations committed before and during the conflict, the researchers also had to deal with the absence of the rule of law. This enabled impunity to continue for human rights violations committed within the ethnic Albanian community and also by some sections of that community against Serb and Romani minorities.

Amnesty International's researchers succeeded in establishing a unique position and high profile for the organization in addressing the international community's responsibility for the protection and promotion of human rights. In January 2000 they called for the full deployment of an international civilian police force in Kosovo. In February 2000, following an eruption of violence in the divided northern town of Mitrovica, Amnesty International documented the unlawful detention of some 50 people and the shooting of an ethnic Albanian by members of KFOR (Kosovo Force). The subsequent report put the international community on notice to implement international standards of human rights. Further work resulted in a comprehensive analysis and series of recommendations addressing the slow progress of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo in establishing a system of administrative justice in accordance with those standards.

In April 2000 *Next Steps* relocated to Skopje, where one researcher took over the work until the end of the year. Although the absence of a second researcher limited Amnesty International's capacity to document the range of continuing human rights violations in Kosovo, research continued on both outstanding and developing concerns there. In Macedonia, research enabled Amnesty International to provide in-depth coverage where it had previously not been possible to document human rights violations so extensively.

Human rights promotion formed a vital component of *Next Steps*. Both delegates in the field and visiting staff and section members provided workshops at schools and youth projects in Kosovo and training and assistance to human rights organizations in both Kosovo and Macedonia.

### Mission to Lebanon, May 2000: joy at the liberation of the Khiam Detention Centre

Amnesty International delegates travelled to Lebanon in May 2000 to research human rights concerns in south Lebanon. These visits

took place at the time of the withdrawal of Israeli forces from its self-styled "security zone" and the collapse of the South Lebanon Army (SLA), Israel's proxy militia in south Lebanon. On 29 May, together with former detainees, the delegates visited Khiam Detention Centre, where hundreds of Lebanese nationals have been detained over the years without charge or trial.

One delegate recalled: "Only six days before our visit, this was still a frightening detention centre, with its tales of torture, degradation and despair. The accounts we heard that morning from detainees just freed did not differ significantly from those we had become familiar with over the years. Filthy hoods, relentless interrogation, beatings, repeated suspension from an electricity pylon, dousing with water, electric shocks. Detention in crowded, dark and dirty cells followed interrogation. No one held there was charged or tried but some were held in these conditions for up to 15 years. Others died there.

"Then suddenly, at midday on 23 May, there was a dramatic liberation. No jailers showed up with the keys to the cells – they had run away to join other SLA members streaming to the border to seek refuge in Israel, in the wake of Israeli troops. The villagers of Khiam made their way spontaneously to the detention centre. Detainees heard shouting, some shooting, and feared that fellow detainees were being executed. But they were shots of celebration, while, using any tools they could find, the villagers broke down the doors of the prison, setting free all the remaining 144 detainees.

"With dignity and courage former prisoners relived their experiences as they showed the delegation around the prison. One detainee, returning with her daughter and husband for the first time since her release just six days before, had tears in her eyes as she faced her cell with memories all too fresh.

"The joy of liberation mixed with the sorrow of recent experiences made this an extraordinary and moving day, filled with incongruous sights and powerful, mixed emotions."

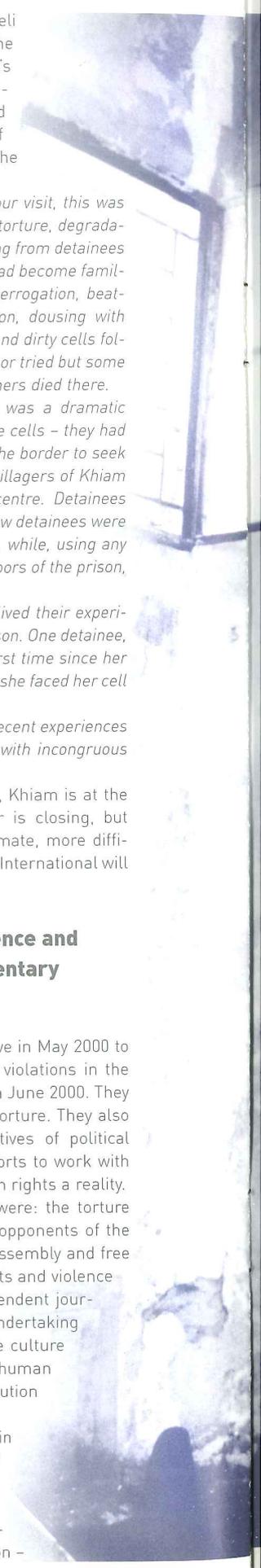
With the traces of its terrible past still fresh, Khiam is at the same time already well into history. A chapter is closing, but another one has immediately opened, more intimate, more difficult for the prisoners and their families. Amnesty International will continue to help.

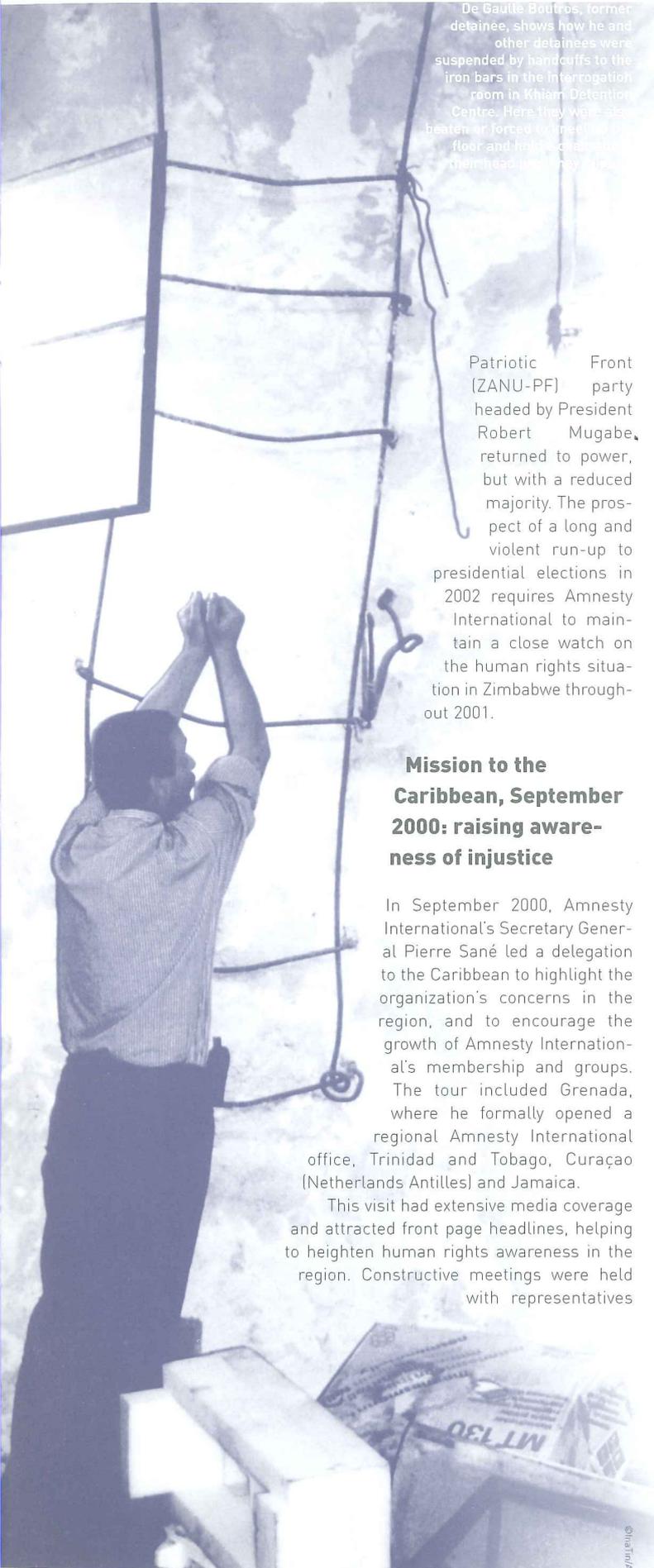
### Mission to Zimbabwe, May 2000: violence and intimidation in the run-up to parliamentary elections

Amnesty International delegates visited Zimbabwe in May 2000 to investigate allegations of serious human rights violations in the run-up to parliamentary elections in Zimbabwe in June 2000. They met human rights organizations and victims of torture. They also spoke to government officials and representatives of political parties as part of the organization's ongoing efforts to work with Zimbabweans towards making respect for human rights a reality.

The main concerns raised on the mission were: the torture and extrajudicial execution of real or perceived opponents of the government; the restriction of the right to free assembly and free association of opposition party supporters; threats and violence against human rights defenders, such as independent journalists and workers for civil society groups undertaking non-partisan voter-education programs; and the culture of impunity that allows those responsible for human rights violations to remain immune from prosecution and free to commit further abuses.

The violations of human rights that occurred in the run-up to the elections – and the lack of accountability of those responsible – were of even greater concern given the history of impunity in Zimbabwe. The results of the elections saw the Zimbabwean African National Union –





De Gaulle Boutros, former detainee, shows how he and other detainees were suspended by handcuffs to the iron bars in the interrogation room in Khiam Detention Centre. Here they were also beaten or forced to kneel on the floor and hold their hands above their heads for long periods.

Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party headed by President Robert Mugabe, returned to power, but with a reduced majority. The prospect of a long and violent run-up to presidential elections in 2002 requires Amnesty International to maintain a close watch on the human rights situation in Zimbabwe throughout 2001.

### Mission to the Caribbean, September 2000: raising awareness of injustice

In September 2000, Amnesty International's Secretary General Pierre Sané led a delegation to the Caribbean to highlight the organization's concerns in the region, and to encourage the growth of Amnesty International's membership and groups. The tour included Grenada, where he formally opened a regional Amnesty International office, Trinidad and Tobago, Curaçao (Netherlands Antilles) and Jamaica.

This visit had extensive media coverage and attracted front page headlines, helping to heighten human rights awareness in the region. Constructive meetings were held with representatives

of the various governments, including the Prime Minister of Jamaica, P.J. Patterson, and members of his cabinet. At this meeting it was agreed that Amnesty International and the Jamaican government would continue a dialogue concerning the numerous instances of police abuse and of excessive and lethal force.

For the delegation, the most moving memories of the mission were a visit to the scene of a recent police shooting and an inspection of Jamaica's death row.

Local human rights activists took the delegation to a house where, two hours before, a Jamaican man had been shot by members of the police force. They found that, despite the assurances of the Commissioner of Police that all police shootings would be thoroughly investigated – including by the collection of vital forensic evidence – no such steps had been taken and no officers were present at the scene.

The visit to death row was equally disturbing. Prisoners were housed in row upon row of tiny cages of about 3m x 2m, with concrete beds and no furniture. The men were desperate to tell the delegation of brutality by guards, of violations of the due process of law in their cases and of appalling living conditions.

Amnesty International has continued to enjoy increased media coverage in the region since the mission and the dialogue with the Jamaican authorities continues. The human rights situation in the region remains a cause for grave concern – the police killed 15 people in Jamaica in the first month of 2001 – and much still needs to be done. However, the mission gave Amnesty International a public voice in the region and an opportunity to raise awareness of human rights issues.

### High-level mission to Japan, December 2000: ensuring human rights standards are upheld

A delegation led by Secretary General Pierre Sané visited Tokyo in early December 2000, to hold talks with government ministers and political party leaders about Amnesty International's concerns in Japan.

The organization's concerns are long-standing. Japan maintains the death penalty, and conditions for prisoners on death row amount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. These conditions include mandatory solitary confinement, which in some cases may be for more than 10 years.

Amnesty International is also concerned about the legal rights of detainees held for questioning. Suspects may be detained incommunicado for up to 23 days: under the *Daiyo Kangoko* or "substitute prison" system, they can be interrogated without access to legal counsel, denied the assistance of court-appointed lawyers until after they have been brought to court and charged, and detained without provision for release on bail. This leaves suspects vulnerable to ill-treatment and forced confessions which may subsequently be used against them in court. Refugees and asylum-seekers are detained and often ill-treated, and many of them are deported with little regard to the risks they face of human rights violations in their countries of origin.

Pierre Sané raised these concerns with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Justice, as well as with the leaders of almost all the main political parties. He also requested access for Amnesty International to the Landing Prevention Facility at Narita International Airport, where foreigners denied entry to Japan (including many potential asylum-seekers) are detained until they are deported. During the visit, the Secretary General gave a speech at Sophia University and outlined Amnesty International's concerns to the national and international media at a press conference.

In a major breakthrough, access to the Landing Prevention Facility was granted in late December 2000 following the mission. An Amnesty International researcher and representatives from the organization's section in Japan visited the facility and questioned staff about the regulations governing its use.

# WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

A young ethnic Albanian refugee, 1999.



Associated Press/Jerome Delay

As we complete 40 years of Amnesty International's work for human rights, we highlight the efforts of our million-plus volunteers around the world who support the organization through their action and their financial contributions.

Universality is a concept that permeates all of Amnesty International's work. Human rights are not just for some people somewhere – they are for everyone everywhere. Amnesty International strives to address violations of human rights around the world. We have played a crucial role in exposing the dirty war in Argentina; in insisting on the restoration of human rights protections in Myanmar; in preserving human rights in armed struggles in Chechnya and the Balkans; in reporting on violations of human rights in Togo and Sierra Leone; and in campaigning against the death penalty in the USA, Japan and the Caribbean. Not only are we vigilant in the cause of human rights around the world, but our members are also present around the world, in over 160 countries.

Over the years the techniques we use have expanded: e-mail makes communication faster and easier and our websites in many languages reach a new audience, particularly in countries otherwise closed to Amnesty International. But each day thousands of Amnesty International members around the world continue to write letters protesting about the suppression of dissent, the denial of fair trials and against executions. Hundreds of members every day visit embassies or lobby their govern-

**So long as we can continue to count on our members and friends, we can be impartial and outspoken about any human rights violations anywhere, without fear for our financial survival... Contributions from individuals are vital to the continuation of our work to promote and protect human rights.**

ments, particularly to urge support for international human rights treaties and covenants, many of which were formulated with the advice and assistance of Amnesty International.

Many of those targeted by Amnesty International in its 40 years of existence have not yet been called to account for their human rights violations. Believing that the protection granted by impunity is a denial of justice, Amnesty International is focusing in the coming year on its work in this area, following up the leading role it has played in the case of Augusto Pinochet.

Other emphases are on identity-based violations – the abuse of people because of their sex, race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality – and on children, who are particularly vulnerable. Amnesty International is focusing on the protection of children in its

year-long campaign to stamp out torture as well as in its opposition to the use of child soldiers.

But we need your help. Amnesty International is supported primarily by the subscriptions and donations of its members worldwide, setting us apart in the human rights community and helping to guarantee our effectiveness. So long as we can continue to count on our members and friends, we can be impartial and outspoken about any human rights violations anywhere, without fear for our financial survival.

Contributions from individuals are vital to the continuation of our work to promote and protect human rights. If you would like to make a donation or to join Amnesty International, please contact your national section, as detailed on the back cover of this booklet, or the International Secretariat of Amnesty International in London:

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Mary Gray, *Treasurer, Amnesty International*

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## 2000 - 2001 BUDGETED EXPENDITURE

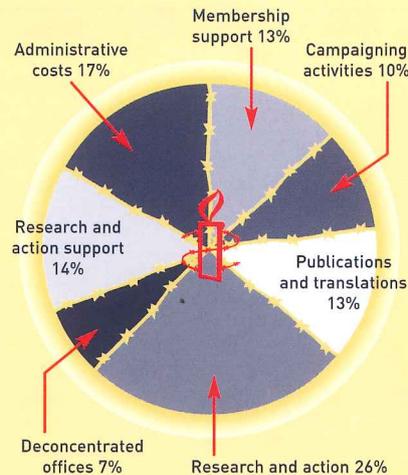
Amnesty International's national sections and local volunteer groups are primarily responsible for funding the movement. No funds are sought or accepted from governments for its work investigating and campaigning against human rights violations. The donations that sustain this work come from the organization's members and the public. The international budget adopted for the financial year April 2001 - March 2001 was £18,959,800. This sum represents approximately one quarter of the estimated income likely to be raised during the year by the movement's national sections to finance their campaigning and other activities.

The International Secretariat of Amnesty International is also dependent on the generous support of various trusts, foundations and companies. In 2000, these included the National Lottery Charities board, the Ford Foundation, the Dutch ZipCode Lottery (through the Dutch World Wide Fund), the NRK (Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation) Telethon Fund, as well as other smaller funders.

The 2000/2001 international budget for operating expenses, as agreed by Amnesty International's governing Interna-

tional Executive Committee, was spent as follows:

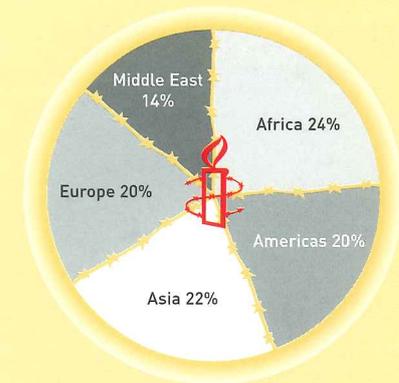
### International budget breakdown



Research and action work represent one of the key roles of the International Secretariat. Research into human rights violations is carried out throughout all the regions of the world. The results are presented in reports and action materials which are used by the membership for

campaigning activities, and to inform governments, intergovernmental organizations such as the UN, the news media and the general public. This budget was spent as follows:

### Research and action by region



These figures combine the budgeted expenses of Amnesty International Charity Ltd, a registered charity under the UK Charity Act, number 294230, and Amnesty International Ltd, a registered limited company under the UK Companies Act, number 1606776. Copies of the most recent audited accounts may be obtained by writing to: The Company Secretary, Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, London, WC1X 0DW, United Kingdom.

## BRINGING TECHNOLOGY INTO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

This period is one of immense challenges, not least technological. Amnesty International was founded 40 years ago as an organization which based its reputation on careful, well researched documents and publications calling for action, such as letter-writing to governments seeking the release of prisoners of conscience.

Amnesty International now needs to publish its reports more quickly and in a widely accessible format. It has been developing systems which enable it to manage and send documents to its sections worldwide as well as publishing them on the web. The system is now in place for English language documents, and work is under way to extend the

system to Spanish, Russian, French and Arabic reports by June 2001. Work has started on systems which will enable staff in outposts of the International Secretariat - for example the new Africa Regional Office in Uganda - to work effectively with teams in London.

Some 2,971 documents were published by AI in 2000. The major publications were the *Amnesty International Report 2000*, and two major reports for the Campaign Against Torture: *Take a Step to Stamp Out Torture*, and *Hidden Scandal, Secret Shame: Torture and Ill-Treatment of Children*.

Reports were published in 2000 on the following countries and territories:

ALGERIA	COLOMBIA
ANGOLA	COTE D'IVOIRE
ARGENTINA	CUBA
ARMENIA	DEMOCRATIC
AUSTRIA	REPUBLIC OF CONGO
BAHRAIN	DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S
BANGLADESH	REPUBLIC OF KOREA
BELARUS	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
BELGIUM	EAST TIMOR
BELIZE	ECUADOR
BHUTAN	EGYPT
BOLIVIA	EQUATORIAL GUINEA
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA	FEDERAL REPUBLIC
BRAZIL	OF YUGOSLAVIA
BULGARIA	FIJI
BURUNDI	FINLAND
CAMBODIA	GEORGIA
CHILE	GERMANY
CHINA	GHANA
	GUATEMALA

GUINEA	ROMANIA
HAITI	RUSSIAN
HONDURAS	FEDERATION
INDIA	RWANDA
INDONESIA	SAUDI ARABIA
IRAN	SIERRA LEONE
IRELAND	SLOVAKIA
ISRAEL/OCCUPIED	SOLOMON ISLANDS
TERRITORIES	SOUTH AFRICA
ITALY	SPAIN
JAMAICA	SRI LANKA
KENYA	SUDAN
LAOS	SYRIA
LATVIA	TANZANIA
MACEDONIA	TOGO
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MEXICO	TURKEY
MYANMAR	TURKMENISTAN
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NIGER	UNITED KINGDOM
NIGERIA	USA
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PHILIPPINES	ZIMBABWE
PORTUGAL	

Many of these documents can be found in the library pages of the International Secretariat website at:

[www.amnesty.org/ailib/index.html](http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/index.html)

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