

EXTRA 151/97

Extrajudicial executions / Fear for safety 4 November 1997**CHAD At least 80 people killed in Moundou, others arrested**

At least 80 people have been killed in Moundou, southern Chad, following a clash on 30 October 1997 between Chadian security forces and members of the former *Forces Armées pour la république fédérale* (FARF), Armed Forces for the Federal Republic. Others have been arrested on suspicion of collaboration with the FARF, and subsequently subjected to torture or ill-treatment. Amnesty International is concerned that unarmed civilians are among the victims and that more extrajudicial executions, arbitrary arrests and torture may be carried out in the next few days.

Shooting between members of the army and the FARF left at least two soldiers and 40 FARF members dead, according to official sources. Laokein Barde, leader of the FARF, escaped during the incident, and his whereabouts are unknown.

The violence initially involved members of the FARF who were waiting to be integrated into the army. On 18 April 1997, a peace accord was signed by the Chadian government and the FARF which provided for, amongst other things, members of the FARF to be integrated into the Chadian National army and the civil service, a general amnesty for all FARF members, activists and sympathizers, and a renunciation of armed struggle by the FARF which would become a political party, renamed the *Forum des alliances pour la République fédérale* (FARF), Forum of Alliances for the Federal Republic.

In the hours and days following the first exchange of gunfire on 30 October, members of the security forces combed Moundou and extrajudicially executed, or arrested and then tortured and ill-treated, many unarmed civilians who they suspected of being FARF members. Dr Merci Danyo was arrested on 30 October, he was beaten, tied up, and put in a plastic sack; there has been no news of him since his arrest. Dominique Djekoula, Alain Doumran, Mathias and Gaston, members of the FARF, were arrested in Déli, a village near Moundou, on their way back to Moundou from the capital, N'Djaména; there is no further news of them. Alain Baltimore, two mentally ill patients, and members of the family of Désiré Laonji, the executive secretary of the FARF, were all extrajudicially executed by the security forces. Two wounded civilians were taken from the hospital; one was returned to his family and died shortly afterwards, but the other is still missing. Two human rights activists were taken hostage but managed to escape.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

President Idriss Déby has faced ongoing but sporadic armed insurgency in the east, north and south regions of Chad since he took power in 1990. While all parties to the conflicts, including the FARF, have committed human rights abuses against the civilian population, the main perpetrators have been the Chadian security forces. Members of the security forces taking part in counter-insurgency operations have committed scores of human rights violations against the civilian population. In 1995 and 1996, there were many counter-insurgency operations in the south of Chad, in the Logone occidental and oriental regions, where the FARF was active. Real and suspected members of the FARF have been the victims of human rights violations in this context, including arbitrary arrest and torture. Many people or communities appear to have been targetted because relatives or people they are associated with, are suspected of connections with the FARF.

The FARF have committed human rights abuses, including deliberate and arbitrary killings and rape, against the civilian population.

There is almost total impunity for human rights violators in Chad. Amnesty International believes that the phenomenon of impunity is one of the main contributing factors to the continuing pattern of human rights violations in Chad, and the world over; when investigations are not pursued and the perpetrators are not held to account, a self-perpetuating cycle of violence is set in motion resulting in continuing violations of human rights.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in French or your own language:

- expressing deep concern that scores of unarmed civilians have been extrajudicially executed, arrested, tortured or ill-treated by security forces in Moundou following a clash with the FARF on 30 October;
- urging the Chadian authorities to take immediate steps to stop the human rights violations being carried out by the security forces against unarmed civilians;
- asking that those arrested be released if they are not charged with a recognizably criminal offence, that those tortured or ill-treated be given immediate medical attention and that all those in detention be given access to their families, legal counsel and humanitarian agencies;

if possible, also:

- calling for a full investigation to be carried out into the human rights violations, as well as abuses by the FARF, and for those responsible to be brought to justice in accordance with international standards of fairness and without recourse to the death penalty;
- pointing out your concern that unless this is achieved, the problem of impunity will continue, and the cycle of violence and human rights abuses in Chad will be perpetuated.

APPEALS TO:

Président Idriss DEBY
Président de la République
Présidence de la République
BP 74 N'DJAMENA, République du Tchad
Faxes :+235 51 45 01
Telegrams: President Déby, N'Djaména, Chad
Salutation: Monsieur le Président / Dear President

Monsieur Nadjita BEASSOUMAL
Ministre de la Justice et Garde des sceaux
Ministère de la Justice
N'Djaména, Chad
Telegrams: Ministre Justice, N'Djaména, Chad
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

Monsieur Mahamat Nimir HAMAJTA
Ministre de la Défense nationale et de la Réinsertion
Ministère de la Défense nationale
N'Djaména, Chad
Telegrams: Ministre Defense, N'Djaména, Chad
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

Colonel Routouang Yoma GOLOM
Chef d'Etat-major Général
Armée nationale tchadienne, N'Djaména, Chad
Telegrams: Colonel Golom, Armee national, N'Djamena, Chad
Salutation: Monsieur le Colonel / Dear Colonel

COPIES TO:

Monsieur Ahmat Hassaballah Soubiane, Préfet de Moundou, Moundou, Logone
occidental, Chad
Procureur de la République de Moundou, Palais de Justice, Moundou, Logone
occidental, Chad
Le Rédacteur en chef, N'Djaména-Hebdo, BP 760, N'DJAMENA, Chad

and to diplomatic representatives of Chad accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 December 1997.