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MEDIA ADVISORY
THE GAMBIA
REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
2 DECEMBER 1997

Amnesty International is releasing a new report on Tuesday 2 December 1997 on human rights violations in the Gambia during and after the return to civilian rule.

The report, *The Gambia: Democratic reforms without human rights* (AFR 27/05/97) details how despite significant political changes and the release of numerous long-term prisoners of conscience, human rights continue to be violated with impunity.

In the recent months, dozens of members and supporters of legal opposition parties have been persecuted by the authorities for their political activities. Several of them have been detained and some have been tortured.

The first death sentences since the death penalty was reintroduced in 1995 were handed down in 1997 although no judicial executions have taken place. There has been no progress in any investigations into past human rights violations.

The return to civilian rule and the introduction of a new Constitution has improved the Gambia's international reputation and as a result international donors have resumed assistance. Amnesty International believes that this international cooperation should be directed to improve respect for fundamental human rights.

This new report also recommends steps to be taken by the Government of Gambia to improve respect for human rights.

For a copy of the report, or to schedule an interview with the author of the report, please contact Mr Marc Saghie, Press Officer/Africa, at (44) 171 413 5831/5566