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Italy: Authorities must carry out urgent investigation and review of G8 policing

Amnesty International [AI] is very concerned by the circumstances in which -- during anti-globalization demonstrations in Genoa on 20 July -- a demonstrator was fatally shot by a 20-year-old law enforcement official performing his military service in the carabinieri force.

"The Italian authorities should institute a thorough review of the current training and deployment of law enforcement officers involved in crowd control and take all necessary measures to ensure that officers are adequately equipped and trained to employ non-lethal methods of crowd control, and that no more than reasonable force is used to control disturbances," Amnesty International said today.

AI is also urging that the criminal investigation opened into the fatal shooting pays special heed to international standards relating to the use of force and firearms by law enforcement officials. These stipulate that "in the dispersal of violent assemblies, law enforcement officials may use firearms only when less dangerous means are not practicable and only to the minimum extent necessary."

AI is also concerned about the allegations of indiscriminate assaults by officers on non-violent protestors, journalists reporting on the demonstrations and individuals unconnected to the demonstrations. The organization is also greatly disturbed by reports that during a raid carried out on the headquarters of the Genoa Social Forum in the early hours of 22 July, officers subjected individuals to deliberate and gratuitous beatings, resulting in numerous injuries, some of them requiring urgent hospital treatment. Allegations that some of those

detained in Genoa over the last few days have been deprived of prompt access to a lawyer and prompt and adequate medical care are also a cause for concern.

"The allegations of gratuitous violence and violations of detainees= rights by law enforcement officials must be investigated promptly, thoroughly and impartially," said AI.

"AI recognizes the difficulties faced in policing summits, especially as certain factions are set on causing violence. The organization does not condone violence aimed at police or property, nor does it oppose the lawful use of reasonable force by law enforcement officials but -- as AI reminded the Italian authorities in the run-up to the G8 demonstrations -- at the same time policing must be carried out with full respect for international human rights standards."

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For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566 or call +44 20 7413 5672 or visit our website at <http://www.amnesty.org>

Further information on AI's concern about policing of demonstrations in Italy is available on the web:

G8 - at <http://www.web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/index/eur300022001>

*Naples Global Forum - at
<http://www.web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/index/eur300012001>*

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