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MEDIA ADVISORY

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MEETING FOR THE MEDIA ON
1997 UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

Amnesty International will be holding a meeting for journalists on the organization's concerns at the 53rd session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, which opens on 10 March 1997.

Speaking at the meeting will be Nick Howen, Director of the Amnesty International's Legal Program at its International Secretariat in London, and Isabelle Scherer, Amnesty International's representative at the UN in Geneva.

At the Commission, Amnesty International will be raising the cases of five countries with persistent and systematic patterns of human rights violations -- Algeria, Colombia, Indonesia and East Timor, Nigeria and Turkey.

The human rights situation in all of these countries has been raised before by Amnesty International, but previous sessions have been marked by an almost complete lack of accountability, an institutionalised amnesia about repeated violations and an unwillingness to deal with countries deemed "untouchable".

At the meeting, Mr Howen will discuss the vested political and economic interests which lie behind decision making at the Commission, and call on the Commission to act decisively against governments which suppress human rights or otherwise risk becoming an irrelevant debating chamber.

Meeting details:

Date: 6 March 1997 – 11am

Place: Library Press Room 2, Palais de Nations, Geneva

Both speakers will be available for interviews, and a media pack with news release, country briefings and a copy of Amnesty International's 50-page document on the Commission will be available.

For further information, to arrange an interview or to receive a media pack, please call:

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