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# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 130/93

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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - BURUNDI, RUSSIA, CHINA (GOODNEWS)  
EXTERNAL FOR RESPONSE ONLY - JORDAN, LEBANON

NEWS INITIATIVES - INTERNAL

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Myanmar - 8 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 111  
Yugoslavia/Kosovo - 12 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 117/126/128

**\*\*EJEs and "Disappearances" - 20 October\*\*** - SEE NEWS SERVICE 124/126/128

The embargo time has been finalized as 1100 hrs gmt, 20 October.

Please let Richard at the IS Press Office know which national press you are inviting to the campaign launch by tomorrow. Also, only two sections have responded to our request for info on your plans for the campaign - please fax a short summary of your plans to us by Friday, so that an item can be sent out in a News Service before the campaign begins. Also, please remember to keep us up-to-date on media coverage throughout - Torbin in the IS Press Office will be maintaining a continuous evaluation.

India & Pakistan - 7 December - SEE NEWS SERVICE 126

## TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

Council of Europe Summit - 7 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 122  
Francophone Summit - 11 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 111/126  
North Korea - 15 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 88/119/124  
Afghanistan - 26 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 124  
Algeria - 28 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 127

## FORTHCOMING NEWS INITIATIVES

Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting - 21-25 October (undecided)  
Iran - 3 November (international)  
Venezuela - 10 November - SEE NEWS SERVICE 121  
Papua New Guinea - 19 November (targeted)  
Colombia - 16 March 1993 - SEE NEWS SERVICE 123 + UAs AMR 23/56-57/93

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**BURUNDI: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL VISITS BURUNDI**

Two Amnesty International representatives, Franca Sciuto, an Italian lawyer and former chairperson of Amnesty International's International Executive Committee, and Godfrey Byaruhanga, a staff member of the organization's International Secretariat, are scheduled to visit Burundi between 18 and 23 October.

They will be holding talks with government and security officials on establishing mechanisms for the protection and promotion of human rights in Burundi. Amnesty International representatives previously visited Burundi in June 1989 and February 1992.

This visit takes place three months after a new President and parliament were elected in multi-party elections. President Melchior Ndadaye is Burundi's first ethnic Hutu President. His three predecessors were Tutsi who came to power as a result of military coups. The new government has committed itself to enforcing the rule of law in the country.

Soon after his election last June President Ndadaye announced a general amnesty for all political prisoners. About 4,500 prisoners were released in September following the ratification by parliament of a general amnesty. Those released include about 400 Hutu accused of involvement in attacks by insurgents at the end of 1991 - in reaction to which the security forces extrajudicially executed about 1,000 civilians, most of them Hutu. About 80 of the 400 were convicted in unfair trials in 1992, at which five people were sentenced to death. Although non-political prisoners convicted for violent crime were not released, those under sentence of death had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment.

The amnesty also applies to members of the security forces responsible for past human rights violations, although virtually no official investigation has been held to establish what occurred and who was responsible. Successive Burundi governments have failed to investigate human rights violations despite the killing by members of the security forces of thousands of unarmed civilians and captured insurgents in 1965, 1969, 1972 and more recently in 1988 and 1991: in early 1972 alone 80,000 or more civilians were killed.

Amnesty International is concerned that such a blanket amnesty interferes with the proper course of justice to establish responsibility for human rights violations and clear those who are innocent. The tradition of impunity for human rights violators enforces the belief among members of the security forces and others that they can continue to violate human rights without fearing exposure or being brought to justice.

ENDS/

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**RUSSIA: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONCERNED AT REPORTS OF ILL-TREATMENT OF POLITICAL OPPONENTS IN MOSCOW**

Amnesty International is concerned about reports that a number of known or perceived opponents of President Boris Yeltsin have been ill-treated in detention.

Over 1,000 people were initially detained after fighting broke out in Moscow on 4 and 5 October 1993, but the majority are now believed to have been released. However, dozens have reported that they were beaten during their time in detention and at least one lawyer reports he has been denied access to his client.

The human rights organization has been concerned for some time about reports of ill-treatment of people in detention, and fears that beatings in custody are a widespread problem. Amnesty International is particularly afraid that those detained after recent violence in Moscow may be especially vulnerable to possible ill-treatment given the fact that the detentions have occurred in a highly-charged political atmosphere.

This concern is borne out by a number of reports of beatings that have already been received. For example Boris Kagarlitsky, a deputy to Moscow City Council, says that he and some eight other deputies were beaten at police station No. 2 after they were detained on the evening of 4 October. The following day, he continues, they were taken to police station No. 77 where the beatings were more systematic, and directed at forcing them to confess to stealing a police car. He reports that guards beat him with Kalashnikov rifles and that another person detained with him, Aleksandr Fegal, sustained a fractured rib after he was beaten with a rubber truncheon. Guards are also said to have beaten a third detainee, Vladimir Kondratyov, about the head.

In the light of these reports, Amnesty International is also concerned about allegations that a number of those still detained have not yet been charged, and that at least one has been denied access to his lawyer. Abdullah Khamzayev, appointed by the family of former parliamentary speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov, says that on 6 October officials at Lefortovo prison refused to discuss the case with him. They referred him to the investigator in charge, but would not give him the actual name of this official.

Amnesty International has written to President Yeltsin and other officials urging them to institute a full and comprehensive inquiry into all these allegations, to make the findings public, and to bring those responsible to justice. Anyone detained after the events of 3 and 4 October should be charged promptly with a recognizably criminal offence or released, and given full access to a defence lawyer of their own choosing, in line with internationally-agreed standards. ENDS/

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**CHINA: LETTER ABOUT RELEASED PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE**

On 30 September the Asia department at the International Secretariat of Amnesty International received a letter from the son of a released prisoner of conscience in China on whose behalf the organisation had campaigned. Following is an extract from that letter, no names are given for the protection of the survivor and his family.

"Just recently I heard of my father's release ... as reward for his "being good" in the labour camp he was released 8 months earlier than his sentence. My father's return brought great joy to my family... we are very grateful to the friends who have helped us in the darkest time. My father sends especially thanks and best wishes to you and those unknown Amnesty members who wrote to him at Christmas last year, which encouraged him greatly..."

ENDS/

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**JORDAN: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL VISITS JORDAN**

Two Amnesty International delegates, Ms Radhia Nasraoui, a Tunisian lawyer, and a staff member of the International Secretariat, are scheduled to visit Jordan on 9 October to observe the trial currently taking place before the State Security Court of alleged members of the Islamic Liberation Party in Jordan (LPJ).

Ten defendants, two of whom are being tried in absentia, are accused of having plotted to kill King Hussein bin Talal. They face the death penalty if found guilty. If convicted and sentenced they would have the right to appeal to the Court of Cassation.

The Amnesty International delegation intends to stay in Jordan for approximately one week. On their return they will report to the Secretary General of Amnesty International.

ENDS/

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**LEBANON: UPDATE ON THE CASE OF RON ARAD, AN ISRAELI SOLDIER MISSING IN LEBANON SINCE OCTOBER 1986.**

Ron Arad went missing during an Israeli bombing raid in southern Lebanon in October 1986. He is known to have been captured alive by *Amal*, a Lebanese militia, although later he was apparently transferred into the hands of other groups.

There has been no news of his fate since late 1987, although reports suggest that he may be held by Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Lebanon. This month is the eighth anniversary of his capture, and Amnesty International continues to work for his fate to be clarified.

Captain Ron Arad (born 5 May 1958), an aircraft navigator in the Israel Air Force, participated in a bombing raid apparently against positions of the Palestine Liberation Organization in south Lebanon on 16 October 1986. His Phantom aircraft apparently suffered mechanical failure and both the pilot and Ron Arad parachuted out, landing in the Saïda area. The pilot was rescued by Israeli forces, but Ron Arad was captured by members of *Amal*.

*Amal* officials were reported to have stated in Saïda on 17 October 1986 that they were holding Ron Arad. It is believed that he was taken to Beirut in the custody of Mustafa Dirani, *Amal*'s chief of security. Negotiations between *Amal* and Israel appear to have taken place in 1987 over a proposal to exchange Ron Arad for Lebanese prisoners held by Israel or the South Lebanon Army (a Lebanese militia allied to Israel). In October 1987, Ron Arad's family in Israel received a photograph and a letter from him in which he stated that he was in good health after recovering from an arm injury sustained when he parachuted out. In the letter he asked his wife to take good care of their daughter, who was one year old when he was captured.

In early 1988, Mustafa Dirani severed his links with *Amal* and formed a new organization reported to be close to Iran. Ron Arad apparently remained in Mustafa Dirani's custody throughout 1988. Reports indicate that in early 1989 he was transferred into the custody of Iranian Revolutionary Guards stationed in Lebanon. He is still believed to be in the hands of the Revolutionary Guards, most probably somewhere in Lebanese territory under Syrian military control. The Iranian Government has never acknowledged holding him. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has not been able to visit him.

Amnesty International has repeatedly intervened seeking assurances about Ron Arad's welfare and asking for clarification of his fate. After his capture, the organization wrote to Nabil Berri, leader of *Amal* and at the time Lebanon's Minister of Justice, asking for assurances that Ron Arad was being held in accordance with international standards governing the treatment of detainees. It urged that he be treated humanely and allowed access to the ICRC as well as the ability to communicate with his family. No response was received.

Amnesty International publicized Ron Arad's case in the Amnesty International Newsletter in January 1987. Most recently, in January 1993, it made further appeals on his behalf, as well as on behalf of Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman and Yehuda Katz, three other Israeli soldiers also missing in Lebanon since June 1982, in letters to the Lebanese, Syrian and Iranian authorities. No response was received. The cases of all four soldiers were publicized by Amnesty International in May 1992 and February 1993 in two public statements, the latter delivered before the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva.

Amnesty International continues to call on the Iranian authorities to take steps to help ensure that Ron Arad's fate is clarified. If he is alive and held as a hostage, solely in order to obtain the release of prisoners held by the Israeli authorities, he should be released immediately and unconditionally. Otherwise he should be treated fully in compliance with the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment

of Prisoners of War (the Third Geneva Convention of 1949). At the very least he should be allowed access to the ICRC and the ability to communicate with his family.

Amnesty International also reiterates its appeals to the Lebanese and Syrian authorities to provide any information they may have on the fate and whereabouts of Ron Arad.

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