

Amnesty INTERNATIONAL

January 1998 Vol.28 No.1

NEWS



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ALGERIA

A country in terror

ON 28 AUGUST 1997 in Rais, a village surrounded by army barracks and security force posts, up to 300 men, women and children were massacred by an armed group while the security forces stood by. After the carnage the attackers left; no one tried to stop them. One of the survivors asked: "Why did this happen? Why didn't anyone stop it? ... The army and the security forces were right there; they heard and saw everything and did nothing... They waited for the terrorists to finish their dirty work and then they let them leave."

Over the past year thousands of civilians, many of them women and children, have been massacred with unspeakable brutality by armed groups. Most of these massacres have been committed in regions around the capital, Algiers, and often right next to army barracks and security force posts. Yet, in spite of the victims' cries for help, the sound of gunshots and explosions, and the smoke and flames of burning houses, the security forces have never intervened. The attackers have been allowed to leave every time. Why?

The authorities blame all the massacres on armed groups such as the Armed Islamic Group (GIA). But there are allegations, including some from survivors and families of victims, that

some of the massacres were committed by groups acting on the instructions, or with the consent, of certain army and security force units. Victims have included people suspected of links with armed groups and their relatives, and those who had refused to join the militias armed by the state.

These massacres have taken place against a background of increasingly widespread violence and gross human rights abuses committed by the security forces, by armed opposition groups which call themselves "Islamic groups", and, more recently, by militias armed and encouraged by the state. Since the imposition of the state of emergency in 1992, violence has spiralled and the civilian population has found itself increasingly caught up in the conflict and denied state protection.

The international community has failed to take any action to address the plight of the victims. Moreover, when Algerians have attempted to escape death by seeking refuge in western countries, they have often been refused protection by western governments. Recommendations made in September 1997 by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the European Parliament that Algerian asylum-seekers should benefit from international protection have yet to be translated into action.

Words of condemnation and expressions of concern about the Algerian human rights tragedy are not enough. The lack of action has contributed to a climate of impunity for the perpetrators of massacres and other gross human rights abuses. Urgent steps must be taken to ensure that the civilian population in Algeria is given adequate protection and that those responsible for massacres and other abuses – whoever they may be – are brought to justice.

AI has launched a joint appeal with the International Federation for Human Rights, Human Rights Watch, and *Reporters Sans Frontières*, calling for an international investigation to be set up to establish the facts, examine responsibilities and make recommendations for a long-term human rights plan to end the crisis in Algeria.

You can help...

...by lobbying your own government to support the establishment of an international investigation into the human rights abuses in Algeria. You should also call on your government to uphold its obligation to ensure that Algerian asylum-seekers in your country receive fair treatment.

An Algerian woman holds up official papers and a photo of a missing relative

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WORLD-WIDE APPEALS



An RPA soldier walks through a deserted transit camp for refugees who have returned to Rwanda
© Steven Dupont

RWANDA

Thousands killed while world remains silent

AT LEAST 6,000 PEOPLE, most of them unarmed civilians, are reported to have been killed in Rwanda between January and August 1997. Their fate was largely greeted with indifference by the international community.

Such indifference allowed the Rwandese security forces (RPA) and armed opposition groups linked to the former Rwandese forces to continue killing with little fear of censure. In the undeclared war in the northwest of the country, both have deliberately been targeting unarmed men, women and children. Many people have "disappeared"; their families do not know if they are alive or dead. Among the victims of killings and "disappearances" are many people who had been refugees in the former Zaire until late 1996, when they returned to Rwanda.

JAMAICA

Setting a dangerous precedent

THE JAMAICAN GOVERNMENT has informed the UN Secretary-General that it is withdrawing from the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The Optional Protocol allows individuals who believe that their rights under the ICCPR have been violated to appeal to experts on the UN Human Rights Committee, who can then make recommendations, which may include payment of compensation, release and commutation of sentences, if the government has failed in its obligations.

Unless the government reverses its decision, as of 22 January 1998 (the effective date of the denunciation) Jamaicans will be deprived of an essential means of protecting their human rights.

In the past, the Human Rights Committee has found the Jamaican Government to have violated the rights of many individuals, a large proportion of whom were under sentence of death. As of November 1997, there were 47 men on Jamaica's death row. If Jamaica withdraws from the Optional Protocol, many of these men will be denied a

Large regions of Rwanda have been cut off from outside observers, so it is difficult to gauge the scale of the tragedy.

Some 1,500 civilians were reportedly killed by RPA soldiers in Nkuli, Ruhengeri, between 9 and 11 May 1997. At least 130 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo were killed by armed opposition groups in Mudende refugee camp on 22 August. These, however, are just a few examples from many reports of mass human rights violations.

Behind the silence of the international community lies a degree of complicity in the tragedy. Several governments, such as the USA and South Africa, have transferred military equipment or training to Rwanda over the past two years, apparently with little regard for the human rights record of the Rwandese security forces.

means of review of allegations that their human rights have been violated. They could be executed after trials which fail to meet international standards of fairness, or face lack of redress for other violations of their human rights.

This unprecedented decision by the Jamaican government threatens to undermine not only Jamaicans' rights, but, if other states follow suit, the system of international protection of human rights.

On the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, states should be ensuring that all states ratify the main human rights treaties, and be working to strengthen the international system of human rights protection – not withdrawing from it.

You can help...by writing to your government, urging it to use all appropriate means, in national, regional and international forums, to prevent such a backward step for human rights. You could also write to the Jamaican Government, urging it to reverse its decision to withdraw from the Optional Protocol.

VIET NAM

Prisoner of conscience released

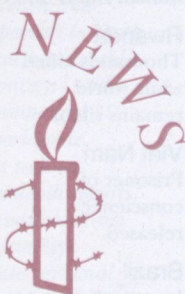
PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE Pham Duc Kham, who had spent 20 of the last 22 years in prison, was unexpectedly released five years before completion of his sentence. He has been allowed to join his family in the USA.

His first period of imprisonment came when, as a military officer, he was detained for "re-education" without charge or trial for 13 years between 1975 and 1988. He was rearrested two years later in November 1990 for being the co-author of an unauthorized newsletter called *Freedom Forum*. The newsletter, which had a limited distribution, was critical of government policies and called for peaceful political change. After more than two years in detention, he was finally brought to trial in March 1993 and sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment, reduced to 12 years on appeal in July the same year. His years of detention in prison camps where diet and medical care are inadequate have taken their toll on his health; he has suffered variously from malaria, chronic ulcers and hypertension.

The Vietnamese authorities said that his sentence was shortened under a presidential amnesty for National Day, and because of his "good behaviour". Press reports on his release in September 1997 claim that Interior Ministry officials said at the time that other dissident prisoners, such as the founder of *Freedom Forum*, Doan Viet Hoat, may also be released.

You can help...

...by writing to the Government of Viet Nam, welcoming the release of Pham Duc Kham, and urging that Doan Viet Hoat and all those imprisoned for the expression of their non-violent opinions be immediately and unconditionally released. Send letters to President Tran Duc Luong, Office of the President, 35 Ngo Quyen, Ha Noi, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

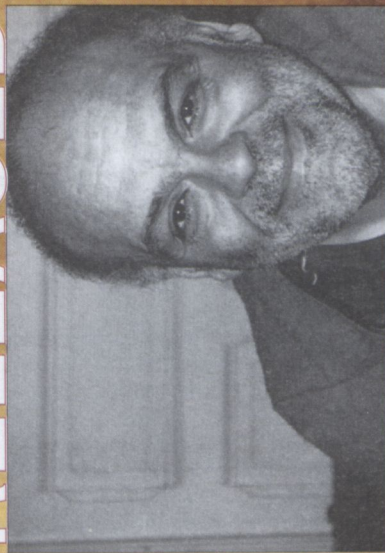


worldwide appeals 1995 – 1997



REUNITED

RELEASED



REUNITED



RELEASED



FOCUS

Worldwide Appeals

THIS FOCUS gives brief updates on just a few of the *Worldwide Appeal* cases that *AI News* has featured over the past three years. In some there has been progress – for others, justice has yet to be done.

Every month, thousands of people from all over the world sit down and write letters to government officials complicit in human rights abuses. We write on behalf of those who would rather be imprisoned than renounce their beliefs, who have been through unimaginable horrors in detention, who have risked their lives for their human rights work, who have been sentenced to death.

Sometimes we are asked – and ask ourselves – if all these appeals have

any effect. This *Focus* is an attempt to answer that question, at least in part.

Aurora Nazario Arrieta (pictured left), a young Mexican woman, was raped by three police officers in November 1995. She was the subject of a *Worldwide Appeal* in April 1996. The police in Mexico are seldom held accountable for their actions, but this time, action was taken because of Aurora's courage in speaking out and concerted international pressure. After receiving hundreds of appeals, the state Attorney General decided to pursue the case against the police officers involved. The conviction of those responsible for raping Aurora

has given other women in Mexico the courage to come forward and file complaints against the police.

There are scores of other people featured in AI's *Worldwide Appeals* who have been released early, had their sentences commuted, or have seen those who abused their human rights brought to justice. No one ever knows exactly how much influence AI has had in any particular case – but when international pressure has played a part in changing oppressive laws or in bringing justice, AI's action is often a major component.

On behalf of everyone featured in AI's *Worldwide Appeals*, we thank you for your work.



Aurora Nazario Arrieta

NIGERIA

DECEMBER 1996*

CHIEF GANI FAWEHINMI

CHIEF GANI FAWEHINMI and two other prisoners of conscience, Femi Falana and Femi Aborisade, have been unconditionally released. All three are prominent human rights activists, and had been detained, incommunicado and without charge or trial, for nearly a year.

MOROCCO/WESTERN SAHARA

MAY 1996

KELTHOUM AHMED LABID EL-OUANAT

PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE Kelthoum Ahmed Labid El-Ouanat, aged 25, was released from prison in May 1996 after receiving a royal pardon. She had served three years of a 20-year prison sentence imposed after an unfair trial in July 1993.

IRAN

JUNE 1996

SHEIKH MAKKI AKHOUND

SHEIKH MAKKI AKHOUND, a Shi'a religious scholar, was granted an amnesty and released from prison in December 1996. He had been serving a three-year prison sentence, imposed after an unfair trial, and was a possible prisoner of conscience.

PERU

MARCH 1995

PELAGIA SALCEDO PIZARRO AND JUAN CARLOS CHUCHON ZEA

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE Pelagia Salcedo Pizarro and her husband Juan Carlos Chuchón Zea have been released after serving nearly four years of their 30-year prison sentence.

They were originally detained in December 1992 by anti-terrorist police in Lima and, under torture, forced to sign a police report stating that they were in possession of illegal explosives and leaflets issued by the armed opposition group "Shining Path". In February 1993 they were sentenced by the Navy War Council to 30 years' imprisonment.

In August 1996, following a considerable amount of pressure from the international community, the Peruvian Congress passed a law creating an *ad hoc* Commission charged with proposing to the President that those prisoners falsely accused of "terrorism" be granted clemency or a pardon. By September 1997 the review of cases by the Commission had resulted in the release of 226 prisoners – including Pelagia Salcedo Pizarro and Juan Carlos Chuchón Zea, who were freed in October 1996.

*Header dates refer to the month in which the *Worldwide Appeal* was featured in *AI News*

KENYA

MARCH 1995

JOSEPHINE NYAWIRA NGENGI

JOSEPHINE NYAWIRA NGENGI, a member of the outspoken human rights campaigning group Release Political Prisoners, was arrested in May 1994 and detained on fabricated charges of robbery with violence.

Thanks, in part, to domestic and international pressure, Josephine was acquitted of all charges in March 1996 and returned home to her family. She revealed that she had been tortured during questioning – she has since undergone major surgery. To date there has been no investigation into her allegations of torture.

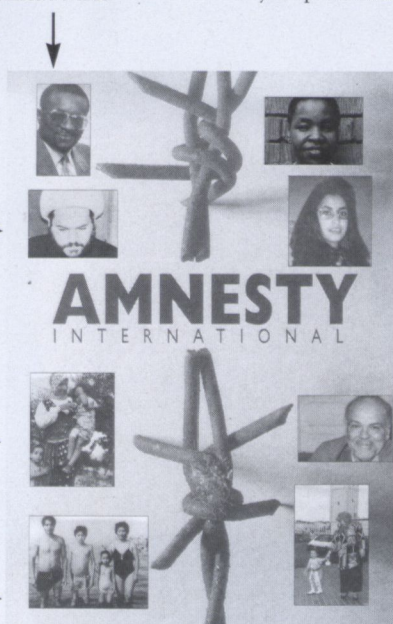
TUNISIA

OCTOBER 1996

KHEMAIS CHAMMARI

KHEMAIS CHAMMARI, a human rights activist and member of parliament representing an opposition party, was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in July 1996 on charges of "disclosing national secrets to a foreign power", which he denied. He was released conditionally in December 1996, having served five months of his sentence. The conditions of his release included a ban on any form of political activity. In April 1997 Khemais Chammari's passport was returned to him and he was able to leave the country to attend a human rights conference in Malta.

International appeals, including pressure from AI, played a part in securing his early release.



Background designed by Yossi Lemel

TUNISIA

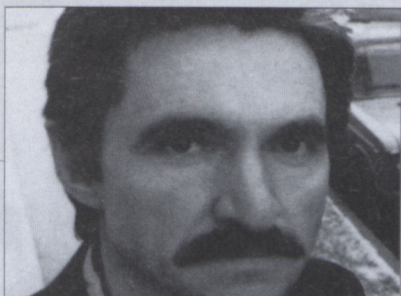
OCTOBER 1995

TOURKIA HAMADI AND AICHA DHAOUADI

TOURKIA HAMADI AND AICHA DHAOUADI are married to exiled government opponents. They were harassed by their government and eventually imprisoned; when released, the families could not be reunited in exile because the authorities refused to grant their children passports. However, in June 1997, the authorities capitulated, and Tourkia, Aicha and their children joined their husbands in France. Both families expressed their gratitude to the AI members who had worked on their case.

JANUARY 1997

RUSSIA
ALEKSANDR NIKITIN



© Beltona Foundation

PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE Aleksandr Nikitin, a retired naval captain, was released from prison in December 1996. However, he still faces up to 20 years in prison for publicizing the environmental consequences of accidents on Russian nuclear submarines.

In a recent letter to AI, he wrote: *"I would like to thank you for your participation in my release... I am convinced that the international attention and support, which you, among others, have initiated, will influence the further judicial proceedings in the case, so that these will be in full conformity with universally accepted international principles and with the Russian legislation".*

Please continue sending appeals, urging that criminal proceedings against Aleksandr Nikitin be dropped, to: President Boris Yeltsin, g. Moskva, Kreml, Russian Federation.

APRIL 1997

PAPUA NEW GUINEA
THEODORE MIRIUNG

THEODORE MIRIUNG, the former premier of the Bougainville Transitional Government, was shot dead in October 1996. There has been no further information about progress in the police investigation into his death.



© Post Courier

This is despite the findings of a coroner's inquiry which concluded that a group of between eight and 10 men, including soldiers from the Papua New Guinea Defence Force and members of a government-backed paramilitary group, were involved in the killing.

In a letter to AI in response to its April 1997 *Worldwide Appeal*, the Acting Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea wrote that he had received "thousands of letters" from AI members, adding that an impartial investigation had been completed and presented to the government, but that no action had been taken.

Papua New Guinea now has a new Prime Minister, Bill Skate. The new government, despite announcing that it would establish a National Human Rights Commission which would examine human rights violations on Bougainville, does not appear to have taken any steps to ensure that the inquiry into Theodore Miriung's death continues. AI believes that the government should demonstrate its commitment to protecting human rights on Bougainville by ensuring that there is a thorough and impartial investigation into the killing of Theodore Miriung.

Please call on the new government to take immediate steps to bring to justice those found responsible for the killing of Theodore Miriung. Write to: Right Hon. Bill Skate, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Office of the Prime Minister, PO Box 6605, Boroko, NCD, Papua New Guinea.

This *Focus* is extracted from an 18-page document, *Amnesty works: Updates to Worldwide Appeals, January 1995 to August 1997* (AI Index NWS 22/07/97). The document features many 'good news' stories as well as full information on cases on which you should keep appealing. For a copy of the document, please get in touch with the AI section in your country.



PLEASE CONTINUE SENDING APPEALS ON THESE CASES

COLOMBIA

JULY 1995

MEMBERS OF THE CIVIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF META



Human rights workers in Meta. Josué Giraldo is pictured third from left

THE "DISAPPEARANCE" and extrajudicial execution of members of the Civic Human Rights Committee of the Department of Meta forced the closure of its headquarters in Villavicencio in April 1995. AI issued an appeal to the Colombian authorities to ensure the safety of all those working for the Committee – however, the authorities made no real effort to investigate the source of the continuing threats and harassment. Perhaps if they had done so, then the killing of Josué Giraldo Cardona, President of the Committee, could have been prevented.

Josué Giraldo was shot dead outside his home on 13 October 1996. He had received numerous death threats, both because of his work with the Committee and because of his political activism. His killing renewed fears for the safety of other members of the Committee, many of whom have also received death threats.

The murder of Josué Giraldo led to renewed demands from the international community for the protection of human rights in Colombia. Following the killing, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued a resolution requiring the Colombian Government to protect all members of the Meta Civic Committee, to investigate the murder of Josué Giraldo and other acts against members of the Committee, and to bring those responsible to justice. Although the Colombian Government has condemned the killing of Josué Giraldo and opened an investigation, little progress has been made in identifying those responsible.

Please continue appeals to the Colombian authorities, urging them to complete their investigation into the death of Josué Giraldo and to bring those found responsible to justice. Also seek assurances that measures deemed appropriate by members of the Meta Civic Committee are taken to guarantee their safety. Write to: Señor Presidente Ernesto Samper Pizano, Presidente de la República, Palacio de Nariño, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia.

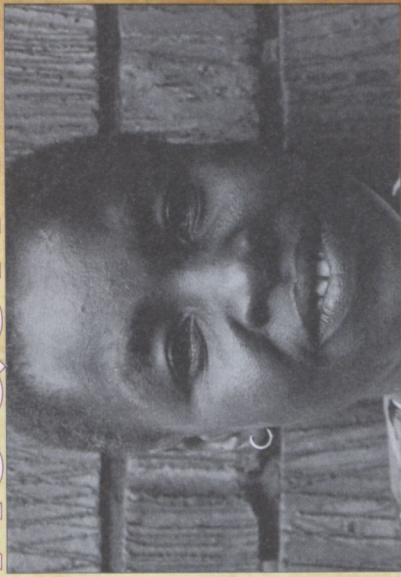
You could also write to your own government, asking how it will monitor efforts by the Colombian authorities to ensure full investigation into the killing of Josué Giraldo and the implementation of measures to guarantee the safety of human rights workers.

AMNESTY WORKS... BUT ONLY WITH YOUR HELP

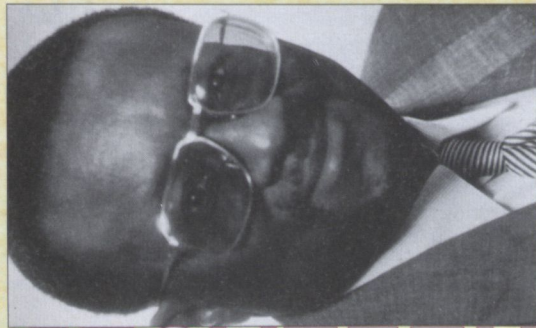
THERE ARE MANY WAYS in which you can support AI's work. Make a donation, either to your AI section if there is one in your country, or directly to Marketing and Supply, AI International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, London, United Kingdom, WC1X 8DJ. Become involved in AI's campaigns and actions to defend human rights worldwide – write letters, lobby governments, raise human rights awareness among your friends and colleagues. Make a stand for human rights.



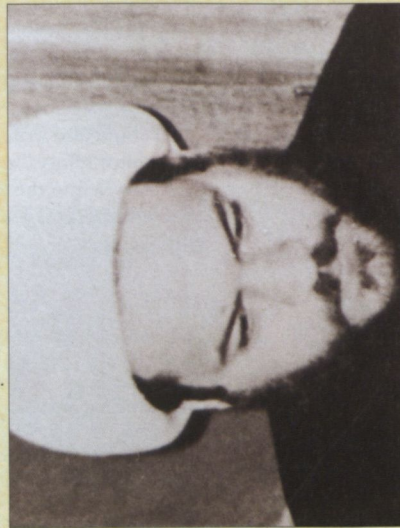
ACQUITTED



RELEASED



RELEASED



RELEASED

AMERICAN works

INTERNATIONAL

WORLDWIDE appeals

TURKEY - PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

LEYLA ZANA, HATIP DICLE, ORHAN DOĞAN AND SELIM SADAK are currently serving 15-year prison sentences for exercising their right to freedom of expression.

The four Kurdish politicians were elected to parliament in October 1991 as members of the Democracy Party (DEP), and were vocal in their support for, in Leyla Zana's words, "reconciliation between Kurds and Turks". However, in Turkey, to call for a political resolution to the 13-year-old conflict in southeast Turkey is to risk one's life and liberty. All four received death threats, their parliamentary immunity was lifted, and they were prosecuted on charges of treason. Other DEP members were tortured, murdered and "disappeared"; the party was later closed down for "separatism".

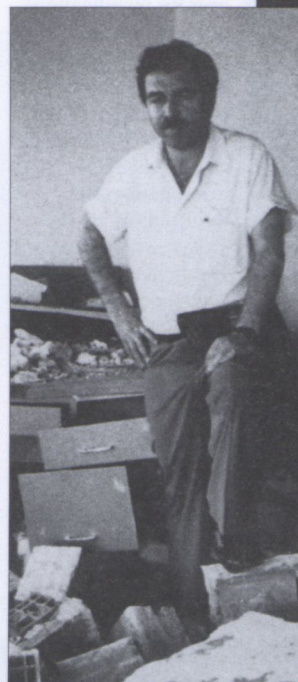
In December 1994, after trial proceedings which fell far short of international standards of fairness, the four were convicted on trumped-up

charges of membership of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), an illegal armed opposition organization, and were sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention ruled this imprisonment to be arbitrary, in contravention of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The four were never even accused of any violent activity. The evidence produced against them was extremely unreliable, contradictory, and some statements were allegedly extracted under torture.

In 1995 the European Parliament awarded Leyla Zana the Sakharov Prize for the defence of human rights.

✉ **Please write**, calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Leyla Zana, Hatip Dicle, Orhan Doğan and Selim Sadak to: Mr Mesut Yilmaz, Prime Minister, Başbakanlık, 06573 Ankara, Turkey. Please also send cards to the prisoners at Ankara Merkez Kapalı Cezaevi, Ulucanlar, Ankara, Turkey.



Hatip Dicle (left), Selim Sadak (above) and Leyla Zana (top)

APPEALS

BURUNDI - DEATH PENALTY

AT LEAST 215 PRISONERS are currently under sentence of death in Burundi, the majority in connection with their alleged participation in the 1993 massacres. Most of their trials have been blatantly unfair, and the majority of defendants have been tortured to extract confessions. Six people have already been hanged in Burundi's first executions for over 15 years.

Corneille Karikurubu, Jean Berchmans Ngendakimana, Joseph Nteziriba, and Libérat Ntandikiye were sentenced to death in early 1996 after unfair trials in which they were convicted of participation in the massacres of Tutsi civilians following the assassination of

President Melchior Ndadaye in October 1993. Despite the gravity of the charges against them, they did not have access to legal representation. The four men subsequently appealed to the *Cour de cassation* of the Supreme Court, but in October 1997 their appeals were turned down. Their only hope of avoiding execution is if the President, Major Buyoya, grants them clemency.

AI opposes the death penalty in all countries and all circumstances because it is a state-sanctioned violation of the right to life and of the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment. The situation is of special concern when, as in Burundi, people are sentenced after unfair trials.

✉ **Please write**, appealing for Major Buyoya to grant clemency to Corneille Karikurubu, Jean Berchmans Ngendakimana, Joseph Nteziriba, Libérat Ntandikiye, and all those whose death sentences come before him. Acknowledge the duty of the government to bring to justice those responsible for criminal acts, but express opposition to the death penalty in all cases as a cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment which has no proven deterrent effect and is brutalizing to all involved in its application. Send faxes to: Major Pierre Buyoya, Président de la République, Présidence de la République, Burundi, fax: 257 22 7490. Also send letters to diplomatic representatives of Burundi accredited to your country.

An appeal from you to the authorities can help the victims of human rights violations whose stories are told here. You can help free a prisoner of conscience or stop torture. You can bring liberty to a victim of "disappearance". You may prevent an execution. Every appeal counts.

EGYPT - "DISAPPEARANCE"

SAYYID 'ALI HASSAN IBRAHIM AND NABIL MOHAMMAD 'ALI HASSAN AL-BATTUGI both "disappeared" in southern Egypt after being arrested by members of the security forces, reportedly for their suspected connections with an Islamist group.

Sayyid 'Ali Hassan Ibrahim, a farmer from Minya, was arrested by officers from the State Security Investigations (SSI) Department on 23 September 1995. His wife and children watched as he was led away from his house and was blindfolded and beaten. He was then put into a security car and driven away. His wife visited him in the local police station on

several occasions following his arrest but, when she tried to see him on 14 October 1995, she was told he had been transferred elsewhere the previous night. She was not told the exact destination.

Nabil Mohammad 'Ali Hassan al-Battugi, from Bani Sueif, was arrested by officers from the local branch of the SSI on 7 July 1996 as he was shutting his furniture shop for the night. He was reportedly taken to the SSI building in Bani Sueif for a few days before being transferred to the SSI headquarters in Cairo. When his mother went to the Prisons' Department in Cairo to enquire about his whereabouts, she was told he

was not held in any prison. She lodged complaints with the Bani Sueif Prosecution, but to no avail.

All attempts made by the families of the two men to ascertain their whereabouts have failed.

✉ **Please write**, expressing concern for the safety of Sayyid 'Ali Hassan Ibrahim and Nabil Mohammad 'Ali Hassan al-Battugi, and urging the government to hold a public and impartial enquiry into their "disappearances", to: General Mohammad Hassan al-Alfy, Minister of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior, Al-Sheikh al-Rihan Street, Bab al-Louk, Cairo, Egypt.

Remember: AI members should not take up cases from their own countries.

BRAZIL

Investigating the death squads

DURING THE PAST YEAR there has been increasing concern for the safety of those who seek to uncover the truth behind Brazil's death squads.

In October 1996 lawyer Gilson Nogueira was killed while investigating death squad activity in the state of Rio Grande do Norte. A year later,

colleagues who took over his investigations were still regularly receiving death threats. At the opposite end of the country, in Mato Grosso do Sul, human rights activists investigating the hundreds of killings along the Paraguayan and Bolivian borders were intimidated following the discovery and exhumation of a cemetery in which death squad victims were buried.

These are just two examples. A recent investigation by the Brazilian Chamber of

Deputies' Human Rights Commission has identified death squad activity in at least nine of Brazil's 27 states. The members of these death squads, many of whom belong to the police force and some of whom have been linked to high-ranking state officials, operate with the knowledge that they will almost certainly never be brought to justice for their crimes.

In their attempts to bring those responsible for such gross human rights abuses to court, human rights defenders often have to overcome police investigations that are compromised by links to death squads, witnesses who are too afraid to testify, and death threats and attacks. Yet they continue their painstaking, meticulous and dangerous work of gathering evidence in the hope of securing a conviction that will break the cycle of impunity – a process which might take years.

AI is committed to supporting the human rights defenders in their work, and has recommended to the Brazilian Government several concrete measures that could aid and speed up the prosecution of human rights violators. In particular, AI has recommended the creation of a national witness protection

program and a federal mechanism for the investigation of human rights violations where state security forces are suspected of being involved. The government's National Program on Human Rights, launched in 1996 and welcomed with reservations by AI, commits it to measures aimed at improving human rights protection. But while the gap between rhetoric and implementation remains, Brazil's human rights defenders are at risk.

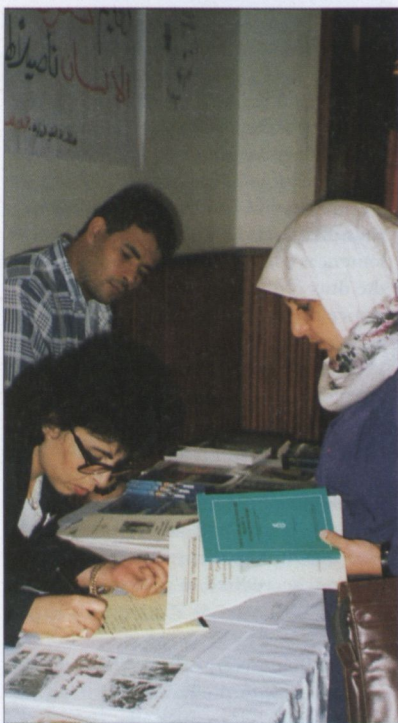


AI joins forces with Brazilian human rights defenders at the international conference on the protection of human rights defenders, Bogotá, Colombia, May 1996. From left to right: Oscar Gatica, Serra Human Rights Commission – Espírito Santo; Katia Pereira, GAJOP – Recife; Marta Fotsch, AI Switzerland's Brazil Coordinator; Father Ricardo Rezende, Rio Maria Committee – Pará

You can help...

...by writing to the Brazilian Government, expressing concern about the frequent death threats and attacks against human rights defenders in Brazil; urging full investigations into all complaints of human rights violations; and asking that human rights defenders receive whatever protection they deem necessary. Send your letters to: President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Gabinete do Presidente, Palácio do Planalto, 3º andar, Brasília DF, CEP 70150 900, Brazil.

Turning the tables... three scenes from a month in the life of AI

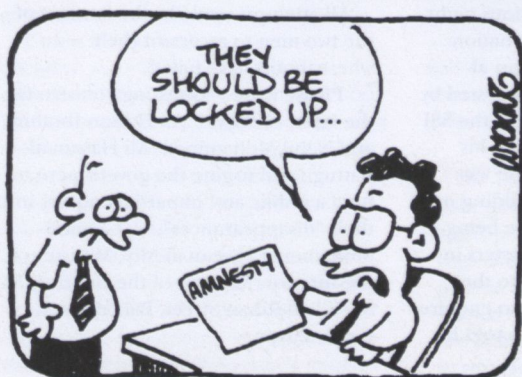


HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN GAZA (photo far left)

A WORKSHOP aimed at putting human rights on the Palestinian educational curriculum was organized by AI's Palestinian groups in October. Attended by several senior officials from the Palestinian Authority, eminent academics, and representatives of local and regional human rights organizations, the workshop concluded by making a series of recommendations around which future work would be based.

REFUGEES' RIGHTS AT THE UN (photo left)

REFUGEE COORDINATORS and lobbyists from 10 AI sections gathered in Geneva, Switzerland, in October. They were there to raise AI's concerns over the human rights of refugees with the governing committee of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and to receive training in how to use international human rights mechanisms to protect refugees' rights. The proceedings of this meeting, called the Excom, are usually low-key. This time, however, committee members were subjected to intense lobbying and media scrutiny. AI's stand is pictured.



AI: "SLOGANEERING" ON REFUGEES?

THE AUSTRALIAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, Mr Downer, has accused AI of "just sloganeering, slanging off at people, abusing them" following AI's publication of a report on Asia for its campaign on refugees. "It might make you feel good but it doesn't achieve anything", he added.

Ironically, these comments seem to have done AI's worldwide campaigning for human rights some good. Provoked, the Australian Senate passed resolutions calling on the Minister to address human rights abuses in East Timor more vigorously, and urging the government to review Australia's stance on mandatory detention of undocumented asylum-seekers.

The cartoon on the left is the Australian Northern Territory News' view of the Minister's reaction...

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AI NEWS

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