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Annual Report Summaries

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT

2002

Annual Report Summaries 2002

An overview of Amnesty International's Annual Report

NOTE TO EDITORS

The following summaries provide an overview but do not detail all the human rights abuses in the *Amnesty International Report 2002*. For full information, please refer to the report.

The following statistics on human rights violations and abuses in 2001 are based on information from the *Amnesty International Report 2002*. The statistics include the number of countries in which human rights abuses took place but do not detail the numbers of victims.

AFRICA

Highlights of Amnesty International Report 2002 Covering events from January to December 2001

Throughout the continent civil strife continued to create situations conducive for serious human rights abuses. Whether in **Angola, Burundi, Central Africa Republic (CAR), Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan** or **Uganda**, thousands of unarmed civilians suffered some of the most egregious human rights violations in Africa -- illegal arrests and detention, kidnapping, torture and ill-treatment, rape, murder, "disappearances" -- by both government forces and armed opposition groups.

In **Burundi**, hundreds of unarmed civilians were killed by government soldiers and armed opposition groups and hundreds of thousands of people remained internally displaced.

In **Sudan**, oil companies continued to play an important role in human rights abuses linked to the forces they use to protect their oil fields or to the provision of aviation fuel to government aircraft which deliberately and indiscriminately bombed civilians in the war zones in the south of the country.

By the end of the year some 4.5 million people were believed to be internally displaced within Sudan and some 500,000 were thought to have sought refuge abroad. Thousands of **Sierra Leonean** and **Liberian** refugees as well as internally displaced **Guineans** and **Liberians** were repeatedly attacked and harassed or detained by both government forces and armed groups in the border region between the three countries.

The human rights situation in **Zimbabwe** deteriorated markedly as the ruling ZANU-PF party and its supporters used politically-motivated violence, arrests and detention, torture, abductions and killings to stifle opponents in the run-up to the March 2002 presidential election. The independence of the judiciary and the press as well the impartiality of the police and prison system were undermined by new government laws and actions.

In **Burkina Faso** and **Cameroon** dozens of people were reportedly unlawfully executed or remain unaccounted for by security forces by security forces in combatting banditry and rising crime.

Throughout the year, vigilante groups in **Nigeria** were responsible for unlawful detention, acts of violence, torture and killings. Soldiers killed hundreds of people in revenge attacks and during interventions in inter-ethnic strife in Lagos and parts of the middle and northern region. Investigation and punishment of such violations were either inexistent or negligible. Many victims do not file complaints for fear of reprisals.

Hundreds of people remain detained for political reasons for countries such as **Angola, Burundi, CAR, Ivory Coast, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Rwanda, Swaziland, Sudan** and **Zimbabwe**. Some of them were possible prisoners of conscience.

The **plight of prisoners and detainees** was compounded by inhuman conditions, extreme overcrowding, poor hygiene and lack of basic medical services and care. Amnesty International received reports of appalling conditions in **DRC, Nigeria** and **Togo**.

Despite the international trend towards the abolition of the **death penalty**, executions were carried out in **Guinea, Somalia** and **Sudan**. Hundreds of people were sentenced to death in **Burundi, CAR, DRC, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Mauritania, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan**, and **Zambia**. In

Nigeria, death sentences and cruel, inhuman and degrading punishments were handed down under new penal legislation recently introduced in several northern states and based on *Sharia*.

Failure to bring to justice those who violate human rights remained a key factor in perpetuating abuses in the region. By the end of 2001, there were still insufficient funds for the Special Court for **Sierra Leone** created by the UN Security Council in August 2000 to try crimes against humanity, war crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law.

However, the tide began turning, albeit slowly, with more and more countries recognizing the need to bring to justice alleged perpetrators of human rights violations. Under strong national and international pressure, the government of **Cameroon** took steps to investigate some killings by security forces. In **Burkina Faso**, a member of the security forces was indicted for the extrajudicial execution of four people, including a leading investigative journalist. A Belgian court successfully prosecuted four **Rwandans** accused of aiding and abetting the 1994 genocide, thereby re-enforcing the principle of universal jurisdiction for crimes against humanity.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN AFRICA DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 2002.

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

Confirmed or possible extrajudicial executions were carried out in at least 18 countries

"DISAPPEARANCES"

People "disappeared" or remained "disappeared" from previous years in 8 countries.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

Victims of torture and ill-treatment by security forces, police and other state authorities were reported in 23 countries.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

Confirmed or possible prisoners of conscience were held in 15 countries.

DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL

People were arbitrarily arrested and detained without charge or trial in 20 countries.

DEATH PENALTY

People were sentenced to death in 12 countries and executions were carried out in at least 3.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

Armed opposition groups committed serious human rights violations, such as deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians, torture and hostage taking in 11 countries.

AMERICAS

Highlights of Amnesty International Report 2002 Covering events from January to December 2001

Although the year has seen some positive developments -- especially regarding the struggle against impunity and the use of the death penalty -- the international climate created by the "war on terrorism" declared by President Bush after the 11 September attacks in the USA posed a serious threat to human rights advances region wide.

The 11 September attacks were followed by intense backlash against Muslims and people of Middle Eastern descent in the **USA**. Arrests also took place in countries including **Paraguay** and the **Dominican Republic**.

In the **USA**, more than 1,200 people -- mainly non-US nationals -- were detained during investigations into the attacks. The detentions were surrounded by extreme secrecy and there have been reports of incommunicado detention and ill-treatment. Human rights concerns raised by the sweeping "anti-terrorism" legislation passed by Congress were compounded by the establishment by Presidential military order of special military commissions for the trial of non US-nationals suspected of "terrorism". These courts would create a "second class justice system" for foreign nationals as they would expressly flout some of the basic guarantees prevailing in the US justice system.

In December, **Canada** also passed new anti-terrorism legislation amidst fears that it might undermine the right to a fair trial. New Immigration and Refugee legislation adopted in November could result in people being returned to countries where they may face human rights violations.

Meanwhile, the human rights crisis in **Colombia** continued to spiral and it is feared that the post-11 September climate will contribute to exacerbate it. Both the army, with their paramilitary allies, and armed opposition groups continued to commit grave human rights violations and abuses, with civilians the principal victims. The year's statistics are chilling: over 300 people "disappeared", more than 4,000 civilians were killed outside combat -- the majority by army-backed paramilitaries -- large numbers of people were displaced and over 1,700 people were kidnapped, mainly by guerrilla groups.

As in previous years, torture and ill-treatment by security forces and in custody continued to be reported in at least 20 countries, including **Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guyana, Jamaica, Paraguay, Peru, the USA** and **Venezuela**. In countries like **Brazil** and **Mexico** the use of torture to extract confessions is often used as a *de facto* replacement for modern investigation techniques.

Unlawful killings by law enforcement agents -- often as a result of excessive use of lethal force -- were recorded in several countries, including **Belize, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, Mexico, the USA** and **Venezuela**. In **Brazil**, death squads appear to operate in collusion with security forces, and some 481 police killings were reported in São Paulo state alone. In **Jamaica**, at least 152 people were killed by security forces, include seven young men killed in a house in Braeton in circumstances strongly suggesting extrajudicial executions. In **Argentina**, dozens of police killings in disputed circumstances were reported and over 30 people were killed during demonstrations at the end of the year, amidst reports of excessive use of force.

"Disappearances" continued to be widespread in **Colombia**. Cases were also reported **Mexico** and **Venezuela**, and in at least eight other countries families and friends continued living the daily torture

of not knowing what happened to their "disappeared" loved ones.

"Prisoners of conscience" were still detained in **Argentina, Cuba** and **Mexico** as well as in **Peru**, where approximately 200 people unjustly convicted of "terrorism" charges are still in prison. 2001 saw the release of two **Mexican** "prisoners of conscience", environmental activists Rodolfo Montiel and Teodoro Cabrera. However, these releases fell short of full justice as their innocence was not acknowledged and no investigation was opened into their claims of having been tortured.

Defending and promoting human rights proved once again to be a life-threatening pursuit, with human rights defenders and activists being the target of harassment, threats and attacks -- sometimes fatal -- in countries including **Colombia, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica** and **Nicaragua**. In **Mexico**, human rights lawyer Digna Ochoa y Plácido was killed in her office in October. In **Colombia**, over 100 trade unionist were killed -- mainly by army-backed paramilitaries -- and 10 journalists were the target of fatal attacks because of their work. Journalists were also threatened and harassed in **Guatemala, Mexico** and **Haiti**, where at least one was killed. Government political opponents were targeted in countries including **Cuba** and **Haiti**.

The **USA** was the only country in the region to carry out executions, including the first two federal executions since 1963. The 66 people put to death in the USA included some with mental impairment and one prisoner who was under 18 at the time of the crime. In a landmark ruling the International Court of Justice found the USA had breached its international obligations by denying German citizens Karl and Walter LaGrand -- executed in 1999 -- their right to communicate with their consulate. Death sentences continued being passed in all the region's retentionist countries, but a halt in executions in **Cuba** indicated that an informal moratorium is in place.

Although past and present human rights violations continue to go largely unchecked, some advances have been recorded in the struggle against impunity. In March in **Argentina**, a judge investigating the "disappearance" of three people in 1978, ruled the country's two "amnesty" laws unconstitutional and void. In June and July, an Argentinian federal judge requested the arrest of a number of military officials from **Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay** and **Uruguay** for their involvement in "Operation Condor" -a region wide plan characterized by systematic "disappearances".

In a historic ruling in **Brazil**, a former high-ranking military police officer was convicted on charges related to the 1992 massacre of 111 inmates in Carandiru prison, São Paulo. In the state of Amazonas, 13 men -- several of whom were tried *in absentia* -- were convicted of ordering and carrying out an attack on around 100 Ticuna Indians, which left 14 dead including 6 children.

In **Guatemala**, while efforts to bring to justice the perpetrators of mass human rights violations in the past continued in the country and abroad, three armed forces officers were sentenced to 30 years' imprisonment for the 1998 murder of Bishop José Gerardi. However, justice came at a price: at least nine witnesses were killed, dozens of other witnesses, lawyers, judges and prosecutors involved in the case were threatened and harassed, and many were forced to flee the country.

In **Peru**, a Truth Commission was established to clarify human rights violations committed between 1980 and 2000. The former head of the Peruvian Security Services Vladimiro Montesinos, accused of human rights violations, was arrested in Venezuela in June.

In **Chile**, former President Augusto Pinochet was put under house arrest on charges of "kidnapping and/or aggravated homicide" committed against 75 people during the "Caravan of Death" military operation in 1973. The house arrest was later lifted when charges were reduced to "covering up" the crimes rather than perpetrating them. The Santiago Appeals Court temporarily suspended the case against him on health grounds, but the case is still pending following legal action filed by prosecution lawyers.

**HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE AMERICAS
DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S
ANNUAL REPORT 2002**

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

Confirmed or possible extrajudicial executions were carried out in 12 countries in the region in 2001.

"DISAPPEARANCES"

People "disappeared" in at least 3 countries and remained "disappeared" from previous years in at least another 8 countries.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

People were reportedly tortured or ill-treated by security forces, police or other state authorities in 20 countries.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

Confirmed or possible prisoners of conscience were held in 3 countries.

DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL

People were arbitrarily arrested and detained, or in detention without charge or trial in 6 countries.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

Armed opposition groups committed serious human rights abuses, such as deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians, torture and hostage-taking in 2 countries.

People were sentenced to death in 8 countries and 66 executions took place in one country only.

ASIA

Highlights of Amnesty International Report 2002 Covering events from January to December 2001

Human rights abuses increased in many **Asia Pacific** countries, particularly in the context of armed conflicts. The attacks of September 11 and the need for increased security were used to justify the enactment and/or introduction of harsh security legislation in several countries including **Singapore, Pakistan, India** and **Malaysia**.

In **Afghanistan**, ordinary people suffered greatly throughout the year as a result of conflicts and the accumulated effects of years of drought.

While the *Taliban* were in power, religious and ethnic minorities were targeted in mass killings, and executions, and amputations were carried out. The movement, employment and education of women was severely restricted. The United Front (Northern Alliance) were also responsible for human rights abuses.

An unknown number of civilians were killed or had their homes or property destroyed during the US-led bombing campaign which started in October. The US and its allies may have breached the rules of war. In one incident on 29 December, a UN spokesperson reported that relatives identified 52 bodies, including 25 children, after the US bombed a village near the eastern town of Gardez. As daily reports of civilian deaths filtered out of Afghanistan, Amnesty International asked the US government to account for the deaths but no information has been forthcoming.

The treatment of captured or surrendered prisoners in **Afghanistan** raised serious concerns. There were reports that the United Front summarily executed captured *al-Qaida* fighters who were wounded or had surrendered. Amnesty International called for an inquiry into the uprising at Qala-i-Jhangi fort where some prisoners were found dead with their hands tied behind their backs. The head of Shibargan prison revealed in December that 43 prisoners had died from injuries or asphyxiation while being transported in shipping containers.

Post September 11, all neighbouring countries closed their borders to refugees and international assistance programs were severely reduced. More people becoming internally displaced.

As the world focused on the war in Afghanistan, other conflicts received even less attention than usual. Civilians were caught up in internal conflicts in **Nepal, Sri Lanka, India, Philippines** and **Myanmar**.

The "People's War" declared by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) in 1996 entered a new, more bloody phase, after peace talks broke down and a state of emergency was declared in November. Civilians have been abducted, tortured and deliberately killed by both sides of the conflict.

The government suspended the right to freedom of expression arresting dozens of journalists, human rights activists and lawyers. Meanwhile the Maoists maintained control over a sizable proportion of the country, running parallel "people's governments" with their own tax system and "people's courts".

There was passing international interest in the conflict in **Kashmir, India**, as the Indian and Pakistani governments engaged in a tense build up of military forces. However, scant attention was paid to the 100 civilians who were killed there each month.

The protracted conflict in **Sri Lanka** between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the

government got worse from May. There was a marked increase in cases of rape by police, army and naval personnel and torture generally continued to be reported on a daily basis. The LTTE engaged in hostage-taking and widespread recruitment of child soldiers.

Separatist conflicts in the **Indonesian** provinces of Aceh and Papua worsened in 2001 and hundreds of civilians were "disappeared", unlawfully killed and tortured. Houses and means of livelihood were destroyed in both provinces as a form of collective punishment for attacks by armed separatists against the police and army. Political upheaval effectively paralysed the government for much of the year, obstructing the process of human rights reform and efforts to resolve the conflicts. Laws which were used in previous years to silence dissent were invoked to bring charges against independence and other activists who were jailed for the peaceful expression of their views.

Serious human rights violations in **China** increased in 2001. A "strike hard campaign" against crime led to a massive escalation in executions - at least 2,468. Executions were carried out for non-violent crimes such as bribery, pimping, embezzlement, tax fraud, selling harmful foods and drug offences. Many executions took place after mass sentencing rallies in front of vast crowds. On 20 April, over 200 people were executed after rallies were held across China.

Repression of spiritual and religious groups, dissenters and human rights activists continued through arrests, torture and imprisonment. Around 200 Falun Gong practitioners allegedly died in custody as a result of torture, scores of nuns and monks remained in prison in **Tibet**. The Chinese government used the "war against terrorism" to justify a crackdown on ethnic Uighur "separatists", saying they were linked to international terrorism". Many alleged separatists were detained and some were executed.

Hundreds, possibly thousands of asylum seekers fleeing the famine in **North Korea** were forcibly repatriated to meet an uncertain fate.

In August, the Australian government began to send warships to intercept more than 1,800 "boat people" who were detained and denied the right to claim asylum on the Australian mainland. About 600 possible asylum seekers were turned back by the navy, and several hundred were diverted to remote islands in the Indian and Pacific oceans in what has become known as the "Pacific solution". At least 356 others, including 70 children, drowned after their leaking boat sank on the journey from Indonesia to Australia. Ahmed al-Zalime, a refugee living in Australia whose three daughters had drowned in the incident, was unable to visit his rescued wife in Indonesia, because Australian temporary refugee visas prohibit return to the country after any overseas travel.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ASIA PACIFIC DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL REPORT 2002.

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

Confirmed or possible extrajudicial executions were carried out in at least 9 countries

"DISAPPEARANCES"

People "disappeared" or remained "disappeared" from previous years in 6 countries.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

Victims of torture and ill-treatment by security forces, police and other state authorities were reported in 19 countries.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

Confirmed or possible prisoners of conscience were held in 15 countries.

DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL

People were arbitrarily arrested and detained without charge or trial in 15 countries.

DEATH PENALTY

People were sentenced to death in 15 countries and executions were carried out in at least 12.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

Armed opposition groups committed serious human rights violations, such as deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians, torture and hostage taking in 9 countries.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Highlights of Amnesty International Report 2002 Covering events from January to December 2001

The human rights situation remained serious throughout much of the Middle East and North Africa with impunity largely prevailing and the victims and their families still denied justice. The gross human rights violations that took place in many countries include judicial and extrajudicial executions, widespread use of torture and unfair trials, intimidation of human rights defenders and restrictions on freedom of expression and association.

More than 460 **Palestinians** were killed by Israeli security forces, including 79 children and at least 32 individuals targeted for assassination. Palestinians armed groups killed 187 **Israelis**, including 154 civilians among them at least 36 children.

Thousands of Palestinians were arrested, frequently in incommunicado detention, sometimes for several days, and were reportedly subjected to torture or ill-treatment.

The Israeli authorities maintained strict closures on Palestinian towns and villages and at least 350 Palestinians houses were destroyed and 29 people died after delays impeded their access to hospitals.

Under the Palestinian Authority hundreds of suspected "collaborators" with Israel and scores of alleged members of armed opposition groups were arrested.

Reports of torture by various Palestinian security forces remained widespread and three men died in custody in circumstances which suggest that torture may have contributed to their deaths.

In **Algeria** where the state of emergency imposed in 1992 remained in place, hundreds of civilians, including women and children, were killed by armed groups which define themselves "Islamic groups". Dozens of civilians were shot dead by security forces during anti-government demonstrations. Hundreds of members of security service, state armed militia and armed groups were killed in armed confrontation.

Torture remained widespread and cases of secret detention continued to be reported, and no concrete action was taken to clarify the fate of some 4000 persons who "disappeared" since 1993, while changes in the Penal Code threatened the right of freedom of expression.

Torture is systematically practised in detention centres throughout **Egypt**, and victims of torture and their relatives continued to report harassment by security agents. The death penalty continued to be used extensively by criminal courts.

Thousands of suspected supporters of banned Islamic groups remained in detention without charge or trial. Several people suspected of supporting Islamic groups were arrested. In addition civil society institutions continued to face legal restrictions, while human rights defenders faced intimidation and imprisonment.

In **Iraq** which remained under stringent economic sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council since 1990, scores of suspected anti-government opponents were arrested. The death penalty continued to be applied extensively while torture of political detainees was systematic. Scores of people, including armed forces officers, were executed and in some cases the bodies bore evident signs of torture.

Civilian deaths resulting from air strikes by the US and UK forces against Iraqi targets were reported. The civilian population of Iraq continued to suffer severe hardship as a result of the sanctions .

In Iraqi Kurdistan, controlled by the two Kurdish political parties, prisoners of conscience were detained and armed Islamic groups were reportedly responsible for abductions and killings.

In **Tunisia**, the authorities stepped up their repression of human rights defenders and attempted to curb their peaceful activities, and continued to prevent international human rights organizations from scrutinizing human rights in the country.

Political prisoners and common law prisoners continued to be subjected to torture and at least one person was reported to have died in custody as a result of torture. Various measures continued to be used to exert pressure on relatives of political prisoners and to prevent former political prisoners from resuming normal life.

Human rights and civil society groups in **Syria** stepped up their campaign against human rights violations in the country, despite restrictions imposed by the authorities on pro-democracy movement. Although scores of political prisoners were released, dozens of people were arrested on political grounds. Torture continued to be used routinely against political prisoners.

At least 79 people were executed in **Saudi Arabia** , and over 5000 Iraqi refugees continue to live in Rafha camp as virtual prisoners. Arrests of suspected political and religious activists continued and the legal status of those held remained shrouded in secrecy. No concrete steps were taken by the government to tackle the issue of discrimination in law and practice.

In **Lebanon** hundreds of people were arrested and held for political reasons, while hundreds of suspected members of former Israel's proxy militia, the South Lebanon Army, continued to be tried in summary hearings before the military court. At least eight people were sentenced to death though no one was executed and human rights defenders were subjected to harassment.

At least five men were sentenced to death in **Kuwait**, and two men and a woman were executed. In the wake of 11 September attacks in the USA, dozens of people were reportedly held incommunicado without charge or trial. Some of them were reportedly handed over to the US authorities for further questioning.

Dozens of political prisoners were released in **Libya**, but hundreds, including prisoners of conscience, remained in jail without charge or trial. Freedom of expression remained severely restricted and there were further reports of torture and ill-treatment from previous years where no impartial and thorough investigations have been conducted. Death sentences continued to be imposed. The fate of people who "disappeared" in previous years remained unclear.

In Morocco, despite the authorities' stated commitment to address all past human rights violations, the failure to bring those responsible for human rights violations to justice remained a major concern. The process of compensating victims of "disappearance" and arbitrary detention in previous years and their families continued. However the authorities failed to clarify the cases of several hundred people, most of them Sahrawi, who "disappeared " between the 1960s and early 1990s.

Judicial and legislative changes with a potentially positive impact on human rights were announced in Oman, and major steps were taken to promote and protect human rights in Bahrain, including the release of political prisoners and the return of many who had been forcibly exiled.

In Jordan hundreds of people, were arrested for political reasons and there were reports of torture or ill-treatment of detainees by members of the security services. Political prisoners continued to be tried before the State Security Court. There were at least 19 family or "honour" killings and at least nine people were executed during 2001.

**HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST
AND NORTH AFRICA DETAILED IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S
ANNUAL REPORT 2002.**

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

Confirmed or possible extrajudicial executions were carried out in at least 3 countries

"DISAPPEARANCES"

People "disappeared" or remained "disappeared" from previous years in 6 countries.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

Victims of torture and ill-treatment by security forces, police and other state authorities were reported in 15 countries.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

Confirmed or possible prisoners of conscience were held in 12 countries.

DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL

People were arbitrarily arrested and detained without charge or trial in 7 countries.

DEATH PENALTY

People were sentenced to death in 9 countries and executions were carried out in at least 7.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

Armed opposition groups committed serious human rights violations, such as deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians, torture and hostage taking in 3 countries.

EUROPE

Highlights of Amnesty International Report 2002 Covering events from January to December 2001

Torture and ill-treatment by state agents, often against members of ethnic minorities or foreigners, continued to be rife in Europe. The attacks of 11 September were used by many governments to take measures, in the name of strengthening national security, which resulted in human rights violations and further restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, association and fair trial, as well as the rights of asylum-seekers.

The human rights situation deteriorated in **Macedonia** as fighting escalated between Macedonian security forces and ethnic Albanian armed groups in the first part of the year. Indiscriminate killings of civilians by the security forces were reported, while the ethnic Albanian armed group, the National Liberation Army (NLA), was accused of kidnapping and ill-treating civilians. Over 140,000 people were displaced between March and August, mainly from villages which fell under NLA control.

In **Bosnia-Herzegovina** tens of thousands of potential returnees were unable to return to their homes since they lacked physical security and suffered discrimination in access to employment, education and social welfare. Proceedings continued at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (Tribunal), but investigations and prosecutions of war crimes and other human rights violations in domestic courts in **Bosnia-Herzegovina** and **Kosovo** were few, progressed slowly and in some cases failed to meet international standards for fair trial. Co-operation with the Tribunal improved in **Croatia** but the **Federal Republic of Yugoslavia** failed to pass a law on cooperation with the Tribunal by the end of the year. In June the **Serbian** authorities transferred former President Slobodan Milosevic to the Tribunal's custody. However, many other indicted suspects remained at large and often in positions of power.

Both the **Chechen** and the **Russian** armed forces continued to commit serious human rights abuses and to breach international humanitarian law. Violations committed by **Russian** forces included arbitrary detention in secret detention centres and in pits in the ground, torture and ill-treatment, "disappearances" and extra-judicial executions. **Chechen** forces attacked civilians working in the local administration in **Chechnya**, failed to take steps to minimize civilian casualties during attacks and ill-treated and unlawfully killed captured **Russian** soldiers. Elsewhere in the **Russian Federation** there were continuing reports of torture and ill-treatment in police custody and of cruel, inhuman and degrading prison conditions.

The **United Kingdom** was the only country in Europe to deploy under-18s into armed conflict situations. In 2001, under-18s were deployed to Macedonia and during the military intervention in Afghanistan.

Torture and ill-treatment were documented in a large number of European countries including **Albania, Georgia, Lithuania, Romania** and **Spain**. In **Turkey** torture and ill-treatment of men, women and children was widespread and systematic, mainly occurring in police and gendarmerie stations during the days immediately after arrest. Thousands of prisoners in "F-type" prisons were held in conditions of prolonged isolation which could amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Members of ethnic minorities and foreigners, including asylum-seekers, were subjected to racist-related abuse and ill-treatment in many countries in Western Europe including **Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Spain** and **Switzerland**. Police ill-treated Roma, and in some cases failed to protect them from abuse in **Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Slovakia** and the

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Amnesty International remained concerned about the excessive use of force by security forces during demonstrations. Such incidents were reported in **Italy**, **Spain** and **Sweden**. In **Italy** there were reports that law enforcement officers used excessive force during large street demonstrations in Brescia, Naples and Genoa, subjecting numerous peaceful demonstrators to gratuitous assault. In July 2001 one Italian protester was shot dead by a law enforcement officer during anti-globalization demonstrations in Genoa. Three demonstrators were wounded by the police during a demonstration in Gothenburg, **Sweden** in June 2001.

People with mental disabilities placed in state institutions for indefinite care in **Bulgaria**, were housed in dilapidated quarters with extremely poor standards of hygiene. They were sometimes subjected to cruel forms of restraint and seclusion. In some homes the lack of adequate medical care, heating and food appeared to contribute to deaths.

In the **United Kingdom** new security legislation, in the wake of the 11 September attacks in the USA, opened the door to human rights violations. The Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 was passed in December after less than a month of parliamentary and public scrutiny. It allows the Secretary of State to order indefinite administrative detention, without charge or trial and without recourse to judicial review, of any non-UK national deemed a "suspected international terrorist and national security risk" on the basis of secret evidence.

In **Bosnia-Herzegovina** at least a dozen people suspected of acts of "terrorism" were detained incommunicado and without charge by SFOR. Most of these detentions took place in the aftermath of the 11 September attacks in the USA.

Members of the Uighur population throughout Central Asia were increasingly accused of sympathizing with, and even supporting, banned Islamist opposition movements. Uighurs had been frequently arbitrarily arrested, tortured and ill-treated by the authorities in **Central Asia**, including **Kazakhstan**, and forcibly deported to China, where they faced ill-treatment, torture and the death penalty. There was concern that **Uzbekistan** might further clamp down on the country's internal opposition after the attacks of 11 September. In **Kyrgyzstan** detentions of suspected members of banned Islamic organizations increased and ethnic tensions exacerbated. **Tajikistan** continued to keep its borders closed to those fleeing fighting in Afghanistan.

In some countries asylum-seekers were forcibly returned after their asylum claims had been rejected in an unfair procedure. This was the case in **Sweden** when two Egyptian men were forcibly returned despite concerns that they would be at grave risk of torture and unfair trial in Egypt. In October, police from **Bosnia-Herzegovina** reportedly deported two dual Bosnian-Egyptian nationals to Egypt without formal extradition proceedings.

In June 2001, following **Belgium's** first trial based on universal jurisdiction, four Rwandese nationals, resident in Belgium, were convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for war crimes committed in the context of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. At the end of the year criminal complaints in the context of this legislation had been lodged with Belgian courts against leaders and members of past and present administrations in over 15 foreign states.

Despite this progress in the fight against impunity, **Italy** refused to implement an international warrant for the arrest of a Rwandese national resident in Italy wanted on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.

ANNUAL REPORT 2002.

EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS

Confirmed or possible extrajudicial executions were carried out in at least 5 countries

"DISAPPEARANCES"

People "disappeared" or remained "disappeared" from previous years in 4 countries.

TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

Victims of torture and ill-treatment by security forces, police and other state authorities were reported in 34 countries.

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

Confirmed or possible prisoners of conscience were held in 11 countries.

DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL

People were arbitrarily arrested and detained without charge or trial in 6 countries.

DEATH PENALTY

People were sentenced to death in 6 countries and executions were carried out in at least 4.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

Armed opposition groups committed serious human rights violations, such as deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians, torture and hostage taking in 9 countries.

Public Document

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