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CHINA: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USES THE INTERNET IN THE FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Amnesty International is posting on its Web Site [<http://www.amnesty.org>] an interactive presentation, designed to be downloaded onto a floppy disk, to commemorate the brutal crackdown seven years ago in Tiananmen Square.

“This is part of the organization's growing use of electronic media in the fight for human rights,” Amnesty International said today.

“Electronic media can cross international boundaries more easily than print, however, we are aware that many governments -- including China -- recognize this by trying to censor the Internet.”

“We hope that our presentation will reach a Chinese audience which may not have previously had access to information on international human rights standards and on human rights violations,” the organization said.

Amnesty International's disk presentation is easy to download and copy and can be used by anyone with access to a computer equipped with a floppy disk drive. It is being made available free of charge and with the express advice to copy and distribute it widely.

The disk is available for PC and Mac, and contains information in Chinese and English on universally-recognized basic rights and freedoms and on Amnesty International's concerns in China, pictures, music and a clear, colourful and striking interface. It also summarizes the cases of some victims of human rights violations in China and offers an opportunity to take action in support of them. It gives details of how to join Amnesty International and get further information on human rights in China and other countries.

Seven years after the 4 June 1989 crackdown, the Chinese authorities continue to unfairly detain, torture and harass people who call for basic guarantees of human rights. Earlier this year Amnesty International began a worldwide campaign on human rights in China. The launch of the disk is part of a week of activity surrounding the 4 June anniversary of the 1989 events.

On 31 May the organization released a directory of nearly 2,000 people detained on political grounds which will also be available on the Internet [*China: Repression in the 1990s - a directory of victims*, ASA 17/48/96].

Amnesty International has used the Internet to communicate its human rights campaigns to a worldwide audience since 1987. The organization's presence has developed from maintaining electronic mailing lists to publishing its reports on Web sites visited by thousands of people each day.

Experience has demonstrated that through the Internet many people have gained access to information on human rights, from Amnesty International as well as other organizations. In many cases these people would not have been able to access this information without the Internet. For example, during Amnesty International's campaign on human rights violations in Indonesia, the report *Power and Impunity* was swiftly downloaded from the Internet, translated into Bahasa Indonesia and reposted.

The organization is currently seeking funding for a fully interactive CD-Rom about human rights in China, for which the floppy disk is a taster; it has already received offers of contributions in kind from those in the industry.

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Copies of the disk can be obtained from the International Secretariat's Publications Program at 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 8DJ. Phone +44 171 413 5500