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Spain: ETA=s new killing campaign must end

Euskadi Ta Askatasuna must put an immediate end to its new campaign of deliberate killings of civilians, Amnesty International said today, in the wake of Sunday=s fatal shooting of a mayor and councillor in Durango (Vizcaya), in the Basque Country.

Jesds MarRa Pedrosa Urquiza, a member both of the ruling centre-right Popular Party (PP) and of a nationalist trade union, was the fifth person to be killed by ETA since the beginning of the year. He was the eighth councillor belonging to the ruling centre-right party to be singled out for assassination by the armed Basque group in the last five and a half years.

PP members have not, however, been the only target. Others killed in the first half of 2000 were Fernando Buesa Blanco, a Socialist Party (PSOE) official, and his police escort, Jorge Diez Elorza, killed in a car bomb explosion in February. A journalist, JosJ Luis L\pez de Lacalle, founder of the "Ermua Forum" peace movement, was shot dead in May.

A number of other journalists have been injured by incendiary devices or have received death threats, and attempts have been made to burn down newspaper offices. Other civilians have been injured in ETA-attributed car-bomb attacks.

Amnesty International is concerned not only about the intentional killings and attacks carried out by ETA against specific individuals or categories of civilians, but also by the numerous acts of intimidation and violence, sometimes life-threatening, connected with the "urban struggle" waged by radical nationalist groups reportedly linked to ETA. These have

persisted throughout 2000 in the three provinces of the Basque Country and Navarre.

Many different sectors of society have been the victims or targets of acts of sabotage, arson, firebombing and other acts of violence. They include journalists, bus drivers, political representatives, judicial figures, or their relatives, as well as law enforcement officers. Individuals have been threatened either directly or by street posters bearing their names crossed with bull=s-eyes and some of the threats have been followed by fatal attacks.

"The human rights abuses committed by ETA flout the principles of international humanitarian law and the dictates of public conscience," Amnesty International said, noting that such abuses are in no way less abominable than the human rights violations committed by governments when they carry out acts of torture, "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions.

In a report published last June, and in subsequent statements, the organization reiterated its unreserved condemnation of ETA=s human rights abuses. Amnesty International also called on groups reportedly involved in the "urban struggle" campaign to end all action that could endanger or threaten life, liberty and security of person.

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