

AI INDEX: MDE 12/10/96

18 APRIL 1996

EGYPT: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL STRONGLY CONDEMNNS THE KILLING OF 18 TOURISTS IN CAIRO

Amnesty International was appalled to learn that 18 Greek tourists were deliberately killed this morning outside a hotel in Cairo by four armed men.

Fourteen others, including an Egyptian man, were reportedly injured. Although no armed group has so far claimed responsibility for the massacre, since 1992 however scores of civilians, including foreign tourists and members of the Coptic Christian minority, have been deliberately killed by armed opposition groups in Egypt, particularly *al Gama'a al-Islamiya* (Islamic Group).

“We strongly condemn the deliberate killing of civilians by armed opposition groups,” Amnesty International said today. “Such killings are human rights abuses which should not be tolerated under any circumstances.”

The 18 Greeks killed were among a group of around 150 Greek holiday makers waiting inside and outside the Europa Hotel, in Giza on the way to the pyramids, to catch buses to go to Alexandria. The tourists were on an Easter visit to some Middle Eastern churches and other religious sites. They were in Israel and on Tuesday 16 April they arrived in Cairo. The four gunmen reportedly got out of a van and started firing at the tourists for several minutes before they got back to the van and drove away.

These latest killings bring the number of civilians killed in Egypt since January 1996 to at least 44.

ENDS\