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WEEKLY UPDATE SERVICE 38/91

Contained in this weekly update are external items on Martin Ennals, Haiti and Equatorial Guinea.

1. NEWS INITIATIVES - INTERNAL

African Charter - 21 October

An advice to editors on AI's activities to mark the fifth anniversary of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights coming into force has been sent to sections. The advice to editors is not embargoed, although it is intended to encourage specialist media to write about the charter on or around 21 October, African Human and People's Rights Day. The IS will be sending the advice to editors to media in Africa and specialist media in London, and section press officers are encouraged to contact their African specialist media as well. The IS is also having an informal briefing with agencies and other African specialists next week. If you want any more information, please call the IS.

Egypt - 23 October

Egypt - Ten years of torture MDE 12/18/91

News release to go with an external document on torture, including strong individual cases and photo material.

Peru - 20 or 21 November (date still to be decided)

Peru - Human rights in a climate of terror AMR 46/56/91

News release and feature article to go with research paper, to launch country campaign on Peru.

2. NWS 10/01/91 EXTERNAL
6 October 1991

INTERNAL

Martin Ennals, the first Secretary General of Amnesty International, died in Canada on Saturday 5 October. A résumé of his contribution to AI follows. The family would very much appreciate copies of any obituaries or articles that appeared in the press following his death. The Secretary General's office is compiling a file of these and would appreciate your sending clippings which it will present to the family.

There is to be a memorial service in London later in the year. We will notify sections in the Weekly Update once details are known. Sections, groups and individuals wishing to send condolences to his family should write to: Jackie Ennals, 38 North View, Tufnell Park Road, London N4 0QB, United Kingdom.

MARTIN ENNALS

Martin Ennals made one of the foremost contributions in the history of Amnesty International. He was the movement's first Secretary General, serving for 12 years from 1968 (when the post of Secretary General was first created) until 1980.

He was born in Walsall, England, on 27 July 1927. His career in international relations began with studies at the London School of Economics where he received a degree in Economics, specializing in international relations and international law. He joined UNESCO in 1951 and was appointed to administer the UNESCO Arab States Fundamental Education Centre in Egypt in 1954, returning to Paris in 1956 where he was attached to the Office of the Director-General.

Martin Ennals returned to the United Kingdom to become the General Secretary of the British National Council for Civil Liberties from 1960 until 1966. During this period he also helped establish refugee and community projects in Bechuanaland (now Botswana) and travelled widely in Southern and East Africa. He was a founder member of the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

In 1966 he began full-time work in race relations in Britain joining the government sponsored National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (NCCI). He resigned from the NCCI in protest against the British government's 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act which was designed to stop citizens of the United Kingdom and colonies in East Africa from exercising their legal rights to enter the United Kingdom.

In 1968 he was appointed Secretary General of Amnesty International, at a time when the organization was just beginning to emerge from its first major public controversy over torture by British forces in Aden (now

Yemen). As part of an organizational review in the same period, the post of Secretary General had been created and it was under Martin Ennals' leadership as its first Secretary General that the growing movement first adopted an international statute to regulate its democratic governance.

Under his period as Secretary General the public impact of Amnesty International made extraordinary advances, and the movement itself grew at an astonishing rate. When he joined the organization, its international budget was less than £20,000. The International Secretariat employed 19 people. There were 27 national sections and 850 groups. By 1980, the international budget had grown to £1,666,280. There were 150 staff in the International Secretariat. The movement counted 39 national sections and 2,200 groups.

"In 1970," wrote Martin Ennals in the Amnesty International Report for his last year in office, "the idea of the growth of Amnesty International into the type of structure or institution which exists in 1980 was unthinkable or unthought."

"The confirmation of the international standards of human rights spelled out first in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and later in the conventions and international covenants which came into effect in the latter half of the decade confirmed Amnesty International's absolute belief that despite differences of environment, human rights are universal," he said.

"In the definition of human rights there cannot be enemies and friends, rich or poor: only people."

During his years as Secretary General, and with the international stature of Amnesty International growing, Martin Ennals followed a punishing schedule of work, travel and public engagements that brought him face to face with heads of government and heads of state including the Shah of Iran and the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and numerous other officials before whom he appealed for the freedom of prisoners of conscience and fair treatment for political prisoners.

During the Ennals years, Amnesty International was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and the United Nations Human Rights Award, in the face of colourful denunciations of the organization by such figures as President Idi Amin of Uganda, President Sekou Toure of Guinea, President Hafizullah Amin of Afghanistan and the Premier of Queensland, Australia, Johannes Bjelke-Petersen.

Two of the great Amnesty International campaigns that mobilized hundreds of thousands of people worldwide in this period were the launch, in 1972, of a worldwide campaign for the Abolition of Torture. More than a million people signed an appeal circulated in 30 languages calling on the United Nations "to outlaw immediately the torture of prisoners throughout the world" -- a goal eventually achieved with the adoption in 1984 of an international Convention Against Torture. To combat the practice itself, the International Secretariat devised an Urgent Action network that could launch thousands of individual appeals on behalf of prisoners at risk - often within hours of the arrest when the victims were most at risk. That innovative approach set the tone for an ever-increasing ability to intervene in desperate cases: in the first six months of this

year the Urgent Action network (now involving more than 50,000 volunteers in 65 countries) went into action 385 times to help people in 69 countries.

The second major campaign launch in the Ennals years was the Campaign for the Abolition of the Death Penalty -- a cause he personally championed as Amnesty International debated becoming an abolitionist movement. The organization now runs a regular program of opposition to the death penalty and has published the most comprehensive study of its type on the subject: "When the State Kills" (1989). It points out that the tide of international opinion is changing: during the past decade, on average, at least one country a year has eliminated the death penalty for ordinary crimes or for all crimes, and today over 40 per cent -- nearly half-- the countries of the world have abolished the death penalty in law or practice.

"When Amnesty International meets the nineties, " wrote Martin Ennals in 1980, "it should be universally active both in working for prisoners and identifying prisoners to be assisted. The sophistication of impartiality must be accepted and appreciated by governments and opposition movements. Amnesty International is not and should not be a movement of dissidents or opposition elements in national internal affairs. Instead it should be working for the recognition that dissidents have rights and governments have the duty to protect their societies against abuses that result or may result in imprisonment, torture or death. To convince governments of this fact, which in principle they accept and to which they have in public committed themselves, is an amazing ambition."

The extent to which this ambition today seems not only plausible, but increasingly within reach, is in itself a tribute to the role that Martin Ennals played in putting human rights firmly on the international agenda.

Following his stint as Secretary General of Amnesty International, he continued his contribution to human rights, both at home and abroad, serving as adviser to the Greater London Council's police committee and then as head of the newly created International Alert. He was in Saskatoon, Canada, at the time of his death on Saturday 5 October 1991.

3. AFR 24/WU 01/91 EXTERNAL
9 October 1991

EQUATORIAL GUINEA: RELEASES AND FURTHER ARRESTS

Two prisoners of conscience in Equatorial Guinea were released on 15 August 1991, on the orders of the President on the 12th anniversary of his accession to power.

Julián Nguema Abogo and Jesús Ntutumu Nsong were among nine people convicted in August 1988 of attempting to overthrow the government of Equatorial Guinea. Three were subsequently released.

Their trial was grossly unfair, and the real reason for their arrest and imprisonment appeared to be their non-violent opposition to government policies. Amnesty International has welcomed the release of these two prisoners of conscience while it continues to call for the unconditional release of the remaining four defendants in the case, who remain prisoners of conscience: Pedro Bakal Mayé, Joaquín Elema Boringue, Gaspar Manana Okiri and Francisco Bonifacio Mbá Nguema.

Other political prisoners, including Sergeant Venancio Mikó, who was sentenced to death at an unfair trial in 1983 for plotting to overthrow the government, were also released in August 1991.

Despite these releases, there have also been many new arrests of suspected government opponents.

Equatorial Guinea is a one-party state: the Partido Democrático de Guinea Ecuatorial (PDGE), Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea, led by President Obiang Nguema is the only legal political party. Recently, the government has expressed a willingness to adopt a multi-party political system but at the same time the authorities have continued to arrest those who call for the legalization of all political parties.

Between late November 1990 and February 1991 dozens of people who called for a multi-party system were arrested and either imprisoned or placed under house arrest. Amnesty International knows of 12 who appear to have been unlawfully detained or restricted solely on account of their political views. One, Antonio Ebang Mbele Abang, former Vice-President of the Cámara de Representantes del Pueblo, the Equatorial Guinea parliament, was stripped of his functions and placed under house arrest for opposing the one-party system in November 1990.

In May 1991 Amnesty International learnt that at least 40 people had been arrested following the appearance of anonymous posters calling for the legalization of all political parties in the streets of Malabo and Bata. It seems that those arrested were released after a short period of time in prison or under house arrest. Amnesty International learnt the names of six of those detained in May, one of whom, Alfonso Nsué Mokuy, was reportedly re-arrested in August 1991 and is apparently still detained. He is a journalist imprisoned previously for expressing his political views.

At least four other people were reportedly arrested in mid-August 1991. They include the former Parliamentary Vice President, Antonio Ebang Mbele Abang, who is said to have been re-arrested and imprisoned on 16 August while under house arrest, for refusing to set up a political party allied to the ruling PDGE. These four people are still detained and have not yet been brought to trial.

Amnesty International is calling for the release of all those detained for exercising their right to express peacefully their political views, including both long-term convicted prisoners and recently arrested untried detainees.

Amnesty International also remains concerned about continuing reports of torture in Equatorial Guinea, including reports of one death in detention in early August 1991 as a result of torture. The organization is investigating these reports.

4. AMR 36/WU 01/91 EXTERNAL
9 October 1991

HAITI: HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS FOLLOWING COUP

Amnesty International is extremely concerned at reports of widespread human rights violations committed by the Haitian security forces since a coup d'état that deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide on Monday 30 September. These violations included a large number of extrajudicial executions, beatings and mass arrests without warrant.

In a letter to Brigadier General Raoul Cédras, Head of the Haitian Armed Forces, on 4 October, Amnesty International urged him to send clear instructions to the security forces to put a stop to human rights violations, to open thorough investigations into those that have occurred and to bring the perpetrators to justice. With regard to reports of mass arrests by the armed forces, Amnesty International has asked General Cédras to ensure that the physical safety of those arrested be guaranteed while in custody, that they be given prompt access to families and lawyers, be brought promptly before a judicial authority, and be released without delay unless charged with a recognizable criminal offence.

Reports of extrajudicial executions include the killing, on Monday 30 September, of Radio Caraïbe Director Jacques Caraïbe, after a group of soldiers arrived at his house, severely beat him in the presence of his family, and took him away to an unknown destination. His dead body was later found.

According to the information received by Amnesty International, security force agents have deliberately shot a large number of civilians in different sectors of Port-au-Prince, resulting in hundreds of dead and wounded. One such incident is reported to have taken place on 2 October in Cité Soleil, when soldiers shot and killed at least 30 people and wounded many more, apparently in reprisal for an earlier attack by a crowd on the police station in which at least two policemen were killed.

Amnesty International is further concerned at reports of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment by the security forces. According to information received by the organization, some of the people who were at the National Palace with President Aristide on Monday 30 September, including Captain Danny Toussaint, and the Chief of Police Pierre Chérubin, were subjected to beatings and threatened with death by the security forces.

Other reports of concern to Amnesty International are those of the mass arrest without warrant of scores of youths in the districts of Carrefour and Carrefour Feuille by uniformed military men and armed civilians. In another reported incident, on the evening of 3 October soldiers forcibly entered many houses in the Delmas 32 area, taking away young people.

In a recent incident Evans Paul, mayor of Port-au-Prince, was arrested and severely beaten at the Maïs Gaté airport on 7 October, where

he sought to meet a delegation of the Organization of American States. He was subsequently released and has reportedly gone into hiding.

Amnesty International's concerns under the administration of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide related to the imprisonment and prolonged detention without due process of political opponents or members of previous administrations, and the extreme length of judicial proceedings against political prisoners, such as Serge Beaulieu, director of Radio Liberté, arrested in January 1991.

Amnesty International was also concerned that the government of President Aristide may have condoned acts of violence carried out by angry crowds against those considered to be opposed to the government.