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# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 86/94

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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - RWANDA, CHINA

NEWS INITIATIVES - INTERNAL

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

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## TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

**\*\*China - 5 May\*\*** - SEE NEWS SERVICE 81/94

News service item enclosed is embargoed for 5 May to go with document: "China: Death Penalty Figures recorded for 1993", AI Index: ASA 17/15/94.

## FORTHCOMING NEWS INITIATIVES

Annual Report - 7 July - SEE NEWS SERVICE 51/94

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26 APRIL 1994

### RWANDA'S MILITARY AND GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES COMPLICIT IN ATROCITIES

Amnesty International appealed today to military and government authorities and political leaders in Rwanda to condemn strongly and publicly the on-going massacres and take immediate steps to stop them.

Contrary to the common perception that ethnic in-fighting and anarchy are responsible for the tens of thousands of deaths in Rwanda, officials in the security forces and the government are ordering or condoning the continuing massacres, according to Amnesty International.

"The leaders responsible for these atrocities should be identified and held to account and the international community should make it clear that the killers will not escape justice," said the organization.

"If the conflict had been solely on ethnic lines, then the Hutu-dominated armed forces would not have extrajudicially executed several Hutu government ministers, including Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana, and other opposition leaders."

Each day brings new reports of massacres and atrocities in Rwanda. Amnesty International today received news that government-sponsored militia and security forces are killing individuals selected from a group of more than 5,000 people who had fled to a sports stadium to avoid the fighting in the southwest town of Cyangugu.

The refugees, who have no food or shelter, are taken away at regular intervals to be executed. Tens of thousands of civilians are reported to have been killed since former President Juvénal Habyarimana was killed in a 6 April plane crash.

Since the war between the *Front patriotique rwandais*, or Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), and government forces began in October 1990, Amnesty International has made numerous appeals and recommendations to security and government authorities to prevent killings and bring those responsible to justice. The UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary execution has also made similar appeals.

Instead of implementing these recommendations, late President Juvénal Habyarimana's ruling party, the *Mouvement républicain national pour la démocratie et le développement* (MRND), Republican National Movement for Democracy and Development, armed and mobilized its supporters -- especially the party youth wing known locally as *Interahamwe* -- to attack and kill known or perceived RPF sympathizers.

During the past two years, the MRND has been allied to the *Coalition pour la défense de la république* (CDR), Coalition for the Defence of the Republic, exclusively composed of Hutu. CDR's own youth wing, known locally as *Impuzanugambizi*, has orchestrated a violent campaign against any Hutu supporting the Arusha Peace Accord, which includes sharing power with the Tutsi-dominated RPF, and all Tutsi. More than 2,300 people had been killed with complete impunity before the latest wave of killing.

In recent months Amnesty International has received credible reports that military and government authorities have been supplying military weapons to *Interahamwe* and *Impuzanugambizi* now being used in their killing spree. The current massacres in Kigali and other parts of the country are being carried out mainly by supporters or sympathizers of the MRND and CDR, in conjunction with members of the security forces, particularly those of Presidential Guard, Gendarmerie and other units of the Rwandese armed forces. Most killings are politically-motivated -- to deprive the RPF and parties opposed to the MRND and CDR of any supporters or sympathizers.

**It is unclear whether the Secretary General of the MRND, Joseph Nzirorera, and the leader of the CDR, Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza, support or oppose the killings. However, they are not known to have condemned the massacres or called on supporters to stop them. The Presidential Guard is said to be under the command of one Major Ntabakunza, who is also commander of Kanombe battalion in Kigali. Local government officials are said to be encouraging MRND and CDR supporters to kill opponents. Some opposition officials who refused to participate in the killings, such as the Prefects of Butare and Kibungo prefectures, are reported to have been killed.**

**"The international community misunderstands the cause of the killings. They are not solely ethnic. There is a campaign to eliminate any Hutu, particularly those from southern Rwanda, who are opposed to the campaign and to exterminate all Tutsi. That is why they have killed Hutu government ministers and other officials, while some members of opposition parties have joined the side of the killers and their lives are not endangered", a Hutu who recently fled from Rwanda has told Amnesty International.**

**Foreign governments also bear some responsibility for the massacres which are going on. France, South Africa and Egypt are known to have supplied to the government of Rwanda weapons which have almost certainly been used to carry out extrajudicial executions.**

**The United Nations (UN) decision on 21 April to withdraw most UN peacekeepers from Rwanda left many defenceless Rwandese civilians in the hands of the RPF forces. This may give these civilians the appearance of partiality to the RPF, which may put them at grave risk if the RPF ever withdraws from areas it controls. Additionally, the withdrawal of the UN and other foreign assistance groups leaves Rwanda with few independent observers to report on human rights abuses or protect potential victims.**

**The RPF launched the war in 1990 from neighbouring Uganda which repeatedly served as its rear base and supply line. The RPF has itself carried out numerous human rights abuses, reportedly including revenge killings of civilians carried out by the RPF since 7 April. Amnesty International calls on RPF commanders to prevent their own combatants from carrying out deliberate and arbitrary killings of unarmed civilians.**

**ENDS/**

**News Service 86/94**

**AI INDEX: ASA 17/WU 07/94  
EMBARGOED FOR 5 MAY 1994**

**CHINA: HIGHEST RECORDED DEATH SENTENCE FIGURES PROBABLY FALL DRASTICALLY SHORT OF THE TRUTH SAYS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**

Amnesty International's death sentence figures for 1993 in China, published today, are the highest the organization has ever recorded in one year, with at least 2,564 people sentenced to death and more than 1,419 of them known to have been executed.

"Even these figures probably fall drastically short of the true number which is considered to be a 'state secret' by Chinese officials," Amnesty International said.

An indication of the scale of executions is that in just one day -- 25 November 1993 -- 140 people were executed in 17 different cities around the central Chinese province of Henan. The majority were sentenced to death for violent crimes, but many were also executed for non-violent offences such as embezzlement or theft, which in other countries are punishable only with fines or imprisonment.

In the May 1994 edition of an illustrated biannual log of death sentences in China, Amnesty International lists the details known to the organization of death sentences from July to December 1993. Among them are prisoners convicted of non-violent crimes ranging from such things as accepting bribes to selling fake chemical fertilizer.

Amnesty International's figures for the past few years show that the number of death sentences and executions rise dramatically during anti-crime campaigns. They also rise on selected key dates such as 26 June, International Day against Drug Abuse and Trafficking, and in January, when the Chinese New Year festival is approaching, as a warning to potential offenders.

The same pattern emerged in the run-up to 1 October, China's National Day, which partly explains a dramatic increase in Amnesty International's figures for September 1993.

Another factor accounting for the high number of death sentences in September was the launch by the authorities of a nationwide anti-corruption campaign in the second half of August. As a result, dozens of officials have recently been shot for crimes ranging from bribe-taking to extortion and embezzlement.

China stands out for the extent to which it uses capital punishment. According to Amnesty International's records in 1992, China accounted for 63 per cent of the world's executions that year. Yet there is no evidence in China or elsewhere to show that executions act as a deterrent and lead to less crime.

Amnesty International reiterates its call made in September 1993 that, in the absence of a political decision to abolish the death penalty in China at present, the authorities stop all executions until legal procedures have been revised to ensure all defendants have a fair trial.

The organization also calls for an end to ill-treatment of prisoners on death row, especially the use of hand and foot shackles and the virtual incommunicado detention of such prisoners. Amnesty International also calls for a ban on the use of organs from executed prisoners for organ transplants without their free fully-informed consent.

The human rights organization unconditionally opposes the death penalty on the grounds that it constitutes the ultimate form of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and violates the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**ENDS/**