
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 122/94

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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - DENMARK, ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

PLEASE NOTE: Maud Bredero, Press Officer of AI Netherlands, has offered to hold a three-day press officers meeting in Amsterdam at the end of August or early September. All press officers are welcome and suggested dates are three working days in the week of 22-26 August or 30 August - 2 September. Maud is working on an agenda, but some initial ideas on issues to discuss are: Indonesia Campaign; Sudan Campaign; Turkey media work; AV work. If there are subjects you wish to be added to the agenda, please let Maud know. Please contact Maud as soon as possible if you wish to attend on
Tel: +31 20 626 44 36.

NEWS INITIATIVES - INTERNAL

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

USA - 14 June - SEE NEWS SERVICE 114/94

Turkey - 22 June - SEE NEWS SERVICES 118/94 AND 104/94

Pakistan - 27 July - PLEASE NOTE NEW DATE. SEE NEWS SERVICE 81/94

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

****Denmark - 21 June**** - PLEASE NOTE ANOTHER CHANGE OF EMBARGO DATE. Apologies for the numerous changes to the embargo date. This is the final date. SEE NEWS SERVICES 116/94 AND 105/94

Mozambique - 23 June - SEE ENCLOSED ITEM, SEE NEWS SERVICE 115/94

Myanmar - 20 July - SEE NEWS SERVICE 99/94

FORTHCOMING NEWS INITIATIVES

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

AI Index: EUR 18/WU 03/94

EMBARGOED FOR 0001 HRS GMT, TUESDAY 21 JUNE 1994

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALLS ON DANISH AUTHORITIES TO STOP POLICE ILL-TREATMENT

Amnesty International today released a report highlighting incidents of police ill-treatment in Denmark in recent years and calling for an immediate ban of the "leg-lock".

In its report the organization describes a pattern of ill-treatment by police, often involving the plainclothes *Uropatrulje* or "unrest patrol", during violent demonstrations and during a 1992-1993 police crackdown on hashish dealing in Christiania, an alternative community in Copenhagen. Criminal charges have not been brought against the police officers responsible.

"By repeatedly failing to hold independent investigations into allegations of ill-treatment and by failing to bring those responsible to justice, the Danish authorities are effectively giving the green light for police to act with impunity", Amnesty International said.

Many of the victims of ill-treatment were subjected to the "leg-lock", a painful and degrading form of restraint systematically used by the Danish police -- to Amnesty International's knowledge the only police force in Western Europe to use this restraint method.

During the police operation in Christiania, hundreds of people allege they were unjustifiably searched, detained or arrested and many of them were restrained by the "leg-lock". This involves detainees being handcuffed behind the back, legs bent, one foot wedged against the opposite knee and the other foot pushed under the handcuffs.

"Many victims of the leg-lock have suffered nerve damage lasting for months as well as abrasions or swelling of the wrists or hands," Amnesty International said. "And we think it's high time the authorities ban it."

The 30-page report also documents the organization's concerns about police actions in what has been described as the most violent incident in Denmark since the Second World War on 18-19 May 1993.

Police in riot gear and plain clothes shot directly into a crowd during a violent demonstration in Copenhagen and at least 11 people, mostly bystanders, were injured by the bullets. Fortunately, none died. A year later the circumstances in which police resorted to potentially lethal force remain unclear.

On the night of 18 May 1993, Alexander Borgstrøm walked to the scene of the demonstration to see what the commotion was about. Minutes later, a police bullet shattered his jaw and bottom teeth, then lodged in his neck. After extensive surgery, police took him to prison where he remained in isolation until released on court order. All charges against him were dropped.

In another case, a man known only as "Anders" admits he threw stones at police before his arrest at the 18-19 May demonstration. Video footage shows two plainclothes police officers forcing him to the ground, then dragging him by his legs 25 metres down the street over broken glass and loose cobblestones and a third plainclothes officer hitting him on the head with a truncheon.

"We do not in any way condone violence against police or property, nor do we oppose lawful use of reasonable force by police officers", Amnesty International said. "But ill-treating those taken into custody does not preserve law and order, it destroys it."

While "Anders" was on the ground being handcuffed during the 18-19 May demonstration, an officer reportedly stated, "Do you remember Benjamin? That could just as well be you." He was apparently referring to Benjamin Schou, an 18-year-old youth who suffocated

and had a heart attack while being arrested during 1992 new year celebrations in Copenhagen. He now lies in a nursing home in a vegetative state from which he will never recover.

Amnesty International has received other reports of police ill-treating detainees during routine arrests, including a 50-year-old woman who was punched in the face after being arrested for not appearing in court. She failed to appear because she was bedridden due to a back injury.

Along with the ban on the "leg-lock", Amnesty International calls on the Danish authorities to set up an independent commission of inquiry to examine the use of force and restraint by police as well as the role of plainclothes officers.

In all cases of ill-treatment by police the organization said the allegations should be independently and impartially investigated and those responsible should be brought to justice. Victims should also be compensated for their injuries and ill-treatment.

"It is more by luck than good police practice that there have been no deaths as a result of some of the incidents cited in our report," said Amnesty International. "The Danish authorities must make sure that all law enforcement officials carry out their functions according to international standards."

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9 JUNE 1994

ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DEEPLY CONCERNED AT APPARENT EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS OF PALESTINIANS

The recent shooting of two alleged members of Hamas by Israeli undercover police is the latest example of what appears to have been an extrajudicial execution of Palestinians by Israeli forces.

"This latest report again suggests that Israeli forces have shot Palestinians rather than attempting to arrest them", Amnesty International said.

Israeli army sources have confirmed that Israeli forces killed Zuhayr Radwan 'Abd al-Jawad Farrah, a 30-year-old computer studies student and 'Abd al-Mun'em Muhammad Yusuf Naji, aged 25, on 31 May. 'Abd al-Mun'em Naji was sought by the Israeli authorities in connection with the killing of Noam Cohen, a member of the General Security Service. Amnesty International has expressed its concerns about the shooting to the Israeli Government.

Eyewitnesses saw the two men get off a bus in the al-Ram district of Jerusalem. Several members of the Israeli forces in civilian dress, who had got out of a van behind the bus, called out to them. When the two Palestinians turned round they were shot, apparently without warning. And according to eyewitnesses, members of the undercover unit then went up to them and turned them over firing further shots into their heads.

While Palestinian witnesses are reported as describing the two as unarmed, the Israeli army has apparently said that a loaded pistol was found at the site of the killing.

Amnesty International is calling for full, prompt and impartial investigations -- consistent with international standards -- into all such killings and that anyone found responsible for abuses be brought to justice.

This is the second time this year alone that Amnesty International has expressed its concern to the Israeli Government at shootings of Palestinians by Israeli undercover forces. In April, the human rights organization expressed concern at the apparently unjustifiable killing on 28 March of six Palestinians affiliated to *Fatah* in Jabalia Refugee Camp in the Gaza Strip by Israeli undercover forces. No response has yet been received from the authorities.

"These incidents highlight either serious inadequacies in the official guidelines on opening fire or gross violations of those guidelines by Israeli forces", Amnesty International said.

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