
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 150/94

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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - SUDAN, GAZA STRIP AND JERICHO, SYRIA

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Please DESTROY the UK document mailed to you last week. We have received legal advice and the Joy Gardner case has had to be completely removed. An altered version is available from the UK research team at the IS. There will be no news item to go with it as it is no longer of great media interest. The new document has been given to a few key UK journalists today.

PLEASE NOTE: The Sudan item is embargoed until Monday 18 July. Also, the United Kingdom report that was sent out to press officers should be destroyed. A new document has been written and is available from the press office if needed, but the now-limited nature means we do not foresee a great deal of media interest outside of the United Kingdom. A targeted mailing of the document will be sent soon to selected Asia and Middle East media.

PLEASE NOTE: Please send Paula feedback on any media coverage you managed to get for the Turkey news release last month.

PLEASE ALSO NOTE: Please also send us copies of your Annual Report news releases if you adapted them to suit media in your country. We are evaluating the usefulness of the materials we produced and working out ways of making it more media-friendly. Thanks, Paula.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Pakistan - 27 July - SEE NEWS SERVICE 81/94

Myanmar - 20 July - SEE NEWS SERVICE 99/94

India - 16 August - SEE NEWS SERVICE 129/94

Kosovo - 20 September - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

Algeria - first week of October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

France - second week of October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

North and South Korea - ON HOLD - SEE NS 146/94

Sri Lanka - 15 July - SEE NS 146/94

Brazil - 14 September - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

INTERNAL
AUDIO-VISUAL NEWS

We are conducting an evaluation of the Annual Report ENR and would therefore like to know how it was received in your country. In particular, we would appreciate any comments you may have regarding:

- 1) The new format (of "A" and "B" Rolls);**
- 2) Technical quality;**
- 3) Usefulness of interviews with AI people;**
- 4) Overall length;**
- 5) Usefulness of French and Spanish versions;**
- 6) Appropriateness of footage selected;**

Please also list the TV stations which used the material, if relevant. Thank you. Adam Lloyd

AI Index: MDE 15/WU 05/94
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AREAS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY: DEATH IN CUSTODY

The recent death of a man held in Gaza prison highlights the urgent need for the Palestinian Authority to bring in clear procedures governing arrest, detention and interrogation in the Gaza Strip and Jericho area, Amnesty International said.

"Introducing such procedural safeguards in law and practice now would greatly reduce the risk of human rights violations," Amnesty International said.

The organization welcomed the announcement that an investigation had been opened into the death in custody on 6 July 1994 of Farid Hashem Abu Jarbu', aged 28, but asked the Palestinian Authority to make sure that the investigation would be consistent with international standards. Those standards would require a thorough, prompt and impartial investigation, and a written report on the methods and findings should be made within a reasonable time, and made public immediately.

The human rights organization said the Palestinian Authority which has jurisdiction over the Gaza Strip and Jericho area should take steps in line with international standards to require that:

- anyone arrested is promptly informed of any charges against him;
- detainees have prompt access to families, lawyers, medical doctors and be presented swiftly before a judge; and that
- no-one should be subjected to any form of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Farid Abu Jarbu' was arrested on 26 June 1994 and shortly afterwards was taken to Gaza prison, apparently on suspicion of having collaborated with the Israeli authorities. He was reportedly arrested without an arrest warrant being produced.

During his detention it appears that Farid Abu Jarbu' was not allowed to see either a lawyer or to family members. On 7 July, when his family received his body, they apparently noticed injuries on his body, which also appeared to have undergone an autopsy.

Freih Abu Middain, who holds the Justice portfolio in the Palestinian Authority, has reportedly confirmed that Farid Abu Jarbu' died as a result of violence and that an investigation has been opened into this incident. Three Palestinians are reported to have been arrested, one interrogator and two soldiers, and to be facing criminal charges in a criminal court.

Amnesty International is also seeking details of the trial proceedings faced by the three Palestinian officials arrested in connection with this death in custody.

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**AI INDEX: MDE 24/WU 03/94 GOODNEWS
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SYRIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS FREED

At least 70 Syrian political prisoners held by the government in detention without charge or trial have been released, Amnesty International said.

The freed men include prisoners of conscience, such as 'Ali al-Sarim, who was released at the end of May after 10 years in detention. Eleven other men were released on 3 July after 10 months of incommunicado detention. They had been arrested at the end of August 1993, shortly after attending the funeral procession of Salah Jadid, a former prisoner of conscience who died in custody on 19 August after almost 23 years in detention without charge or trial.

The human rights organization welcomes these releases and has called on the Syrian government to take similar steps to look into the cases of all remaining political prisoners with a view to releasing those detained for the non-violent expression of their conscientiously held beliefs and ensuring the fair trial or release of all other political detainees.

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SUDAN: PEACE TALKS MUST GUARANTEE HUMAN RIGHTS INTO ANY AGREEMENT

On the first day of peace talks aimed at ending more than a decade of conflict in Sudan, Amnesty International warned that the war won't end until human rights violations in the country stop.

Calling on both the Sudan government and both factions of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to build human rights guarantees into any ceasefire and negotiated peace agreement, the organization said:

"Human rights protection must be the foundation of any lasting peace in Sudan -- as long as human rights issues are ignored the war will continue."

In a recent letter written to the warring parties and the Inter-Government Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) countries that are mediating the talks, the organization said that one immediate step that should be taken is having international monitors observing human rights violations in Sudan's war zones.

Last month, two Amnesty International investigators visited Sudan and found an appalling level of human rights abuses committed by both sides in the war-torn south and Nuba mountains.

"The government is following a scorched earth policy along the railway line linking north and south, deliberately killing civilians and destroying villages and crops," charged the human rights organization. "The behaviour of members within the SPLA is little better. In recent clashes between factions in the Upper Nile area, SPLA-United commanders rendered tens of thousands of civilians homeless and dependent on relief food."

Amnesty International's representatives met Dr Riek Machar, leader of SPLA-United, at Ulang village on the Sobat river in Upper Nile. Ulang was completely destroyed in April in fighting between Nuer groups which involved commanders and troops from within SPLA-United fighting each other.

"There is nothing left of Ulang save two rows of mud-brick buildings with leaking roofs. Every hut has been burnt to the ground and thousands of people have fled to the neighbouring bush, their cattle and grain looted. It is raining heavily on people with no shelter and no capacity to rebuild their homes because there is little thatching grass at this time of year."

The administrative town of Nasir has been similarly destroyed as have villages towards Jekou in the east and Akobo further south. People throughout this area are now totally dependent on famine foods collected in the wild and food relief provided by the UN's Operation Lifeline Sudan.

Amnesty International's representatives visited Akon in SPLA-Mainstream territory, an area in which both the government and the SPLA have been responsible for abuses. At Akon they met the SPLA commander for Alek county and found hundreds of civilians from the Luo ethnic group displaced in late May from the area surrounding the railway line which runs south of the government-controlled town of Aweil.

"These people, ordinary villagers, had flocked to the railway hoping to receive food from a UN train they believed to be approaching," the representatives reported. "Instead they encountered a military train flanked by government soldiers and Popular Defence Force (PDF) militia. In shootings at Panjap, Mordit, Gana and Kanji scores of people are reported to have been killed for political reasons."

Similar incidents, involving abduction of children and looting by the PDF, are reported every time a government train passes and also have been detailed in reports by the UN Commission on Human Rights' Special Rapporteur on Sudan, the Hungarian lawyer Gaspar Biro.

"Assaults on villagers at this time of year have the effect of disrupting the agricultural cycle by preventing planting and cultivation creating long-term problems for the population and yet another burden for the UN's relief operation. This appears to be a deliberate policy on the part of the government."

SPLA commanders in northern Bahr al-Ghazal are reported to have arrested local officials from the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SRRA), the SPLA-Mainstream's relief wing, apparently because they tried to prevent the theft of relief aid by the SPLA. Most appear to have been released but Amnesty International remains concerned about the fate of one man, Mading Deng, who has not been seen since he was detained.

The war is only one dimension to the continuing human rights disaster in Sudan. Before visiting SPLA-held territory, Amnesty International had initially hoped to visit Khartoum and Juba but the authorities indicated that a visit would not be appropriate until later in the year.

There have been scores of arrests of government political opponents in northern Sudan in recent weeks. Trade unionists and members of left-wing parties have been detained, among them the renowned Sudanese poet Majhoub Sharif.

Umma Party officials, including Sudan's former Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi and at least 10 army officers, have been arrested and accused of involvement in a plot to assassinate the leader of the National Islamic Front, the ideological force behind the military government. Two Umma Party members arrested in late May, 'Abd al-Rahman Farah and Hamad Omar Bagadi, are reported to have been hospitalized because of torture. Sadiq al-Mahdi was released on 3 July but many others remain in custody.

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