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## Dramatic deterioration of human rights in Pakistan

At least 300 political figures have been arrested in Pakistan since the government announced its decision to detain the leaders of most of the country's political parties. Censorship has been imposed, strikes banned and elections postponed indefinitely. Following the announcement on 16 October there has also been a sharp increase in the number of cruel, inhuman and degrading punishments handed down by the country's military courts.



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According to the Pakistan press in the two weeks since the government crackdown on 16 October, at least 80 people were sentenced to be flogged. In all cases the sentences were carried out immediately in public, some of them administered by "mobile military courts". However, reliable observers estimate that in the same period there were at least 200 public floggings. In several cases the protective coverings usually applied to the victim's lower back to shield the kidneys from permanent damage were not used.

Even before the latest arrests, there were already several thousand political prisoners known to be in jail in Pakistan under martial law provisions.

Most had been tried and convicted by military courts without the possibility of appeal to a civil court and without even the right of being defended by a lawyer.

In a public letter to President ZIA-ul-Haq on 1 November, AI expressed its grave concern at the dramatic deterioration of the human rights situation in the country and called for the immediate and uncondi-

tional release of those arrested since 16 October.

AI also expressed its dismay that following an amendment to the country's constitution, the powers of the civil courts to protect prisoners from infringements of their human rights had been further eroded.

The Constitution (Second Amendment) Order, announced on 16 October, prevents Pakistan's civil courts from reviewing the decisions of the military courts, whose verdicts are now final.

The letter also pointed out that new martial law legislation had further widened the powers of the military

## Dissenters on trial in China

An official newspaper in Peking announced on 6 November that human rights activist WEI Jingsheng (see page 3), who had been sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment on 16 October, had lost his appeal in Peking High People's Court.

A woman activist, FU Yuehua, was also brought to trial on 17 October but her trial was adjourned at the end of the day's hearing for "further investigation". She had been arrested on 18 January, a few days after taking part in peasant demonstrations in Peking (March Newsletter).

courts, enabling them to try cases that were previously only within the jurisdiction of the civil courts.

Implementation of the constitutional amendment could exceed the limitations on martial law determined by Pakistan's Supreme Court in a judgment in November 1977. The court ruled that martial law had a legal basis only so long as the civil courts retained the right "to judge the validity of any act or action of the martial law authorities".

The Supreme Court had validated the proclamation of martial law in July 1977 only to the extent that this was "for a temporary period and for a specified objective" which was "the restoration of law and order and normalcy in the country and the earliest possible holding of free and fair elections".

AI called on President Zia to abolish all trials of civilians before military courts and to immediately restore the supervisory jurisdiction of civil courts over military hearings.

AI has repeatedly pressed the Pakistan government to set up an independent review of the cases of all political prisoners held without trial, to immediately release all those against whom there was no evidence that they had committed criminal offences and to halt all floggings and threatened amputations□

## News in Brief

**Ghana**

Three days before the return to civilian rule in Ghana on 24 September, the military government of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) declared an amnesty for 258 people detained under previous military regimes. All people sentenced to terms of imprisonment for political offences received "free, absolute and unconditional pardons". All people sentenced to death, excepting those given this sentence by the AFRC's own Special Courts, are reported to have had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment.

**Ivory Coast**

Thirteen students who had been held in military camps since August 1978 were released by the Ivorian authorities on 25 September. They were held on suspicion of sympathizing with a banned student organization, after political pamphlets had been distributed in the capital, Abidjan. The government cancelled their scholarships to colleges and universities in France, forcibly conscripted them into the army, where they are believed to have undergone a particularly rigorous form of "training", and allowed them no contact with the outside world for six months.

**Mali**

Four people were given prison sentences ranging from six months to four years on 2 October by a Bamako criminal court for "offending the Head of State". The prisoners, Doctor Mamadou GOLOGO, Idrissa DIAKITE, Abdoul Gatta BA and Oumar SENGARE, had been arrested in early April with four others after a pamphlet, which criticized the workings of the country's sole political party, the *Union Démocratique du Peuple Malien* (the Democratic Union of Malian People), had been produced.

Two of the detainees are reported to have been tortured and beaten in the first week after their arrest. *AI's* request to be allowed to send a trial observer was never acknowledged. Because an adjournment was denied, only one defence lawyer could attend.

**United States**

Jesse BISHOP, convicted of killing a man during a 1977 casino robbery, became the first prisoner executed in the State of Nevada in nearly 20 years when he was sent to the gas chamber on 22 October. All mandatory appeals in his case had been rejected □

## Czechoslovakia

### Human rights activists convicted

Six Czechoslovak human rights activists, including playwright Vaclav HAVEL, were convicted of subversion and given prison sentences of up to 5 years on 23 October, after a two-day trial in Prague.

The six, members of the unofficial Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS), had prepared and disseminated documents on cases in which they believed other Czechoslovak citizens had been denied their rights.

Petr UHL, an engineer, was sentenced to 5 years; Vaclav Havel to 4½ years; Vaclav BENDA, philosopher and mathematician, to 4 years; Otta BEDNAROVA and Jiri DIENSTBIER, both journalists, to 3 years; and Dana NEMCOVA, a psychologist, received a 2-year suspended sentence.

Although the trial attracted considerable attention in Czechoslovakia and abroad, it was closed to the general public and to foreign journalists and observers.

An *AI* observer, Austrian lawyer Henry GOLDMANN, sought to attend the trial but was denied admission to the courtroom. He was however able to interview relatives of the accused and other people who were present at the trial. After studying his report, the text of the indictment and related information, *AI* sent appeals to

President Gustav HUSAK and to Czechoslovak legal and judicial authorities, expressing the belief that the prosecution had not substantiated the charge that the accused acted with the intention of subversion, and that they were in fact sentenced for exercising their right to freedom of expression and that they did not have a fair trial.

*AI* asked President Husak to grant amnesty to the prisoners and to order an end to proceedings against five of their associates who are in pre-trial detention.

The indictment cited the fact that one of the accused made documents on human rights violations available to two *AI* members, and it accused *AI* of "spreading slanders about Czechoslovakia". *AI* has rejected the accusation of slander and has said it followed its usual practice of publicly reporting the cases of individual prisoners of conscience wherever they were held.

The documents cited, *AI* said, included statements that the Committee had submitted to the Czechoslovak government and that had been sent abroad. At the time the statements were given to *AI* members, the texts were already known abroad. *AI* added that nothing in the statements "could be construed as incitement to violence or subversion" □

## United Kingdom

### Gov't threatens refugee program

Britain has announced the closing of a five-year-old program under which it accepted refugees from Latin America, where exile is often the only alternative to political imprisonment. Home Secretary William WHITELOW told parliament on 29 October that the government would only consider individual applications where there was a strong indication that the United Kingdom was a natural choice of country for resettlement.

*AI* wrote to Mr Whitelaw the next day, urging the government to reconsider. *AI* said in the letter that a continuing pattern of arbitrary arrest, torture, political murder and other violations of human rights meant that a significant number of Latin Americans still had to leave their countries. It was not *AI's* policy to encourage exile, but "when this is

the only alternative to torture, murder or long-term imprisonment without trial, we would hope that governments who do respect human rights would not close their borders to the potential victims."

Reducing the possibilities for resettlement could also discourage countries that provided temporary refugee to asylum seekers, the letter said.

An estimated 3,000 people entered the United Kingdom under the program, which permitted the granting of asylum on a case-by-case basis to victims of political persecution. The program was designed for refugees from Chile when it began early in 1974, after the military coup in that country, but it was later expanded to cover other Latin Americans □

# Campaign for Prisoners of the Month



Each of the people whose story is told below is a prisoner of conscience. Each has been arrested because of his or her religious or political beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin or language. None has used or advocated violence. Their continuing detention is a violation of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. International appeals can help to secure the release of these prisoners or to improve their detention conditions. In the interest of the prisoners, letters to the authorities should be worded carefully and courteously. You should stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. In no circumstances should communications be sent to the prisoner.

## WEI Jingsheng, *People's Republic of China*

A 29-year-old electrician at Peking Zoological Garden and editor of an unofficial journal was sentenced in October to 15 years' imprisonment and a further three years' deprivation of civil rights after being convicted by a Peking court of "counter-revolutionary" offences.

Before his arrest on 29 March 1979, WEI Jingsheng had been actively involved in the "human rights movement" which started in Peking in the autumn of 1978. He was the main editor of an unofficial journal, *Exploration*, which published articles critical of many aspects of political life in China. In December 1978 Wei Jingsheng published an essay entitled "The Fifth Modernization" in which he argued that China needed not only a modernization of the economy but also a political modernization: democracy.

At his trial on 16 October Wei Jingsheng was charged with conducting "counter-revolutionary activities" and "passing military secrets to a foreigner". The second charge referred to information about the Sino-Vietnamese conflict which Wei Jingsheng was accused of having given to a foreigner in February while the conflict was still going on. According to dissident groups in Peking, however, the information could hardly be considered secret because it had been published in the *Reference News*, a magazine circulated to many cadres in China.

The charge that Wei Jingsheng engaged in "counter-revolutionary activities" referred to his publishing and writing activities. All information available indicates that he has been convicted for exercising his constitutional rights to freedom of speech, publication and association.

Please write courteously-worded appeals for the immediate release of Wei Jingsheng to: His Excellency Hua Guofeng, Premier, Peking, People's Republic of China.

## Obert Mpangele MABUZA, *Swaziland*

A veteran politician and leader of the small Swaziland United Front (SUF) has been detained without trial since 7 October 1978. Obert Mpangele MABUZA has been held at Matsapha prison under a series of administrative detention orders.

Under Swaziland law, the Prime Minister is empowered to order the detention without trial of any person for up to 60 days, but these orders are often renewed as soon as they expire — resulting in continuous detention without trial. This practice has become increasingly common in Swaziland in the last two years. No courts may challenge the validity of any detention order and detainees have no right to an appeal or review of their case.

Obert Mpangele Mabuza was detained three weeks before the first general election to be held in Swaziland since the Head of State, King Sobhuza II, suspended the Independence Constitution and dissolved parliament in April 1973. Prior to the election, which took place on 27 October 1978, a law was introduced establishing a new parliament. Under this law, any person who had been detained for 60 days or more was expressly disqualified from standing as a member of parliament until at least two years after his release.

The election, in which political parties like the SUF were not permitted to participate, was conducted without any registration of voters or political campaigning and without a secret ballot.

In August *AI* received information that conditions at Matsapha prison had deteriorated. Detainees are now said to be held incommunicado and to be denied reading material.

Please write courteously-worded letters appealing for the immediate release of Obert Mpangele Mabuza to: Senator Benjamin Nsibandze, Deputy Prime Minister, PO Box 57, Mbabane, Swaziland.

## HOOI Chin Han, *Malaysia*

Ten years ago this month HOOI Chin Han was arrested under the Malaysian Internal Security Act (ISA). He has been held without trial ever since under successive two-year detention orders.

At the time of his arrest in December 1969, Hooi Chin Han, aged 42, was a member of the *Partai Sosialis Rakyat Malaysia* (the Malaysian People's Socialist Party), a party that has sought to win support particularly among the peasantry. Several leading members of the party have been detained under the ISA at various times, including its chairman, Kassim Ahmad, who has been held since November 1976.

Little is known about the grounds for Hooi Chin Han's detention, but under the ISA a person may be detained if the Minister of Home Affairs is satisfied that detention is "necessary with a view to preventing him from acting in any manner prejudicial to the security of Malaysia".

Hooi Chin Han is detained at Batu Gajah Detention Camp where conditions are particularly grim, especially since the introduction of new regulations in March 1977. *AI* has been informed that the Advisory Board, the official body to which prisoners detained under the ISA may make representations, has recommended the release of all detainees held in Batu Gajah. However, the Advisory Board's powers are purely recommendatory and the Minister of Home Affairs has not followed its recommendations in this instance.

During his detention Hooi Chin Han has suffered from severe bouts of bronchial asthma and has been hospitalized on a number of occasions.

Please write courteously-worded letters appealing for Hooi Chin Han's immediate release, particularly in view of the length of his detention without trial and the state of his health. Write to: Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, Minister of Home Affairs, The Ministry of Home Affairs, Jalan Datuk Onn, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Since the *AI* movement started, the *Newsletter* has appealed for international assistance on behalf of hundreds of prisoners of conscience and victims of cruel treatment. In 1975, the *Newsletter* reported that of more than 360 prisoners featured in the *Campaign for Prisoners of the Month* alone over the previous 10 years, at least 178 prisoners in 45 countries had been released, had their sentences reduced or been transferred to better conditions following the *AI* campaign. In this issue we look at cases of prisoners on whose behalf readers sent appeals from the beginning of this year until August.

## Where are they now?

Each of the prisoners whose cases are cited below from the *Campaign for Prisoners of the Month* has been adopted—or is being adopted—by one or more *AI* groups. In those cases of prisoners who have not been released, the *AI* groups are still hard at work trying to secure the prisoners' liberty.

The cases taken up in the *Campaign for the Abolition of Torture* are those of people known or feared to be subject to cruel and degrading treatment. *AI* has acted to prevent ill-treatment and does not always have sufficient information to establish whether the individuals can be considered prisoners of conscience.



January  
1979

**John Chirisa**, the former National Organizing Secretary of the internal wing of the Zimbabwe African People's Union, is still held under an indefinite detention order in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia).

**Mykhalo Osadchy**, the Ukrainian journalist, poet and literary critic convicted of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda", is now in his seventh year in a "special regime" corrective labour colony.

**Ciro Molina**, the crippled Nicaraguan poet, was held without charge by the country's National Guard in September 1978. *AI* learned of his release in February 1979.

### appeals

**Boris Evdokimov**, arrested in Leningrad in 1972 on charges of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda", was transferred in January 1979 from Kazan special psychiatric hospital to Kashchenko ordinary psychiatric hospital in Leningrad. In April he was released, suffering from cancer, after 8 years' psychiatric confinement. He applied to emigrate from the USSR but was refused by the authorities. On 4 October 1979 he died in Leningrad.



February  
1979

**Alfonso Avelino Fernández Cabrelli**, the Uruguayan lawyer, historian and journalist imprisoned under the country's military penal code, is still being held. A renewed appeal on his behalf was included in the November 1979 *Newsletter*.

**Tan Hock Hin**, a schoolteacher and legislative councillor, has now entered his 12th year in detention under Malaysia's Internal Security Act.

**Miloslav Cerny**, the Czechoslovak worker who was reported suffering from epileptic fits in prison and whose case was highlighted first in the September 1978 *Newsletter*, remains in jail despite repeated international appeals on his behalf. There has been no further news about his condition.

### appeals

There has been no further news of **Juan Raúl Borg** and his family who have been missing in Argentina since October 1977.



March  
1979

**Khamking Souvanlasy**, one of many officials and civil servants of the

former administration in Laos sent to "re-education" camps in 1975, is still being held in a camp in northeast Laos without charge or trial.

**Ciro Vélez Mendoza**, associated with the *Partido Socialista Revolucionario Ecuatoriano* (Ecuadorian Socialist Revolutionary Party) at the time of his imprisonment in 1973, was released in February 1979.

**Mohamed Ben Kilani**, a Tunisian science student serving a seven year prison sentence for membership in a banned organization, was transferred from Bourji Er Roumi prison to Tunis Civil Prison in August 1979.

### appeals

**Marta Román**, wife of Hermann Steffen Artique, is the only member of the Steffen family so far released. The other members of his family, also arrested in Uruguay without explanation in November 1978, are now on trial, charged with "assisting subversion". They have been adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience.



April  
1979

**Jassim Haddad**, the poet held since 1975 without charge or trial in Bahrain, was released in August 1979.

**Edival Nunes da Silva**, a member of Brazil's Justice and Peace Commission of the Roman Catholic church who was detained in May 1978, subjected to torture and held without trial, was released in May 1979.

**Bui Tuong Huan**, a former university professor held since late 1975 in a "re-education" camp in Vietnam, was released in June 1979.

## appeals

The **Tsamaraint brothers**, members of an Amazon Indian family reportedly forced under torture to confess to murder, are in prison in Cuenca in southern Ecuador. They have not yet gone on trial.

**Lev Grigorievich Ubozhko**, a Soviet physicist arrested for circulating *samizdat* literature, is still compulsorily confined in Tashkent special psychiatric hospital where he is recently reported to have been subjected to intensive drug "treatment" as a result of which his physical condition is said to have greatly deteriorated.



May  
1979

**Zheng Chaolin**, the 77-year-old Chinese Trotskyist arrested in Shanghai in 1952, was released along with his wife, Wu Jingru, in June 1979 after 27 years as a prisoner of conscience.

**Peter Jones**, the Black Consciousness leader detained in South Africa at the same time as Steve Biko in 1977, is still serving a five-year banning order imposed on him in February 1979.

**Chng Min Oh**, an active trade unionist in Singapore is now nearing the end of his ninth year in detention under the country's Internal Security Act. He has never been formally charged or had the opportunity to defend himself in open court.

## appeals

There has been no further news of **Ana Rosa Kucinski Silva**, who disappeared and was reportedly subjected to torture after her arrest in Brazil in early 1974.



June  
1979

**Irzadi Mirwan**, one of more than 30 student leaders facing charges of "insulting the Head of State" after they blamed the leadership of President Suharto for corruption and the gap between rich and poor in Indonesia, is still on trial.

**Franz Kobold**, who was sent to prison in 1975 for making plans to flee the German Democratic Republic, may have benefitted from the amnesty announced in October 1979. However, *AI* has received no news about him.

**Mwarabu Mak Lubia**, a former sub-lieutenant in the Zairean Air Force imprisoned on conspiracy charges in 1975, was released in an amnesty declared in October 1979.

## appeals

The Ukrainian dissenter, **Iosif Mikhailovich Terelya**, is still forcibly confined in Dnepropetrovsk special psychiatric hospital where he is reported to be undergoing continual "treatment" with psychotropic drugs. Doctors have reportedly told his wife that there is no hope that he will be released in the near future. He is reported to be in very poor health.

There has been no further news of **Oscar Tassino**, a trade unionist, taken from his home in Montevideo in July 1977 by armed men claiming to be from the Uruguayan Combined Forces.



July  
1979

**Veselin Masic**, the Yugoslav medical doctor imprisoned after being accused of having private conversations about the political conditions in his country, is still in prison.

**Mario Argentino Paoletti** and **Guillermo Alfieri**, two Argentine journalists who are reported to have been tortured, are still being held in administrative detention.

**Mahanth Thakur**, a Nepali university lecturer dismissed from his teaching post and detained without trial as a result of his allegiance to the banned Nepali Congress Party, has been released.

## appeals

**Valeria Makeyeva**, a 50-year-old Russian Orthodox nun, is compulsorily confined in Kazan special psychiatric hospital where she is reported to have undergone intensive "treatment" with drugs which have paralyzed her right arm and undermined her general state of health.

To *AI*'s knowledge, the sentences of amputation passed on **Allah Ditta** and **Ghulam Mustafa** in May in Pakistan have not been carried out.



August  
1979

**Moon Ik-hwan**, the Presbyterian minister imprisoned for his part in the *Myong-Dong Declaration* that called for the restoration of civil liberties in the Republic of Korea, is still in prison.

**Virgilio Bareiro Riveros** and **Severo Acosta Aranda** are two Paraguayans held without trial since 1964. Sr. Acosta Aranda was released in October. Sr. Bareiro Riveros is still detained and is believed to be the last long-term prisoner in the country.

**True Orthodox Believers** in the Soviet Union. The 10 women, all of whom are serving sentences of 10 years' imprisonment or more under legislation restricting freedom of expression, are still held in the Mordovian complex of corrective labour colonies.

## appeals

The office of the President of Colombia has informed *AI* that **Alvaro Durán** is now in Model Prison and **Dora Patricia Durán** in Buen Pastor Prison, both in Bogota. Sr. Durán is accused of membership in a left-wing guerrilla group. *AI* maintains its interest in both cases and is trying to obtain further information.

## Nigeria

### No more public executions

Two days after the return to civilian rule on 1 October, Nigeria's Chief of the Army General Staff, Major-General T.Y. DANJUMA, announced that executions would no longer take place in public, and that executions would now be carried out "with

discretion". Major-General Danjuma is reported to have said that in Nigeria the deterrent value of the death sentence had worn off. On the same occasion 678 prisoners, most of whom had been convicted for criminal offences, were amnestied to commemorate the return to civilian rule□

## USSR

### New arrests and political trials

Soviet authorities arrested three dissenters on 1 November: Father Gleb YAKUNIN, a Russian Orthodox priest and founder member of the unofficial Christian Committee to Defend the Rights of Believers; Antanas TERLECKAS, a former political prisoner closely associated with religious and nationalist dissent in Lithuania; and Tatyana VELIKANOVA, who for the past 10 years has been one of the most active participants in the human rights movement. *AI* regards all three as prisoners of conscience.

In October Leningrad truck driver Nikolai NIKITIN was sentenced to one and a half years in prison because of his activities in an unofficial trade union group. Charged with "circulating fabrications known to be false which defame the Soviet state and social system", Nikitin was the fifth member of the group sentenced to prison or internal exile or confined to a psychiatric hospital during its first year of existence.

The Nikitin case is one of a series in which dissenters continue to be arrested and held for trial in the Soviet Union. Eduard ARUTYUNIAN has been imprisoned since July for his involvement in a group set up in Armenia to monitor Soviet compliance with the human rights agreements of the 1975 Helsinki Conference. Four members of a similar monitoring group in the Ukraine are awaiting trial.

*AI* has learned in recent months of at least eight people imprisoned in connection with their seeking permission to emigrate from the country, and 15 Crimean Tartars sentenced to prison or internal exile for trying to return to their ancestral homeland in the Crimea.

Religious activities have also led to prison sentences and confinement to

psychiatric hospitals. Sergei YERMOLAYEV, a member of an unofficial Russian Orthodox seminar in Moscow, and Igor POLYAKOV, a friend of his, were sentenced in October to 4 and 3½ years in jail respectively for "hooliganism". At least five other members of the seminar had already been tried or confined to psychiatric hospitals, and two members of a related seminar in Leningrad are awaiting trial.

Three Seventh Day Adventists were sentenced in June for unofficially printing and distributing religious literature, one of them to 7 years' imprisonment. *AI* knows of at least 25 cases of Protestants arrested and tried this year because of their religious activities.

#### Soviet response

Following publication of *AI*'s open letter to President BREZHNEV (November Newsletter), *Reuters* news agency carried the following dispatch:

*"Tass today described an open letter from Amnesty International on human rights in the Soviet Union as an attempt to poison the minds of Westerners attending the Moscow Olympic Games.*

*Tass analyst Yevgeny Babenko said the writers had resorted to 'out and out misinformation' about Soviet life.*

*'The organizers of the new wave of anti-Soviet speculative insinuation . . . are attempting to sow in the minds of future Western guests at the Moscow Olympic Games the seeds of unfriendliness, mistrust and suspicion' it declared.*

*The commentary hinted that Amnesty's prestige would suffer when tourists came for next year's Olympics and saw for themselves 'the reality of the accomplishments of developed socialism'□*

## Tunisia

### AI appeals to Head of State after prisoners' release

Nine *AI*-adopted prisoners of conscience were released in Tunisia in August, but about 70 remain in prison, some of them held since 1974. In a letter to Tunisian President Habib BOURGUIBA on 25 October, *AI* said it believed their imprisonment contravened the Tunisian Constitution and the country's obligations under international law.

The right to legal defence was consistently violated during the trials of such prisoners, and, in one case, defendants were prevented from attending their own trial, the letter said.

Frequent and detailed reports of torture and ill-treatment of political detainees in Tunisia have reached *AI* over the past 10 years. Methods include the "swing" system, in which the victim is suspended and swung from an iron bar placed under the knees, beatings, burning with cigarettes and in several cases electric shocks have reportedly been used. Many prisoners are reported to be in poor health due to ill-treatment and the conditions in which they are held.

*AI* welcomed the release of the nine by presidential amnesty, but expressed concern at restrictions imposed on them and other released prisoners of conscience, which include house arrest, surveillance and denial of passports.

The organization called on President Bourguiba to guarantee constitutional and internationally agreed rights in Tunisia□

#### Change of Address

Amnesty International  
Sezione Italiana  
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00195 Roma  
Italy

#### Prisoner Releases and Cases

The International Secretariat learned in October of the release of 128 prisoners under adoption or investigation and took up 254 new cases.



amnesty international

## campaign for the abolition of torture

# appeals

Amnesty International opposes the torture of prisoners in all cases, wherever and whenever it is practised. Any act of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment is a violation of the international human rights standards unanimously adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. International appeals can help to alleviate the plight of prisoners being subjected to cruel treatment. Your letters should follow carefully the instructions given below.

## Uruguay Fears for lives of Argentinian family

An Argentinian family living in Montevideo, Uruguay, since May 1977 has been missing for over 18 months despite efforts by their relatives to locate them.

Claudio Ernesto LOGARES, a 24-year-old accountant, his wife Mónica Sofía GRINSPON DE LOGARES, and their three-year-old daughter, Paula, disappeared on 18 May 1978 after visiting a park in Montevideo. Relatives have travelled to Uruguay several times since then to report the disappearance and to try to establish the whereabouts of the Logares family, but all efforts have been in vain.

According to eye-witness reports civilian personnel, using three cars, had been watching the building where the family lived for several days. The patrolling stopped after the family disappeared. Their arrest took place at 3.30 pm when a group of armed men forced Claudio Logares into one car and his wife and daughter into another.

Political prisoners in Uruguay are normally held in incommunicado detention during which they are subjected to torture, including prolonged standing, *submarino* (submersion in water until nearly drowned), electric shocks, and various other forms of severe torture. *AI* fears that the Logares family may have died from torture or be held in secret detention in Uruguay or Argentina. The security forces of Uruguay and Argentina have previously cooperated in abductions of each other's nationals on each other's territory. In such operations several young children



**This family may have been tortured to death or may be held in secret detention in Uruguay or Argentina. Their arbitrary arrest in Uruguay violated the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ratified by that country in 1970.**

have disappeared. Recently, two Uruguayan children abducted in Argentina in 1976 were discovered to be living in Chile; however, their parents are still missing.

*Please write courteously-worded letters urging that the fate of the Logares family be immediately clarified and that their physical safety be guaranteed. Write to: Comandante en Jefe del Ejército, Tte. General Luis V. Queirolo, Soriano 1090, Montevideo, Uruguay. Please send a copy of your letter to the Uruguayan and Argentinian embassies in your country.*

## USSR Ukrainian held in hospital

A 43-year-old former journalist from the Ukraine has been forcibly confined to a special psychiatric hospital in the Soviet Union since April 1979. Pavlo SKOCHOK is reported to have been charged with "circulating anti-Soviet slander"; *AI* believes he was arrested for writing letters to the authorities asking to be reinstated in his job as a journalist.

In the early 1960s Pavlo Skochok worked on the editorial staff of the Ukrainian daily newspaper *Radyanska Ukraina* (Soviet Ukraine). He was one of several Ukrainians who protested against the trials in 1965 of 20 young intellectuals imprisoned for advocating national views in their cultural work. When his newspaper sent him to cover the trial of one of these, Mykola Ozerny, he made a transcript of the proceedings which he sent together with a letter of protest to the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Ukraine. He was dismissed from his job and was subsequently unable to find work as a journalist. At the time of his arrest on 1 December 1978 he was reported to be working as a stoker.

After his arrest Pavlo Skochok was sent to Pavlov psychiatric hospital in Kiev for forensic psychiatric examination and was ruled to be "not accountable for his actions". Although his imprisonment is related to the non-violent exercise of the right to freedom of expression, he has been confined since April to Dnepropetrovsk special psychiatric hospital—a type of institution reserved in Soviet law for those who "represent a special danger to society". *AI* has adopted Pavlo Skochok as a prisoner of conscience on the grounds that he is detained for exercising his right to freedom of expression rather than for authentic medical reasons.

*Please write courteously-worded letters to the Procurator of the Ukraine, Mr F.K. Glukh, asking him to initiate an immediate review of Pavlo Skochok's case. Write to: SSSR, Ukrainskaya SSR, g. Kiev, Respublikanskaya Prokuratura, Prokuroru, F.K. Glukhu.*

# Political prisoners in Syria held without trial and subjected to torture

Political prisoners in Syria are being held in prolonged detention without trial and subjected to torture resulting, in some cases, in death, according to a briefing paper published by *AI* on 24 October.

In the 16-page booklet *AI* also said that political trials before the country's State Security Court were routinely held in secret, thereby denying prisoners the right to a fair and open hearing.

Most political prisoners in Syria, however, are simply held without trial under emergency legislation that has been in force for more than a decade. *AI* estimates that the total number of untried political detainees is at least 350 at any one time and on occasions has risen to nearly a thousand. Some

prisoners, still in detention, have been held without trial for more than eight years.

*AI* stressed that it had difficulty in establishing a firm figure because political arrests are carried out by different branches of the security forces acting independently of each other and many arrests are not officially acknowledged.

Those detained for political opposition include adherents of the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood, members of break-away movements within the ruling Ba'ath Party, supporters of policies promoted by the late Egyptian President Gamal Abdel NASSER under the Syrian-Egyptian union of 1958-61, Marxists, Kurds and Palestinians.

Tortures inflicted upon detainees during interrogation are said to be

applied in increasing order of severity. The methods most commonly reported include beating and whipping, burning with cigarette lighters, pouring petrol over parts of the body and setting it alight, simulating executions, immersing victims to the point of near asphyxiation and applying electric shocks to the genitals.

Syria retains the death penalty for grave political offences. Over the past two years, more than 30 executions have been carried out in cases involving sabotage, murder and membership in armed gangs. Twelve of the executions were carried out by public hanging.

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## United Nations 'Proposal to study disappearances'

The United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities has recommended the creation of a working group to help locate "disappeared" people throughout the world. At its 32nd session in late August, the Sub-Commission proposed that the working group's members should be given all available information about the "disappeared" and make contact with the governments and families concerned.

The Sub-Commission also requested the United Nations Secretary General to prepare a study on the protection of people detained on grounds of mental ill-health "with a view to the formulation of guidelines".

The Sub-Commission, which consists of 26 independent experts, makes recommendations to its superior body, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, comprised of 43 government representatives.

In recent years *AI* has submitted to the United Nations information on "disappearances" in Afghanistan, Argentina, Chile, Democratic Kampuchea, Ethiopia and Uganda.

On the question of protecting individuals detained on grounds of mental ill-health, *AI* presented the Sub-Commission with information on

psychiatric abuse in Romania, South Africa and the Soviet Union.

In a statement to the Sub-Commission *AI* said it considered the disappearance of political opponents practised or tolerated by governments as one of the most serious human rights violations of our time.

The statement continued: "In the view of *AI* it is necessary to make a distinction between abductions which have taken place in the past and abductions which continue to take place in the present and in the future.

"As for the first category, *AI* would welcome the establishment of such a group [to locate disappeared people] and would certainly be willing to make available to such a group all its information on disappeared persons.

"In the view of *AI* the attitude taken by some governments that the present rate of abductions in their country is not as high as before, and that therefore no more attention should be paid to those who disappeared in the past, is completely unacceptable.

"No government should be left alone until the last case of a disappeared person in its territory has been cleared up.

"As for the second category, there seems to be a clear need to set up a system of emergency intervention by the United Nations. . . . This would definitely

influence the governments in question."

The experts from Argentina and the Soviet Union voted against the Sub-Commission's resolution to set up a working group to deal with the problem.

In its statement on the abuse of psychiatry *AI* cited a 1977 World Health Organization report that in South Africa between 8,000 and 9,000 blacks suffering from mental disorders were detained against their will in privately owned institutions.

*AI* said it was aware of more than 100 people in the Soviet Union and another 30 in Romania who had been confined in psychiatric hospitals over the past four years for exercising their rights in a manner disapproved of by the authorities.

The Soviet member of the Sub-Commission said that although *AI* frequently produced well-founded statements it had "fallen for the bait of fabricated material". The Romanian member said the allegations were "entirely lacking in foundation" □

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