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COLOMBIA

Government fails to curb killings

Systematic and gross human rights violations have significantly intensified in Colombia in the past year against a background of escalating civil conflict and criminal violence.

Around 2,500 people have been apparent victims of extrajudicial executions, a further 250 have "disappeared", and collective killing of non-combatant civilians has occurred on an unprecedented scale. Responsibility for many of the abuses has been attributed to paramilitary "death squads".

Information concerning so-called "death squads" provides compelling evidence that paramilitary forces are an integral part of a programme adopted by the Colombian armed forces — often operating in alliance with powerful drugs groups — designed to eliminate those considered "subversive".

The Colombian Government has recently condemned in public the activities of "death squads". President Virgilio Barco has issued Decree Laws to combat their activities, including suspending legislation empowering the mili-

tary to arm and train civilian auxiliary forces.

AI believes that such steps must be accompanied by vigorous measures against those sectors of the Colombian armed forces responsible for widespread human rights violations, whether these are committed directly or through paramilitary forces. At present, despite the government's declared measures, extrajudicial executions and "disappearances" continue on an unprecedented scale and paramilitary forces still operate with virtual impunity.

In several cases, civilian judges have established that politically motivated killings carried out in the name of paramilitary "death squads" were in fact planned, organized and commanded by army officers. In addition, the civilian judicial authorities attempting to investigate human rights violations have themselves been the



Members of a judicial inquiry investigating killings and "disappearances" who were shot dead in the Magdalena Medio region earlier this year

subject of violent reprisals, despite government efforts to protect them.

Dr María Elena Díaz Pérez, a 38-year-old judge, was shot dead on 28 July 1989 by unidentified men while travelling by car in Medellín, Antioquia. Judge Díaz had replaced another civilian judge, Dr María Lucía González, who was investigating massacres in early 1988 of banana plantation workers in the Urabá region of Antioquia.

Threats forced Judge González to flee Colombia after she issued warrants in September 1988 for the arrest of three members of the

armed forces, a mayor, a police chief and two alleged drugs traffickers. Judge Díaz had recently confirmed the arrest warrants before she was killed. Other members of the judiciary investigating similar cases have since been threatened.

AI has called on the Colombian authorities to take urgent steps to protect the lives of those investigating abuses attributed to armed forces personnel, and to ensure they are able to conduct effective investigations leading to the prosecution and conviction of those responsible for human rights violations. □

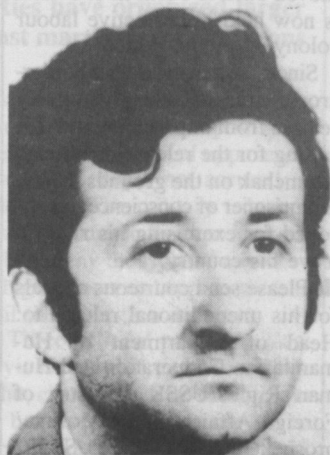
ROMANIA

Journalist imprisoned in crackdown on critics

Restrictive measures have been taken against critics of Romanian Government policies, according to reports received by AI this year.

Petre Mihai Bacanu, a 47-year-old journalist for the newspaper *Romania Libera*, is reportedly serving a six-year prison term ostensibly on economic charges. He was arrested in January in connection with the publication of a pamphlet entitled "The Disease of Power", which is said to call for peaceful opposition to President Ceausescu's administration.

Mircea Dinescu, a poet and editor of the literary review *Romania Literara*, has reportedly been under house arrest since March after giving an interview to the French daily *Liberation* in which



Petre Mihai Bacanu

he claimed that citizens of Romania have become the subject of "intimidation and terror".

Eva Gyimesi, an assistant professor of literature at the University of Cluj, was arrested in June after she wrote to the Romanian Ministry of Education expressing her concern about the treatment of ethnic Hungarian university graduates in Romania.

She claimed they were being sent against their will to other parts of the country while suitable jobs in the area were being given to Romanians lacking the required qualifications. She was allowed to return home after three days of interrogation, but her house is under constant police surveillance.

AI is investigating these and many other reports of violations of the right to freedom of expression in Romania. □

Pakistan visit

An AI delegation led by the Secretary-General visited Pakistan in late July and met Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, senior ministers and provincial officials responsible for law enforcement.

The discussions covered a wide range of human rights issues—including legislation permitting the arrest of prisoners of conscience, remaining cases of prisoners convicted by special military courts, prevention of torture and ill-treatment in police custody and jails, and ratification of international human rights instruments.

Senior ministers assured AI that the government intends to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture. □

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.

SOUTH KOREA

Chang Ui-gyun: a 38-year-old publisher, he is serving an eight-year sentence under the National Security Law. He was convicted of being a North Korean "spy", but AI believes he has been imprisoned for discussing Korean reunification with North Koreans.

He was arrested on 5 July 1987 and held incommunicado by the Defense Security Command for 25 days. His wife was also questioned for six days.



He has claimed he was subjected to "the tortures everybody knows about" and was not allowed to sleep for the first 10 days.

From 1985 to 1987 he studied ancient Korean history at Kyoto University in Japan, a subject in which his publishing company specializes.

During his stay in Japan he met a journalist from *Chochongnyon*, an organization supportive of North Korea, to discuss North Korea's proposals for reunification. He also visited the library and attended lectures at the pro-North Korean university *Chosen Daiggako*. In May 1986 he organized a meeting on Korean reunification at which he performed a song he had written.

He was accused of having passed information on South Korea to a North Korean agent in Japan and of trying to infiltrate South Korean opposition groups as a North Korean spy.

He denied this at his trial. He said he had declined an invitation to visit North Korea and that his discussions with Koreans in Japan were simply exchanges of views on the two countries and on Korean reunification.

He had discussed political issues with other South Koreans but he claimed these were of a general nature and could not be considered as national secrets.

On his return he had contacted dissidents but most of them were old friends. Nothing at his trial substantiated charges that he had acted as a North Korean "spy". ■ Please send courteous appeals for the immediate and unconditional release of Chang Ui-gyun to: Mr Huh Hyong-koo/ Minister of Justice/ Ministry of Justice/ 1 Chungang-dong/ Kwachon-myon/ Shihung-gun/ Kyonggi Province/ Republic of Korea. □

MOROCCO

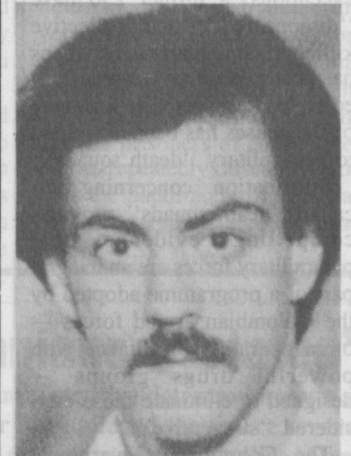
Ali Idrissi Kaitouni: a 30-year-old painter and poet, he was sentenced in May 1982 to 15 years' imprisonment on conviction of charges relating to a collection of his poetry.

A booklet of his poems, entitled "*Etincelle*" (*Spark*), was published in French in Morocco in early February 1982. The poems deal with social injustice and political oppression in Morocco and elsewhere. Prior to the publication of these poems, Kaitouni had been active in various cultural and artistic associations.

The collection of Kaitouni's poems was confiscated from all Moroccan bookshops in late February 1982 after it had been on sale for about three weeks.

Kaitouni was arrested on 6 March. He was held incommunicado for over one month under *garde à vue* (police custody) provisions and then brought be-

fore the public prosecutor on 16 April. While in police custody, which considerably exceeded the time limit provided by Moroccan law, he is reported to have been subjected to torture by electric shocks.



Kaitouni was charged with insulting the King and national institutions, inciting crimes against the internal security of the state and publishing material liable to endanger public security. He was tried on 18 May 1982 and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment and 100,000 Dirhams (£7,500) fine. The sentence was confirmed by the Court of Appeal on 25 May 1982.

AI believes that Kaitouni's poems do not advocate violence and that he is imprisoned solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression. He is held in Kenitra Central Prison.

■ Please send courteous letters in French appealing for his release to: His Majesty King Hassan II/Palais Royal/Rabat/Morocco; and to: Moulay Mustapha Belarbi Alaoui/ Minister of Justice/Palais de la Mamounia/Rabat/Morocco. □

USSR

Bohdan Klymchak: aged in his late forties, he is serving a sentence of 15 years' imprisonment and five years' internal exile for trying to leave the country.

In 1978, apparently because of persecution, he crossed the border into Iran without permission and asked for political asylum. His request was rejected and in November 1978 he was sent back to the USSR where he was convicted of "treason — in the form of flight abroad", probably in the republic of Turkmenia.

Bohdan Klymchak was born in the western Ukraine. After 1945 the Soviet authorities forcibly deported his family along with hundreds of other Ukrainian families to the Soviet Far East on suspicion of having collaborated with anti-Soviet Ukrainian nationalists during the Second World War. His family was officially rehabilitated in the 1950s and allowed to return home, but Bohdan Klymchak chose to finish his technical studies in eastern Siberia.

Some time later he was arrest-

ed on a political charge and served six years' imprisonment, according to a former fellow prisoner.

In 1981 Ukrainian human rights activists reported that prisoners in corrective labour colony 36 in Perm region had gone on strike to protest against the beating of Bohdan Klymchak by a guard. Shortly afterwards he was transferred to Chistopol prison, which is in the harshest category of imprisonment. He is believed to have been moved back to Perm in 1984 and is now held in corrective labour colony 35 in the region.

Since 1987 many Soviet border-crossers have been given early release from imprisonment. AI is calling for the release of Bohdan Klymchak on the grounds that he is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned for exercising his right to leave his country.

■ Please send courteous appeals for his unconditional release to: Head of Department of Humanitarian Cooperation and Human Rights/USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs: SSSR/Moskva/prospekt kalinina 9/MID SSSR/Nachalniku/Reshetovu Yu A. □

Prisoner news

AI learned in August 1989 of the release of 79 prisoners under adoption or investigation. AI took up 51 cases.

Death penalty

AI has learned of 33 people being sentenced to death in nine countries and of 127 executions in eight countries during July 1989.



FOCUS

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THE YOUNGEST VICTIMS

Children jailed, tortured and killed

Children stimulate our protective instincts. Their vulnerability and innocence demand special care. Yet in countries all over the world children are unjustly imprisoned, tortured and killed by agents of the state.

Palestinian children have been victims of human rights violations almost every day since the beginning of the *intifada* (uprising) in December 1987 in the Israeli Occupied Territories. According to United Nations figures, more than half the casualties recorded in the Gaza Strip during the first year of

the *intifada* were under 15 years old.

Children have been shot dead by Israeli forces; others have been severely beaten, imprisoned after unfair trials and administratively detained without charge or trial. Many were involved in incidents in which stones or other missiles were thrown; others appear not to have been involved in any violent activities when they were shot or apprehended.

Eleven-year-old Samer 'Aruri was shot in the head by an Israeli soldier in March 1989 in the village of Silat al-Harthiyah. He had been playing football and ran away as soldiers arrived. Meanwhile in Gaza, 14-year-old As'ad Hammuda had been to the shops to buy medicines he needed because he had been beaten by soldiers some three weeks earlier. He too was shot in the head and killed by an Israeli soldier. Later in May 12-year-old Anton Shahin was shot dead in Bethlehem. He was throwing stones from behind a wall at soldiers positioned on a mound of earth above him, and was shot in the abdomen.

Children have received brutal beatings at the hands of Israeli forces. Fifteen-year-old Ra'ad 'Adwan was stopped by border police while riding his bicycle in Nablus in April 1989. The soldiers demanded his identity card but being under 16 he did not have one. They then beat him so severely that he later needed intestinal surgery.

Israeli military courts have sentenced many Palestinian children to prison after unfair trials, often for offences relating to stone-throwing, particularly during the first months of the *intifada*.

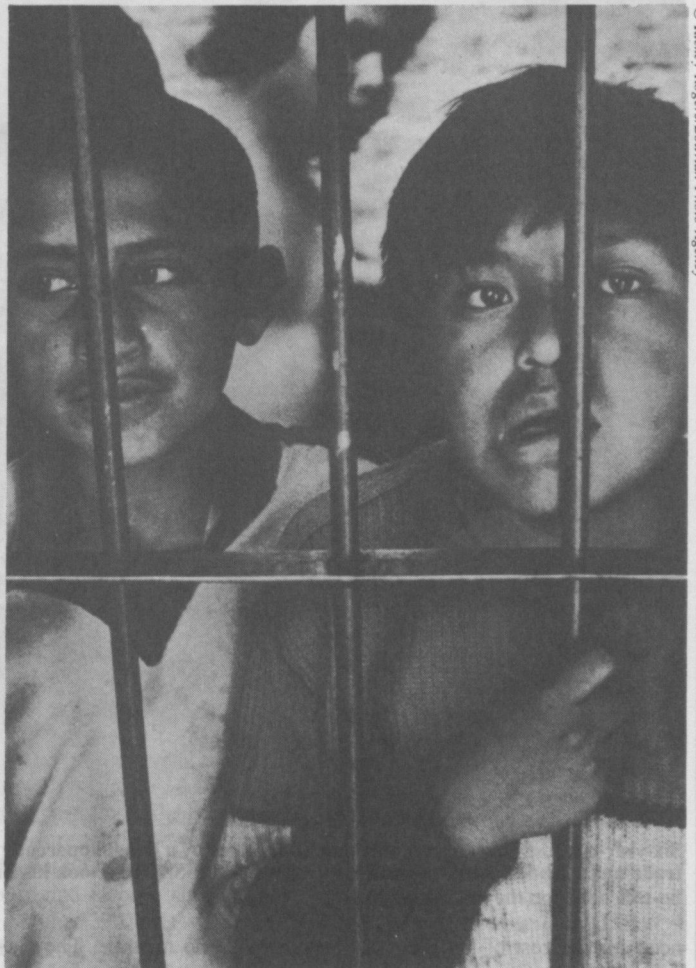
Others have been held in administrative detention, without trial. For example, in March and



Nafije Zendeli took part in a peaceful demonstration calling for classes to be held in her own language.

She is one of four secondary school students arrested in October 1988 after protesting against the closure of classes held in the Albanian language. The four are all ethnic Albanians from the town of Gostivar in the Republic of Macedonia in southern Yugoslavia.

Eighteen-year-old Nafije and her three 17-year-old schoolmates were sentenced to four to six years' imprisonment on charges of "association for the purpose of hostile activity" and "counter-revolutionary undermining of the social order." AI has adopted them as prisoners of conscience.



Twelve-year-old Santiago, on the right of this picture, and the other Bolivian children with him have spent two days in a police pen with no food. These homeless "street kids", ranging in age from eight to 15, were rounded up in police raids in Cochabamba. At a police "rehabilitation centre" near the town, youngsters are reported to have been beaten and ill-treated by guards. At least two died after beatings

April 1989 'Attiyah Shaykh, aged 17, and Muhammad Khilayli, aged 16, were served with six-month detention orders. They were held in the Ketziot detention centre in the Negev desert. Here conditions are harsh and prisoners do not receive visits from their relatives.

Six-year-old José Sotz Alvarez has been paralysed from the waist down since May 1986, when his spinal cord was shattered by a bullet apparently intended to kill his father, a Guatemalan trade union leader.

José's father accused Guatema-

lan municipal security agents of the shooting but he has never even been interviewed by police about the incident that has irrevocably altered his young son's life.

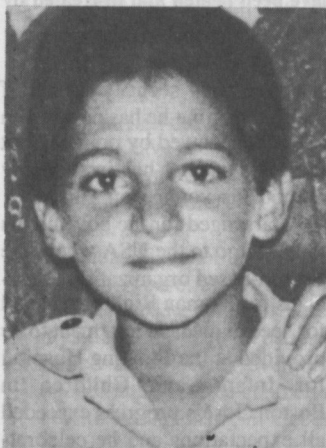
AI arranged for the boy and his father to go to the USA where the Boston-based organization Physicians for Human Rights arranged for special medical treatment to be provided at the Floating Hospital for Infants and Children in Boston. José's progress exceeded all expectations and he celebrated his sixth birthday in April by taking his first steps in three years, aided by the braces he will



Six-year-old José Sotz Alvarez was shot in the spine by a bullet apparently intended for his father, a Guatemalan trade union leader. After medical treatment in the USA, José took his first steps in April, aided by the braces he will need for the rest of his life

need for the rest of his life.

Perhaps the gunmen who shot José hit him by mistake while trying to kill his father. The soldiers who beat 13-year-old Susana Tzoc Mendoza with the butts of their



Samer 'Aruri, an 11-year-old Palestinian, was shot in the head by an Israeli soldier

guns made no mistake. They attacked her because her father is involved in human rights work in Guatemala.

Uniformed soldiers and men in plain clothes burst into her home in November 1988 and when they failed to find her father, who had gone into hiding, beat her over a four-day period and left her vomiting blood.

She was not the only young relative of a Guatemalan human rights worker to be criminally abused by the armed forces. Iris Reyes Urizar is the niece of the president of an organization that defends the rights of indigenous peoples. In February 1989 she was reported to have been captured by soldiers, taken to a military camp and raped. She is 15 years old.

In Peru large areas of the country are under military government and emergency legislation is in

force. Increasingly, reports of "disappearances" are being received from these areas. One recent victim was 17-year-old schoolboy Sergio Huamancusi Ramos.

A group of about 500 people—civilians and soldiers from a local army base—entered a peasant community in Angaraes province, Huancavélica department, in May 1989. Armed with shotguns and knives, they ordered villagers to gather in the main square. When the invaders left, they took two people, one of whom was Sergio. Witnesses say the two were taken to the Santo Tomás de Pata army base.

Their families and community leaders have not been able to find out any more about them, as the army refuses to acknowledge that they were detained.

In Sri Lanka the relatives of Kayathiri Vino Sangaralingam

have to live with that cruel uncertainty. The 10-year-old girl was arrested with her mother and two older sisters by soldiers of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) stationed in Sri Lanka. They were apparently suspected of supporting Tamil separatists.

A relative who went to the soldiers' camp that day was herself detained for a while and said she saw Kayathiri there although she could not speak to her. However, the IPKF has repeatedly denied that Kayathiri or her family are in its custody—appeals to the Sri Lankan and Indian authorities have not brought a response.

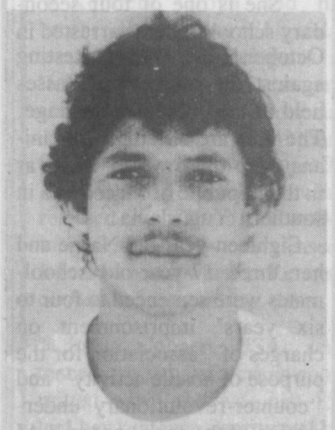
Kayathiri is one of over 800 people who have "disappeared" in Sri Lanka since 1983. The great majority were last seen in the custody of the Sri Lankan security forces but since Indian troops have been stationed in the island they have been accused of responsibility for dozens of "disappearances".

Children in Brazil are frequently the victims of police violence. An estimated seven million live apart from their parents on the fringes of society, often in conflict with the authorities.

Allegations that the Brazilian police ill-treat young suspects in their custody are widespread. For example, three youths from Nova Vicosa in Bahia state were arrested in May 1987 on suspicion of burglary. Rodrigo Borges de Carvalho was 17 and Manoel Mendes dos Santos and Elias Lopes de Lima were about 16.

After their release they said that they had been tortured for five days: beaten, whipped, sexually assaulted, suspended upside down on a bar—the *pau de arara* (parrot's perch)—and that their bodies had been burned with melted plastic. Elias Lopes de Lima had third-degree burns and died in hospital on 11 May 1987.

Although the police chief and four military policemen accused of the crime were freed after initially being arrested, no progress



Silas Abel da Conceição of Brazil was found dead after being threatened by the police

has been made in bringing those responsible to justice. All but one of the prosecution witnesses have retracted their statements—the remaining witness has been threatened with death by armed men.

In another case, Pedro de Almeida, 20, and Silas Abel da Conceição, 18, were arrested on suspicion of robbery in September 1988. Silas was released on 26 September after a *habeas corpus* petition was obtained by his mother. Pedro was never seen again.

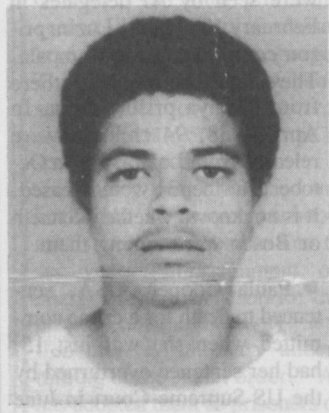
Silas said that the two had been tortured. He alleged that they had been hung by the wrists and ankles from the *pau de arara* and been beaten, given electric shocks and had jets of water forced up their nostrils. He said he had last seen Pedro de Almeida being dragged out of his cell by the hair, unconscious and bleeding from the nostrils, mouth and ears. He said he had been warned that he would be shot if he revealed what he knew.

Pedro's mother was told by the police that her son had escaped but his escape has never been officially reported.

Silas refused to testify that Pedro had escaped and he hid for 11 days. On 7 October 1988 he emerged from hiding and was last seen by witnesses in the grip of two of the police officers he had accused. His dead body was found later that day with a bullet in the back of the neck.

The lives of indigenous peoples in Brazil are increasingly under threat as they attempt to defend their land from incursions by ranchers, and by mining and timber companies. In March 1988, 14 Ticuna Indians, five of them children, were killed by gunmen allegedly led by a timber merchant.

The Indians were waiting to have a meeting with the military about acts of harassment by loggers on their reserve in Amazonas state when 20 gunmen fired on them. Four Indians were killed outright. The rest ran for cover in the forest and in a nearby house,



Brazilian Pedro de Almeida was last seen unconscious in a police station



Qassem Muhammad 'Abdallah, bearing the scars of chemical warfare in northern Iraq

or tried to escape in canoes.

One young boy escaped by hiding in a bread oven. Six-year-old Leila Valentin Marcos was in a canoe with a number of people who were all killed. Although she had more than 12 pieces of gunshot lodged in her head, she survived by pretending to be dead. Her nine-year-old brother, Al-demir was killed.

Although 11 gunmen were later arrested and charged, the Federal Appeals Court rejected federal jurisdiction over the case. The federal arrest warrant for the man named as leader of the gunmen was waived on the grounds that his health was poor.

In the prisons of Iraq brutal treatment of children has become routine practice. "Usually they keep [infants] in a separate cell next to the mother's or father's cell and deprive them of milk in order to force the parents to confess. I saw a five-month-old baby screaming in this state" a former political prisoner told AI.

Kurds living in Iraq have suffered mass killings at the hands of the state. Among the victims have been children, infants and babies.

About 300 Kurdish children and

youths were seized by Iraqi security forces in 1985, apparently as hostages to force relatives to turn themselves in. At least three are believed to have died as a result of torture that reportedly included beatings, whippings, sexual abuse and electric shocks.

Another 29 Kurds were executed without trial in January 1987. Later that year 150 Kurdish political prisoners were executed without trial in Abu Ghraib prison. Eight were school students; one was only 14 years old.

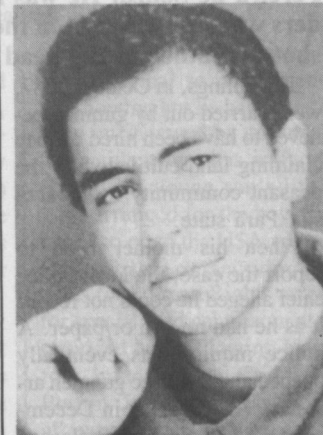
It is impossible to know how many children were among the estimated 5,000 victims of a chemical weapons attack by the Iraqi forces on the town of Halabja in northern Iraq in March 1988. Since then, despite world outrage at the use of chemical weapons, hundreds more Kurdish families in the area have been killed, and tens of thousands made homeless—their villages razed; their crops and orchards uprooted; and their springs blocked with cement.

In Turkey too Kurds of all ages suffer persecution. A 17-year-old schoolgirl from Konya was imprisoned in mid-April for two months earlier this year just for

saying that she was of Kurdish origin. Safinaz Yilboga had been denounced by her teacher for this "crime".

Safinaz was released in June but other Turkish teenagers will never walk free. Thirteen-year-old Emin Ozkaya died in custody in January 1988: he had been arrested on suspicion of stealing. The autopsy report said that the boy's back, knees, hands and feet were bruised and swollen.

A 16-year-old girl, Saadet Akkaya, was arrested in 1988 with



As'ad Hammuda, aged 14, was shot dead in Gaza by Israeli troops on his way back from shopping



Victims of the March 1988 chemical weapons attack on the northern Iraqi town of Halabja, where an estimated 5,000 people were killed

her sister. Her father had been arrested the day before. She was accused of belonging to an illegal organization. When her case came to court, she gave a detailed account of how she was tortured to the point at which she confessed to something she knew nothing about. She told the court:

"... I was interrogated by seven or eight policemen who were shouting and swearing . . .

"They took off my coat, blouse and bra. They made me stand on a chair, put blankets around my arms and tied me to a cross with ropes. When they took away the chair I was hanging by my arms. Then they gave me electric shocks on my fingertips and nipples.

"After a while they stopped the electric shocks, and although I resisted and screamed, they took off my skirt and underwear . . . All the policemen continued touching and squeezing my

breasts, vagina and other parts of my body. The naked policeman assaulted me with his sexual organ . . . The torture continued for 15 days."

Matthew Anu was 18 years old when, before a crowd of thousands, he was executed by firing-squad in the capital of Nigeria. He had been sentenced to death with no right of appeal. When the crime of which he was convicted was committed, he can have been no more than 17 years old, perhaps even younger.

Robbery and Firearms Tribunals of the type that convicted Matthew consist of a single High Court Judge, who may sit alone or with military officers who are not required to have any legal training. There is no right of appeal. They have been known to pass death sentences on children as young as 14.

Matthew was executed in

February 1989. Between mid-1985 and mid-1988, no fewer than 439 executions were recorded by AI, mostly for armed robbery after convictions by Robbery and Firearms Tribunals. The true number of victims is certainly higher.

South Africa's jails hold many children: an estimated 9,800 were detained under State of Emergency regulations between June 1986 and June 1989. Many have said they were tortured in detention. They describe being beaten with whips, hooded, given electric shocks, and partially suffocated, with plastic bags or rubber tubing pulled over the face.

In a retrograde step deplored by human rights organizations around the world, the US Supreme Court ruled on 26 June 1989 that juveniles could be executed.

By a narrow 5-4 majority, the Supreme Court ruled that the execution of juvenile offenders and the mentally retarded was possible under the US Constitution, and did not violate its ban on "cruel and unusual punishment".

This decision was in clear contravention of international human rights treaties and standards prohibiting the execution of juveniles, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the American Convention on Human Rights, both of which the US Government signed in 1977 but has not ratified.

In August 1989 no fewer than 27 prisoners in the USA were on death row for crimes committed when they were less than 18 years old.

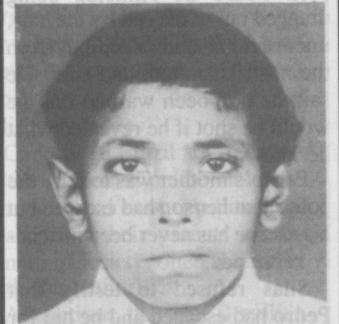
AI believes that the state is never justified in cold-bloodedly taking a human being's life. But when the victim has not yet reached physical or emotional maturity, the uniquely cruel and irreversible character of the death penalty makes it particularly inappropriate. The deliberate extinction of a life that has barely begun cannot be tolerated. □

WHERE ARE THOSE CHILDREN NOW?

Update on cases in the January 1988 Focus on Children

- Amonsissa Issa, Ethiopia, formerly held with his mother, a prisoner of conscience, in Addis Ababa, was released in September 1989.

- Mohammad Azeem, Pakistan, was sentenced to death after being arrested in 1984 for murder and robbery. The sentence has since been commuted to life imprisonment. He was 12 years old at the time of the crime. His case has been referred for review by the Sind High Court, and the hearing was due to take place in August 1989.



Gnanaguru Aravinthan

- Gnanaguru Aravinthan, Sri Lanka, a 13-year-old Tamil boy who "disappeared" in 1985 is still missing. In a letter in April 1987, the then Minister of National Security informed an AI member that there were no records of his being held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act or under Emergency Regulations.

- Shams Rahman, Afghanistan, who "disappeared" in 1979, is now believed to be dead. An Afghan Government minister wrote to an AI group stating that he had been executed several years ago, before the present government took control.

- Kenneth Oloya and his brother Bosco Okura, Uganda, were seen by AI delegates in February 1988 in the Luzira prison complex outside Kampala. They had been moved there from Kirinya prison, Jinja. In April 1988, 94 children were released from Luzira, and in October a further 31 were released. It is not known whether Kenneth or Bosco were among them.

- Paula Cooper, USA, sentenced to death for a crime committed when she was just 15, had her sentence overturned by the US Supreme Court in June 1988.



The dead body of a three-year-old Brazilian boy, Clésio Pereira de Souza. He was riding on his father's shoulders when he was shot in the back by gunmen, who then shot his father in the head at point-blank range.

The killings, in October 1987, were carried out by gunmen believed to have been hired by men claiming land cultivated by the peasant community in Gioanésia, Pará state.

When his mother tried to report the case, the local police chief alleged he could not record it as he had no pen or paper. A police inquiry was eventually opened and the three gunmen arrested. At a hearing in December 1987 they were released pending further proceedings.

Since then, the boy's mother

and her parish priest have received death threats. One of the suspects in the case and a possible witness were killed by a local police chief in October 1988. A state deputy who took an interest in this and other land dispute cases was shot dead in front of his family in December 1988.

The two men believed to have killed Clésio reportedly celebrated the deputy's killing, and declared that Clésio's mother and brothers were next on their "hit list".

CHINA

Chinese authorities reject UN and AI findings on abuses

The Chinese authorities took a deliberate decision before the massacres in Beijing in early June to put a stop to peaceful protest even if this meant widespread killing, according to AI's report, *Preliminary Findings on Killings of Unarmed Civilians, Arbitrary Arrests and Summary Executions since 3 June 1989*, published on 30 August.

The report says at least 1,000 people, mainly helpless civilians, were killed by the security forces and that most of these killings were extrajudicial executions.

It presents a detailed account of what happened on 3 and 4 June in Beijing and shows how people were killed by soldiers and police. It includes first-hand testimonies about the killings and about ill-treatment and torture of detainees arbitrarily seized in Beijing and other cities (See *AI Newsletter*, August, September 1989).

The report was made available to the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities meeting in Geneva. On 31 August the Sub-Commission adopted a resolution expressing concern about the events in China and for the first time ever asked the UN Secretary-General to transmit information about the situation in China to the UN Commission on Human Rights—thus opening the possibility of China being a focus of debate by that body in the first quarter of 1990. The Chinese delegation rejected the resolution as "null and void" and with no "binding force on China whatsoever".

A Chinese Government spokesperson said AI's report constituted "interference" in its

internal affairs and was "unreasonable and without foundation". AI stands by its report and considers the government's response to be totally inadequate in view of the wide range of violations alleged. □

Students detained

In late August student Zhang Weiping was sentenced to nine years' imprisonment for "counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement"—the first student known to have been sentenced to imprisonment for participating in recent protests.

He was accused of telling *Voice of America* radio in June that students in Hangzhou city had marched to the provincial government headquarters and successfully asked officials to fly the flag at half mast to mourn those killed in Beijing.

Eight of the 21 "most wanted" student leaders had been detained by August. Wang Dan—heading the list—was rumoured to have been secretly executed. Chinese police sources said in late August he had been beaten in jail, but that his treatment had improved. □



An armed Israeli soldier watches over Ketzioth detention centre

ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Detention period extended

By August 1989 more than 2,000 Palestinians from the Occupied Territories were being held in administrative detention without charge or trial, most of them in harsh conditions in the Ketzioth detention centre in Israel. A total of more than 5,500 have been administratively detained since the Palestinian *intifada* (uprising) began in December 1987.

Administrative detention in Israel and the Occupied Territories can and has been used to detain prisoners of conscience. Existing judicial procedures do not effectively safeguard the right of detainees to challenge their detention, particularly their right to be informed promptly and fully of the reasons for their detention. Appeals must be initiated by detainees, are often heard long after arrest, and crucial evidence is almost invariably withheld from the detainees and their lawyers.

In August 1989 the maximum period for which administrative detention orders may be issued or

renewed was extended from six months to one year.

AI has concluded that the existing practice of administrative detention violates fundamental human rights. It has called on the government to reconsider whether it is necessary or appropriate to persist in detaining people without charge or trial. It has also urged the government to review all current cases, to ensure that no prisoner of conscience remains in captivity and that all political detainees have the opportunity to exercise effectively their right to challenge their detention if they are not to be released. □

NIGERIA

Government critics detained

Prisoners of conscience are being detained under a security decree which overrides normal legal safeguards for detainees. The decree provides for the indefinite and incommunicado detention without trial of any person suspected of harming the economy or the security of the state.

Femi Aborisade has been held incommunicado since February, apparently because of articles in *Labour Militant*, the newspaper he edits. Balarabe Musa was detained under the decree in May in defiance of a court order for his release on bail. He had been charged with establishing a political party; as a former official, he faces five years' imprisonment for this offence.

Gani Fawehinmi, a lawyer involved in many legal actions against the authorities, was detained in June after government critics met in his office. He was transferred to hospital after being held in harsh conditions in Borno State.

Seven journalists were detained briefly in July due to articles in *The Republic* newspaper group.

Prisoners freed

Twenty political prisoners held without trial in Burkina Faso since late 1987 were released by President Blaise Compaoré on 4 August 1989. The former government officials and soldiers were apparently detained solely because of their association with President Thomas Sankara, who was killed in the October 1987 coup which brought President Compaoré to power.

MYANMAR (BURMA)

Mass arrests of political activists

Thousands of political activists have been reportedly arrested in Myanmar since the September 1988 army coup. The tempo of arrests has significantly increased since June 1989 as student groups and political parties have organized larger and more frequent protests against martial law restrictions on civil liberties.

On 20 July 1989, the martial law authorities placed Aung San Suu Kyi, General Secretary of the National League for Democracy (NLD), and Tin U, the organization's Chairman, under house arrest without charge for up to one year for "endangering the state". The NLD, the most prominent political party, has joined with students and others since June to organize peaceful mass gatherings in defiance of martial law restrictions.

On 17 and 18 July 1989 the

martial law administration empowered the military to impose death sentences on political opponents, including people not accused of violence. The military tribunals use summary judicial procedures which deny the right of appeal to a higher court and apparently curtail the right to a defence.

Three political prisoners, Zaw Gyi, Nyi Nyi U and Moe Kyaw Thu, charged with involvement in a bombing, were sentenced to death by a military tribunal on 27 July 1989. □

SAUDI ARABIA

Political detainees held without charge or trial

At least 50 political prisoners are being detained without charge or trial by *al-Mabahith al-'Amma*, General Intelligence. They were all arrested in 1988 and 1989 and some have reportedly been tortured.

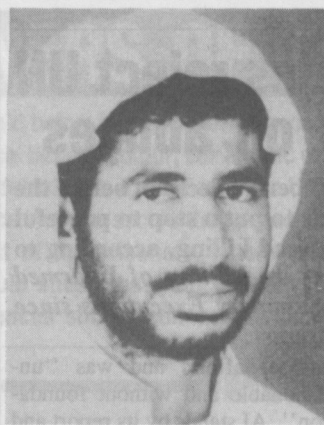
Fifteen Shi'a, alleged followers of Ayatollah Khomeini, were arrested following a reported sabotage in a petrochemical plant in al-Jubail, Eastern Province in April 1988. They include students, engineers and religious

scholars aged between 21 and 31 years. They were initially held in al-Dammam and later transferred to Riyadh. Prominent among them is Sheikh Ja'far 'Ali al-Mubarak, a 30-year-old religious scholar from Safwa.

Some 25 other alleged followers of Ayatollah Khomeini were also arrested: four were executed in September 1988 after being convicted of sabotage; the remaining 21 were reportedly released in the first half of 1989.

Four students being held in Riyadh and al-Dammam were arrested between July and October 1988. They are alleged members or sympathizers of the illegal *Munadhamat al-Thaurah al-Islamiyah*, Organization of Islamic Revolution.

Twenty other alleged members or sympathizers of the organization, including four religious



'Ali Sa'id Darwish, 30 (left), and Tahir Shamimy, 30, are both being held without charge or trial



scholars, four students and a grocer, were arrested between March and August 1989 and are believed to be in al-Dammam.

Six alleged members or sympathizers of the illegal *Hizbul 'Amal al-Ishiraki al-'Arabi*, Arab Socialist Action Party, arrested in March 1989 are being held without trial in al-Dammam. They include four employees of Saudi ARAMCO oil company.

Other political detainees held since June 1989 are not known to be affiliated to any opposition groups. They include five students at King Sa'ud University in Riyadh arrested after fires broke

out at the students' residence. They are believed to be in the General Intelligence prison in the 'Ulaisha district of Riyadh. Some have reportedly been tortured.

AI is concerned about a pattern of human rights abuses whereby suspected political opponents are held in prolonged detention without trial and are routinely tortured or ill-treated during initial periods of incommunicado detention. It is also concerned that some may be prisoners of conscience. AI has repeatedly raised the issue with the Saudi authorities but as of August 1989 had received no response. □

Death in custody

Zahra' al-Naser, a 40-year-old housewife from Awjam, Eastern Province, died on 18 July in police custody. She was arrested on 15 July at the border with Jordan reportedly after she was found with a photograph of Ayatollah Khomeini and a Shi'a prayer book. Her body, allegedly bearing marks of torture, was buried by her family on 20 July. AI has called for a public inquiry into her death. □

MAURITANIA

Dozens killed during expulsions from south

Wide-ranging human rights abuses, including extrajudicial executions, torture and arbitrary arrests, have been committed by Mauritanian security forces in the wake of inter-communal clashes between Mauritians and Senegalese in both countries in April 1989.

The abuses occurred in the course of the forcible expulsion to Senegal of tens of thousands of black Mauritians. Units of the predominantly Moorish security forces are said to have arrested and, in some cases, tortured, executed or beaten to death those who resisted expulsion or expropriation of their property. The victims are mainly Mauritians living in the south.

Dozens of people are reported to have been killed in the areas of Mabout, Maghama and Djéol. In Oulali, a Fulani cattle-herder died in early June after being shot 17 times. The Gendarmerie Commander reportedly tried to hide the body.

Others are said to have died as a result of torture. Mohamed Yéro Bâ, a school headmaster at Tétiane and member of Kaédi town council, was arrested by police in June, apparently because he was suspected of sending letters abroad concerning abuses committed by the security forces. He

died after being subjected to the "Jaguar" torture while being hung over a fire: he was suspended upside-down from a metal bar attached to his legs and wrists and beaten on the soles of his feet until unconscious.

Arbitrary arrests and torture have also occurred in the capital, Nouakchott, and other cities. One eye-witness told AI that he saw a detainee being tortured in May 1989 at Nouakchott's Toujounine police station. The victim, said by the police to be Senegalese, was naked and had his head repeatedly forced under water.

AI appealed to the Mauritanian Government to take urgent steps to end the abuses by its security forces. □

■ **India:** The Indian Government has refused AI's repeated requests to visit parts of the country for discussions about human rights since 1978, not since 1987 as reported in *Amnesty International Newsletter* August 1989. □

YUGOSLAVIA

Over 230 Albanians 'isolated'

Ethnic Albanians held in administrative detention known as "isolation" earlier this year have alleged they were severely beaten by prison guards and state security police. Over 230 were "isolated", many of whom had been arrested during six days of demonstrations in Kosovo province in late March. At least 24 people died in clashes between police and demonstrators who were protesting against constitutional changes limiting the province's autonomy.

In May and June the Yugoslav press published testimonies of four released detainees. Agim Vllasi, a driver; Bashkim Ahma, an engineer; and Ekrem Belegu, a factory director, alleged that in

As administrative detainees, they had been denied the right to challenge in court their detention and no charges were brought against them. It was reported in July that an investigation had been started against 21 prison guards and state security officers.

By mid-July no-one was being held in "isolation". However, at least 50 remained in custody for investigation on political or other charges. In late July Bajram Selmani, a factory worker, was the first of these to be sentenced—to six years' imprisonment for having organised peaceful working demonstrations in November 1988 and strikes in February 1989.

In August the press reported that 55 people, including former Kosovo political leaders Azem Vllasi and Ekrem Arifi, were to be tried on similar charges and face up to 15 years' imprisonment or, in some cases, the death penalty. □



Ekrem Arifi

Leskovic prison they and others in "isolation" were assaulted by prison staff, made to strip naked and forced to run a gauntlet of blows. Bahri Osmani, a grocer, described similar experiences in Vranje prison.

The four were released in May.