

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 15 per section.

24 March 1995

Further information on UA 29/95 (EUR 56/03/95, 10 February 1995) -
Extrajudicial executions / Fear for safety and new concern: Torture

GEORGIA **Reports of torture and at least 10 further deaths (no
names known)**

Fears for the safety of ethnic Georgians in the disputed region of Abkhazia continue after reports that at least 10 people were killed and dozens of others were tortured or ill-treated when Abkhazian militia swept through the Gali district from 11 to 16 March 1995.

A spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported that UN doctors had seen at least 10 bodies, most of which bore signs of torture, including pulled fingernails, bad burns and wounds apparently caused by red-hot bayonets and knives. UN doctors had also treated at least 35 people who had suffered similar types of torture, or had been severely beaten. Local residents reported finding at least another six bodies and an undetermined number of people were said to be missing.

The attacks were carried out as some 400 to 600 militiamen took part in what was described by Abkhazian authorities as an operation to register Georgian refugees and locate "partisans" who had infiltrated the territory with them.

Hundreds of thousands of Georgians are estimated to have been displaced from Abkhazia during bitter fighting over the disputed region. Small numbers have returned, mostly to the Gali district, amid reports that some have suffered reprisals after attacks on Abkhazian forces. In late January, for example, three members of one family were said to have been extrajudicially executed by Abkhazian militia after several of their men were killed by unknown assailants.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express and airmail letters in English, Russian or your own language:

- urging an immediate, comprehensive and impartial investigation into the reports of killings, torture and other ill-treatment;
- urging that the results of such an investigation be made public, with any perpetrators identified brought to justice within the norms of international law;
- urging that all appropriate steps are taken to ensure the security of all residents, regardless of ethnic origin.

APPEALS TO the three officials below, via the Abkhaz press office in Moscow, who will pass them on (faxes, telegrams and letters should be sent via this office):

Rossiyskaya Federatsiya
125252 g. Moskva
Novo-Peshanaya 16, kv. 69
Press sluzhba Abkhazii
Glave GULIA T.

Faxes: +7 095 187 49 87 Please note that this is a combined telephone/fax number and you may have to ask for the fax to be switched on.

Telegrams: Rossiya, 125252 Moskva, Press sluzhba Abkhazii

1. President of Abkhazia, Vladislav Ardzinba

Respublika Abkhazia

g. Sukhum

Apparat Prezidenta

Prezidentu ARDZINBA B.

Salutation: Dear President

2. Procurator General of Abkhazia, Arni Dzhergenia

Respublika Abkhazia

g. Sukhum

Prokuratura Respubliki Abkhazia

Generalnomu prokuroru DZHERGENIA A.

Salutation: Dear Procurator General

3. Head of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission in Abkhazia, Natalya Akaba

Respublika Abkhazia

g. Sukhum

Lakobi 21

Verkhovny Sovet Respubliki Abkhazia

Komissiya po pravam cheloveka

Predsedatelyu AKABA N.

Salutation: Dear Madam

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Send these directly to the officials at the addresses provided:

The Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Abkhazia in Europe, Slava Chirikba

Slava Chirikba

Faculty of letters

University of Leiden

Postbus 9515

NL-2300 RA Leiden

The Netherlands

The Chairman of the Parliament of the Republic of Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze

Respublika Gruzija

380018 g. Tbilisi

pr. Rustaveli, 8

Parlament Respubliki Gruzija

Predsedatelyu SHEVARDNADZE E.

The Chairman of the Georgian State Committee for Human Rights, Aleksandr Kavsadze

Respublika Gruzija

380018 g. Tbilisi

pr. Rustaveli, 8

Komitet zashchity prav cheloveka

Predsedatelyu KAVSADZE A.

and to diplomatic representatives of Georgia, if any, accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 May 1995.