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WEEKLY UPDATE SERVICE 20/93

Contained in this weekly update are external items on Cambodia and the Baltic States.

NEWS INITIATIVES

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Japan - 0500 hrs gmt, 17 March

Please note that there is an item enclosed in this weekly update which gives AI's answer to the Japan Government's response to AI's report. Please use it in conjunction with the news release.

Please note the embargo is confirmed for 0500 hrs gmt, 17 March for this document on refugee issues and we anticipate a high level of media interest in this news release.

The Japanese Section is holding a press conference in Tokyo to launch the report on 17 March. IS staff member, David Petrsek, who wrote the report, is going to Tokyo to help with media there. The Japanese Section will be inviting international media to attend the press conference and the IS will also inform international media of the launch. Details of the conference will shortly be available from the IS press office if you need them.

An Electronic News Release (ENR) is being prepared at the last minute to go with the report. Unfortunately, resources and time will not allow the IS to distribute it to sections. However, it will be given to Japanese TV at the press launch and the IS is giving it to WTN, VISNEWS, BBC World Service TV and CNN - so please refer your media to these. The master copy is held at Dubbs, 25-26 Poland Street, London W1V 3DB - Tel: +44 71 629 0055. Media who urgently require the full ENR may order copies direct from Dubbs, paying the copying costs only.

Chad - 21 April

Please Note

The document to go with this campaign has been sent out to sections dated February. Please inform your section campaign coordinators and anyone else who may receive it that it is EMBARGOED FOR 21 APRIL.

Chad Campaign, document, news release, Q&A and ENR. The news release should be with you by 2 April, the Q&A shortly afterward.

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

Baltic States Death Penalty Action - 1 April

Weekly update enclosed in this document, embargoed for 1 April to coincide with the action launch. The IS press office is not proactively sending this out to media, though it will be used in response to media enquiries. It is mainly to assist sections who are planning media initiatives to go with the action.

Morocco - 14 April

Document and weekly update item - more info soon.

Brazil - 7 May

Please note new embargo date. Document on prison massacre, including new forensic information. Weekly update item to go with it. Sections are also being asked to carry out campaign work in connection with this document.

Section Initiatives

French Section - European Press Officers' Meeting

The second European Press Officers' meeting will take place in Paris this year. The date of this meeting is now fixed for 15 and 16 May as the majority of you asked for. It will be focused on two themes: Audiovisual work (production and TV experiences) and how to improve it; and the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna.

Weekly Update NWS 11/20/93

2. ASA 23/WU 01/93 EXTERNAL
16 March 1993

INTERNAL

Sections are encouraged to use this weekly update to generate publicity about AI's concerns in Cambodia, and members of the press or other interested parties should be referred to the recent document **CAMBODIA: Human rights concerns: July to December 1992** (AI Index ASA 23/01/93, February 1993).

This report details human rights violations committed by both the State of Cambodia Government (the SOC, who controls most of Cambodia's population and territory) and by the *Partie of Democratic Kampuchea* (PDK, or Khmer Rouge). It also contained recommendations for action by the 49th session of the Commission on Human Rights to ensure a continued UN human rights presence in Cambodia after UNTAC leaves. It should be noted that the Commission, which ended its annual six-week session on 12 March, did adopt a resolution on Cambodia. The Commission did not decide to appoint its own country expert on Cambodia. But, it did request the UN Secretary-General to ensure a continued UN human rights presence in the country and to appoint a Special Representative, to guide and coordinate a UN human rights operation in Cambodia after UNTAC departs - and to report to the Commission and the General Assembly. According to the resolution, those UN human rights activities in Cambodia should include: continuing educational and technical assistance programs; assisting the new government to meet its human rights obligations; supporting human rights organizations; and helping to create or strengthen national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights.

The Khmer Rouge and SOC are part of the Supreme National Council (SNC), which embodies Cambodian sovereignty in the run-up to internationally supervised elections and is headed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk. As a consequence, the Khmer Rouge is addressed on the full range of AI mandate concerns, as part of a government, not as a "non-governmental entity". The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) is overseeing the implementation of the October 1991 Peace Agreements.

EXTERNAL

CAMBODIA: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONDEMNNS MASSACRE OF CIVILIANS BY KHMER ROUGE

Amnesty International is gravely concerned by the massacre of 38 civilians, most of them ethnic Vietnamese, by forces of the **Partie** of Democratic Kampuchea (PDK, or Khmer Rouge) on 10 March in Siem Reap province, northwest Cambodia.

At approximately 8.30 in the evening, as many as 40 PDK troops entered the floating village of Chong Kneas, located on the Tonle Sap Lake near the provincial capital of Siem Reap. They opened fire with Chinese AK-47's on several houseboats, including one where people were gathered to watch a video. At least 14 women and eight children were among those killed and 29 others were injured in the attack. Fifteen were killed in the video parlour and an entire family of nine was also shot dead in their home. Many died while trying to swim to safety, and several of the victims were infants, who were reportedly deliberately shot in the head.

Boats from a nearby ethnic Cambodian village were commandeered by PDK forces, who had recently become active in the area, to travel 15 kilometers to Chong Kneas. A State of Cambodia (SOC) police unit was located some 500 meters from the village, but no effort was made by them to intervene in the incident, and reports indicate that the police fled from the area. Attached to the police station were two police launches equipped with 50 calibre machine guns.

The PDK reportedly denied the attack, claiming that bandits were responsible, but UNTAC officials stated

that the attack was carried out "with military-like precision" and was too coordinated to be the work of bandits or rogue forces. Troops from PDK Division 980 are thought to be the perpetrators of the massacre.

This attack on ethnic Vietnamese civilians in Cambodia is the latest in a series of killings and "disappearances" committed by the PDK since all four Cambodian factions signed the peace agreement in October 1991. During 1992, at least 42 Vietnamese were killed and 11 "disappeared" while in the custody of PDK forces. The most recent massacre is by far the largest, with more than twice the number of Vietnamese killed than in any of seven previous incidents. It is also part of an overall pattern of continuing political violence in Cambodia, including apparent extrajudicial killings of opposition party members and attacks on political party offices, widely attributed to elements in the SOC Government. Political violence has escalated sharply since voter registration began in October 1992 in the run-up to UNTAC-supervised elections scheduled for 23 - 25 May. Three months after the elections, when the constituent assembly will have promulgated a constitution, the vast majority of the some 22,000 UNTAC civilian and military personnel are scheduled to withdraw from Cambodia.

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3. EUR 06/WU 01/93 EXTERNAL
EMBARGOED FOR 1 APRIL 1993

INTERNAL

This item is embargoed for 1 April to coincide with the Baltic States Death Penalty action launch. The IS press office is not proactively sending this out to media, though it will be used in response to media enquiries. It is mainly to assist sections who are planning media initiatives to go with the action.

EXTERNAL

BALTIC STATES: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN AGAINST DEATH PENALTY

Amnesty International is today launching a campaign to focus world attention on the issue of the death penalty in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

All three countries have retained the death penalty since regaining their independence after half a century of incorporation in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Three executions were carried out last year - two in Latvia and one in Lithuania - all for the crime of aggravated murder.

Amnesty International believes that the restoration of independence in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and the process of legislative and judicial reform under way in all three countries, provide a unique opportunity for the Baltic states to debate the fundamental issues surrounding the death penalty. Through its campaign, the international human rights organization seeks to provide an international contribution to that debate. Amnesty International hopes to convince the Baltic states that now is the right time for them to join the list of 31 other European countries that have abolished the death penalty.

Amnesty International unconditionally opposes the death penalty. The organization believes it is incompatible with respect for the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.