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WEEKLY UPDATE SERVICE 51/93

Contained in this weekly update are external items on World Conference launch, Egypt, Peru, Azerbaydzhani and Israel & OT.

PLEASE NOTE: Correction to weekly update on Sri Lanka AI Index: ASA 37/WU 02/93, which went out in Weekly Update 43/93. The President was assassinated on 1 May.

PLEASE NOTE: A short document about the War Crimes Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia is being prepared. It will be AI Index: EUR 48/03/93 and is due to be sent out in the Weekly Mailing on 26 May.

NEWS INITIATIVES

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Egypt - 26 May(New Information)

PLEASE NOTE: Weekly update item enclosed on Egyptian Government's response to the Egypt document. It is also embargoed for 26 May to be used in conjunction with the news release.

UN World Conference - 1 June, 1600 hrs gmt(New Information)

Please note embargo has been changed to 1 June 1600 hrs gmt. News release on UN World Conference will be launched at 1600 hrs gmt on 1 June at a press briefing at the Foreign Press Association in London. Pierre Sané will give a major statement on the world conference. The news release is being held up in approvals and we know that you will be anxious to receive it now - especially with the earlier embargo. We hope to get the news release out to you today or tomorrow at the latest and are very sorry that it is so late. The news release is to go with June Focus article and ENR. A media advisory being sent out to London-based journalists including details of the launch are in an item enclosed in this weekly update.

UN WORLD CONFERENCE-RELATED NEWS INITIATIVES ONLY THROUGHOUT JUNE

Annual Report - 8 July

Annual Report publication, Worldwide Summary, Regional Summaries, Regional Updates, news release.

Indonesia (Aceh) - 28 July

Document and news release to go with action on massive numbers of political killings.

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

Israel & OT - 27 May (New Information)

The Israel Research Team got back from a mission to Gaza last week. A weekly update item reporting back on their findings is enclosed and is embargoed for 27 May. The IS Press Office will send the item to international agencies.

Azerbaijan - 28 May (New Information)

Weekly update item enclosed in this document to go with document on hostage-taking and section-level action. IS Press Office will send out to selected international media.

World Conference: Video Material

A video setting out our agenda for the World Conference is currently in production. It will be a development from the conventional ENR format and will be available in four languages. It will be distributed to sections and embargoed for 2 June.

Video compilation tapes are also in preparation for use at the time of the World Conference. One will include footage of human rights violations to illustrate the challenge to governments; another will focus on AI's own work. These tapes will be edited on 4 June and will be embargoed for 14 June.

Section Initiatives

European World Conference Press Briefing in June - Please check with British Section for date

The British Section Press Office has been talking to the EC project office and the Francophone Belgium Press Officer about holding a European press briefing in Brussels for MEPs and for journalists who will be covering the World Conference. The aim will be to look at the EC's role as a whole in terms of its internal shortcomings (Asylum issues, etc), external policies - aid/development, etc, and also to look at Europe's role within the UN.

Although the idea has been suggested by the British Section, it is hoped that all European Section Press Officers will be interested in being involved. For further information please contact either Daphne Davies, in the British Section Press Office or Johannes in the EC project office.

"Caravan of Conscience" - 16 to 25 May

The Irish Section's convoy of buses through Europe to the borders of Serbia and Croatia left Ireland on Sunday. You were sent a weekly update item on Friday 14 May - please contact the Irish Section for further information.

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2. IOR 41/WU 06/93 EXTERNAL
25 May 1993

INTERNAL

Following is a media advisory being sent out to international correspondents in London today.

EXTERNAL

WORLD CONFERENCE THREATENS HUMAN RIGHTS

Amnesty International's Secretary General, Pierre Sané, will make a major statement on the threat to human rights posed by the forthcoming United Nations World Conference, when he meets the international media in London on **Tuesday, June 1**.

Speaking at his first public engagement in London since his appointment last year, Mr Sané will be outlining Amnesty International's views on the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, which takes place from June 14 - 25.

Thousands of people - from government leaders to victims of human rights abuses - will converge on the Austrian capital for the first such conference for 25 years.

Amnesty International will be strongly represented at Vienna, and at 4pm on Tuesday, June 1 Mr Sané will give a press briefing at the Foreign Press Association in London, to which you are invited.

Also at the briefing will be:

Helena Cook, Head of the Legal and Intergovernmental Organizations Office. Has an in-depth knowledge of the workings of the United Nations and has been involved in drawing up Amnesty's proposals for reforming the UN's human rights programme.

Andrew Anderson, World Conference Campaign Co-ordinator. Has been preparing Amnesty International's campaign strategy, liaising with non-governmental organisations, and setting up events at Vienna.

Anita Tiessen, Head of Press and Publications. Will lead Amnesty International's media team at Vienna. Responsible for developing media strategy for the World Conference.

Available at the briefing will be:

- News Release and article embargoed for June 1
- Video News Release embargoed for June 1
- Media Pack on the World Conference
- Case studies of victims of human rights abuses
- Photographs

Date: Tuesday, June 1, 1993

Time: 4pm - 5.30pm

Place: Foreign Press Association, 11 Carlton House Terrace
LONDON SW1Y 5AJ

To arrange interviews or for further information please contact the Press Office: 071-413 5562/5810/5811

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3. MDE 12/WU 02/93 EXTERNAL
EMBARGOED FOR 26 MAY 1993

INTERNAL

Please note that the following is to be used on 26 May in conjunction with the document and news release on Egypt. Please draw it to the attention of you Egypt/Middle East Coordinators.

EXTERNAL

EGYPT: EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Amnesty International said today that a 50-page response it has received from the Egyptian Government failed to allay concerns detailed in its report, Egypt: Grave human rights abuses amid political violence, being published on 26 May.

Amnesty International nevertheless welcomes the government's response, which it received on 19 May, after having sent the Egyptian authorities an advance copy of the report.

Said the organization: "We take this as a welcome and important indication of the government's commitment to continuing dialogue with Amnesty International and other organizations about the human rights situation in Egypt. We hope that we can build on this in future discussions with the government in order to ensure that urgent steps are taken to halt the slide into further and increasingly more widespread human rights violations."

In its response, the government acknowledges that some abuses have taken place, but says these were the exception rather than the norm. It highlights the violence committed by what it calls "extremists" or "terrorists," including more than 80 attacks on police officers in the past year, and the legal provisions which exist to safeguard human rights. The response draws attention to the government's record of open cooperation with human rights organizations. It also refers to statements by the new Interior Minister (appointed last month) that harassment or detention of suspects' relatives, and the use of torture - both of which have been criticized by Amnesty International - will not be tolerated.

The 50-page response from the Egyptian Government, in Arabic, is available on request from the International Secretariat of Amnesty International.

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4. AMR 46/WU 01/93 EXTERNAL
25 May 1993

INTERNAL

NOTE TO TRANSLATORS - Text of letter already translated into Spanish at IS, please contact Consuelo/Ana if you need it.

EXTERNAL

PERU: AI WRITES TO PRESIDENT FUJIMORI REGARDING ALLEGATIONS MADE BY AN ARMY GENERAL OF EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTIONS BY THE SECURITY FORCES

Amnesty International wrote to President Alberto Fujimori on 24 May regarding a signed statement by General Rodolfo Robles Espinoza, former division general and head of the Instruction and Doctrine Command of the Peruvian army. In his statement, he alleges that a military detachment linked to the intelligence services has been responsible for carrying out unlawful killings. In its letter, Amnesty International urged the President to take all the necessary steps to ensure that a full, impartial and independent public enquiry be promptly conducted into the allegations.

The full text of the letter to President Fujimori follows:

Amnesty international has learned with grave concern of the serious allegations made by General Rodolfo Robles Espinoza, former division general and head of the Instruction and Doctrine Command of the Peruvian army, of the existence of a military detachment linked to the intelligence services which has been responsible for carrying out unlawful killings.

As you know, General Robles issued a signed statement on 5 May 1993 in which he accuses the military detachment of at least three killings: the massacre of a professor and ten students from La Cantuta University, near Lima, in July 1992; the massacre of some 15 men, women and children in the Barrios Altos neighbourhood of Lima, in November 1991; and of the murder of "the engineers in Huaral". This last allegation could be a reference to three Japanese agricultural engineers killed on 12 July 1991 at an agricultural centre in Huaral, department of Lima. At the time the killings were attributed by the press to "hooded" members of an annihilation squad attached to the armed opposition group Partido Comunista del Perú (Sendero Luminoso), PCP, Communist Party of Peru (Shining Path). In addition General Robles names an officer whom he claims was at the head of a military detachment alleged to have abducted and killed lawyer Manuel Febres Flores, in Lima, in July 1988.

The detailed claims made by General Robles with regards to the killing of the professor and ten students corroborates, in many aspects, the allegations contained in an unsigned document brought before Congress by parliamentarian Henry Pease at the beginning of April 1993. This document was said to have been written by a group of army officers who identified themselves with "a full respect for human rights", and who claimed that the killings were carried out as a reprisal for the explosion by the PCP of a car bomb in July 1992, in a residential street in Miraflores, Lima. As you know, 22 civilians were killed and some 200 injured as a result of this criminal attack. General Robles' claims about the La Cantuta University case are also in keeping with the testimonies of witnesses to the abduction of the professor and students.

Amnesty International is not in a position to verify the accuracy or otherwise of these serious allegations made against the Peruvian National Intelligence Service, the Army Intelligence Service, and the Army Intelligence Directorate; and against individuals attached to these and other army units and command structures. The organization does believe, however, that all the allegations must be promptly and thoroughly investigated by a competent and independent body, and those found responsible brought to justice.

Amnesty International is aware that an inquiry into the La Cantuta University case has already been initiated by a military tribunal. The organization has also been informed that an investigation into the case has been formally opened by a prosecutor attached to the Public Ministry. As you know, in Peru, in the event of two jurisdictions initiating an investigation into the same alleged crimes, the Supreme Court

of Justice is obliged to decide which jurisdiction has the responsibility for taking forward the investigation and opening trial proceedings against those alleged to be responsible. However, in the past the Supreme Court of Justice has nearly always ruled in favour of human rights cases being assigned to the military courts.

In the event of such a ruling, military court decisions in Peru almost invariably contribute significantly to impunity. The United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, in its 1991 report to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, said of military courts handling human rights cases:

"A recurrent theme in times of internal crisis or under the doctrine of national security is that the military personnel attested to have engaged in gross misconduct against civilians hardly ever see their cases investigated in any rigorous manner. In the few cases which are brought to trial, they are almost invariably acquitted or given sentences that, by any standard, are grossly disproportionate to the crime committed."

The general phenomenon described by the Working Group has been amply documented by Amnesty International in Peru. In the context of military counter-insurgency operations over the past ten years, Peruvian military courts have consistently failed, with only two known exceptions, to convict armed forces personnel alleged to have violated human rights.

It is in this context that I am respectfully urging you, as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, to order that the investigation being carried out by the military court be stopped. I am also respectfully urging you, as President of the Republic, to take all the necessary steps to ensure that a full, impartial and independent public inquiry be promptly conducted into the extremely serious allegations made by General Robles. Such an inquiry should include within its terms of reference an investigation into all the killings identified by General Robles, and into the alleged existence within the intelligence services of a special military detachment responsible for these and possibly other killings. The findings of such an inquiry should be made public and those found responsible for the killings should be brought to trial before an independent, impartial and competent civilian court.

I would like to reaffirm Amnesty International's unqualified opposition to the thousands of cases of torture and deliberate and arbitrary killings by the clandestine PCP and by the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru, Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement. These atrocities have been, and continue to be, directed against defenceless civilians and members of the security forces who were hors de combat.

Amnesty International recognizes the right of the authorities to control the activities of the PCP and MRTA. However, the organization believes that these atrocities by the armed opposition must be met by a policy and practice which, as you and representatives of your government have publicly affirmed on numerous occasions, adheres to "an unrestricted respect for human rights".

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Relations, Mr Oscar de la Puente Raygada; the Minister of Defence, General EP Victor Malca Villanueva; the Minister of Justice, Mr Fernando Vega Santa Gadea; and the President of the Armed Forces Joint Command, Commander General EP Nicolás de Bari Hermoza Ríos. I have also decided to make public the text of this letter.

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5. EUR 55/WU 01/93
EMBARGOED FOR 28 MAY 1993

AZERBAJDZHAN: HOSTAGES IN THE KARABAKH CONFLICT - CIVILIANS CONTINUE TO PAY THE PRICE

Hundreds of civilians are taken hostage by government forces, paramilitary units and private individuals - to be exchanged for other hostages or bartered for petrol or money - in the context of intercommunal violence in and around Karabakh, Azerbaydzhani, said Amnesty International today.

Intercommunal violence in and around Karabakh, which is populated mainly by ethnic Armenians, has escalated since 1988 into large-scale armed conflict which both sides say has claimed thousands of lives, many of them civilian.

In a report issued today, Amnesty International is urging all parties to the conflict over the disputed region of Karabakh to take immediate steps to end the widespread practice of holding non-combatant civilians as hostages.

Among those Amnesty International is seeking further information about is Saltanat Zulal gyzy Mamedova, and five other members of her family. She and her two daughters, along with their three children, then aged 12, five and four, were reportedly detained on 25 or 26 February 1992. They were fleeing from Khodzhal, a town in the Karabakh area populated mainly by ethnic Azerbaydzhani, which fell to ethnic Armenian forces at that time. Saltanat Mamedova and her family were last reported to have been seen in May 1992, held by ethnic Armenians, and their current situation is not known.

In many cases hostage-taking of ethnic Armenians is said to have taken place with the complicity of the Azerbaydzhani authorities. For example, Viliq Oganezov and Artavaz Mirzoyan, ethnic Armenian citizens of the Republic of Georgia, were arrested on 28 April 1992 by airport police at Baku, the capital of Azerbaydzhani, when they arrived there in transit to the Georgian capital of Tbilisi. According to unofficial sources they were initially held on suspicion of espionage, but no supporting evidence was found and at least by the end of 1992 they had not been charged with any offence. It is alleged that their lawyer was told by Azerbaydzhani officials that they were being held solely on grounds of their ethnic origin as hostages, in the hope they could be exchanged for Azerbaydzhani. Their situation is said to be particularly complicated by the fact that they have no ethnic Armenian relatives in Karabakh with whom any exchange arrangements could be made.

The Human Rights Commission of the Georgian parliament has details on at least 17 other of its citizens of Armenian origin said to have been detained as hostages by Azerbaydzhani law enforcement officials while they were in transit through Azerbaydzhani.

During a visit in April that year to Karabakh, representatives of the human rights organization Helsinki Watch reported that the Interior Minister of the self-proclaimed republic openly acknowledged that 12 ethnic Armenian families in the region were holding Azerbaydzhani hostages. Amnesty International, has repeatedly expressed its concern about this issue to officials in Armenia and Azerbaydzhani, including during visits to both countries last year.

Amnesty International takes no position on the legitimacy of territorial claims, or the political objectives of the parties to the conflict over Karabakh. However, in addition to hostage-taking, the organization has expressed its grave concern about reports of extrajudicial execution and other deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians or combatants no longer taking part in hostilities. It is also concerned about the ill-treatment and torture (including rape) of both combatants and non-combatants.

Amnesty International continues to urge all sides to uphold international humanitarian standards and to protect human rights. The organization strongly believes that all violations of human rights are to be

deplored and that in no circumstances can abuses perpetrated by one party be used as justification for abuses carried out by another.

Hostage-taking is expressly forbidden by the 1949 Geneva Conventions and Amnesty International is repeating its appeal to all sides to ensure that no one is detained as a hostage - or otherwise held solely on grounds of their ethnic origin.

As part of Amnesty International's campaign in relation to the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights - to be held in Vienna in June - the organization is calling on all governments to ratify international human rights treaties and to improve the legislative and institutional framework for the protection and promotion of human rights.

For further information on the issue of hostage-taking please see [Azerbaijan - Hostages in the Karabakh conflict: civilians continue to pay the price](#), (AI Index: EUR 55/08/93).

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6. MDE 15/WU 06/93 EXTERNAL
EMBARGOED FOR 27 MAY 1993

ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL EXTREMELY CONCERNED AT THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED GAZA STRIP

Amnesty International is extremely concerned at the deteriorating human rights situation in the Gaza Strip, occupied by Israel since 1967. It is particularly concerned about the upsurge in killings of Palestinian civilians by Israeli forces since the deportation to south Lebanon of more than 400 alleged supporters of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Islamic Jihad in December 1992.

Since then, more than 100 Palestinians have been shot and killed by Israeli forces, at least 70 in the Gaza Strip. More than 30 were 16-years-old or younger. The month of May has already registered the highest monthly death toll since the end of 1992, with up to 24 people shot dead by Israeli forces, up to 19 of these in the Gaza Strip.

Amnesty International believes that many of these killings are absolutely unjustifiable, and that some may amount to extra-judicial executions. It calls on the Israeli authorities to take urgent measures to redress this situation and to prevent the death toll at the hands of its forces from rising still further.

Amnesty International is also concerned that the use of massive firepower by Israeli forces against dwellings in which Palestinians suspected of having committed serious crimes, such as participation in the killings of Israelis or other Palestinians, are alleged to be hiding in may amount to collective punishment.

In May an Amnesty International delegation composed of a staff member from the International Secretariat and Major Allan Huglstad, an officer in the Danish Army, visited Israel and the Gaza Strip to investigate recent cases of killings by Israeli forces and cases of house destruction. They also discussed the guidelines for the use of firearms and on house destruction operations with Israel Defence Force (IDF) officials. The delegates also requested information on a number of individual cases.

Cases of particular concern are those of people who were shot dead while apparently not engaging in any violent activity. They include: Rana Abu Tuyur, aged 11, killed on 19 December 1992 during clashes in Khan Yunes while on her way to buy milk; Rizq al-Fara, aged 19, shot dead on the same day while standing on his balcony after having gone to help carry Rana Abu Tuyur to a car; Maher al-Maja'idah, aged 8, shot dead in the street in Khan Yunes on 20 March 1993; Ra'edah al-Qarra, aged 13, shot by a soldier on 8 April 1993 while she was standing by the corner of her house; Najah Abu Dalal, a 34-year-old mother of six who died on 26 April 1993 after being shot in the head on 21 April by a soldier stationed on a tall building nearby while she was standing in a private courtyard; Fu'ad Timraz, aged 20, killed on 12 May 1993 in Deir al-Balah Refugee Camp by a single shot to the head also from a tall building nearby; and Fares al-Kurdi, aged 18 months, shot in the chest on 16 May 1993 during clashes in Jabalia Refugee Camp while he was sheltering in a shop doorway. The IDF has undertaken to provide Amnesty International with information on these cases.

The Amnesty International delegation also visited scenes of houses destroyed by the IDF during operations said to be aimed at capturing Palestinians wanted for arrest. The buildings were massively destroyed and had been rendered uninhabitable. Amnesty International fears that the large number of houses damaged in each operation and the extent of the damage indicates that one of the aims, if not the main aim, of these operations is to impose a form of collective punishment on the inhabitants. This is reinforced by evidence that at least some of the dwellings may have been blown up from the inside after soldiers had completed their search and arrest operations. Amnesty International is awaiting clarification of such evidence from the IDF.

Armed Palestinians have been responsible for an increased number of killings of Israeli civilians, as well as of a number of Palestinians alleged to have collaborated with the Israeli authorities, since December. Responsibility for some of these attacks has been claimed by armed Palestinian groups, like the killing of two Israeli civilians and two Palestinians while engaged in a business transaction in the Gaza Strip on 16 May. Fatah -- the main faction of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) -- and Hamas acknowledged joint responsibility for their deaths. Amnesty International condemns such deliberate and arbitrary killings, and appeals to the PLO and Hamas to stop them.