
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 159/94

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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - DENMARK (This item is being sent to Danish national media but for other sections it can be used as a for response only item)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Pakistan - 27 July - SEE NEWS SERVICE 81/94 - We are sending the report out via Swift air so it should reach you in time for the release date.

Myanmar - 20 July - SEE NEWS SERVICE 99/94

India - 16 August - SEE NEWS SERVICE 129/94

Kosovo - 20 September - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

Algeria - first week of October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

France - second week of October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

Sri Lanka - 15 July - SEE NS 146/94

Brazil - 14 September - SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

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DENMARK: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REITERATES CALL FOR INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO POLICE ILL-TREATMENT

Amnesty International today called again on the Danish Minister of Justice to hold a wide-ranging, independent inquiry into allegations of ill-treatment by police officers, which the organization highlighted in a report released last month.

"The information we received during our months long investigation points to an apparent problem with police ill-treatment," Amnesty International said.

"We have welcomed the Justice Minister's suspension of the use of the leg-lock, and are now looking for him to show his commitment to get to the bottom of the issue of police ill-treatment by carrying out a wide-ranging independent inquiry."

The organization's call for an inquiry covers not only the investigation of individual complaints but also a review of police regulations, operations and training with a view to revising procedures.

In recent days, public debate on the issue of police ill-treatment has focused on the fact that eight people referred to in Amnesty International's report have not filed official complaints.

By focusing on a few cases and the legal status of their complaints, Amnesty International said the authorities seem to be dodging the larger issue highlighted in the report.

Indeed, the fact that a number of individuals featured in the report have not filed formal complaints illustrates the widespread reluctance to complain about police behaviour, because of a lack of confidence in the independence and integrity of the complaints system.

The organizations said that its concerns about those eight cases -- and others not quoted in the report -- were based on allegations by the individuals, review of video footage, medical evidence and expert analysis of police restraint techniques.

Similar allegations about police practice were recorded by Christiania's Documentary Group, and reports and videos were submitted to the Minister of Justice and the Parliamentary Legal Affairs Committee.

"The number of complaints about police handling during the Christiania operations -- made to Amnesty International and other bodies -- led us to believe that the problem was not limited to a few people but was part of a pattern of apparent police misconduct," Amnesty International said.

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