

Makedonien (117)

(28)

Amnesty International On-line. <http://www.amnesty.org>[back](#)

23/10-01

ai-index EUR 65/004/2001 10/08/2001

10 August 2001

AI Index EUR 65/004/2001 - News Service Nr. 141

Macedonia: Amnesty International appeals to all parties to protect civilian populations

Amnesty International is concerned at the massive increase in human rights violations in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Macedonia), despite the government's announcement on 7 August that a peace agreement would be signed by all political parties on 13 August.

Since the announcement, there have been daily reports of violations, including extrajudicial killings, by the Macedonian police forces, while the ethnic Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA) has reportedly abducted and ill-treated civilians, some of whom are being held hostage.

"All parties involved should respect international human rights and abide by their obligation to respect the Geneva conventions, which forbid the murder and torture of civilians, and the taking of hostages," said Amnesty International.

On 7 August, according to credible reports received by Amnesty International, extrajudicial executions took place when Macedonian police killed two ethnic Albanians and three Albanian nationals in a raid on a house in Skopje and detained five others, alleging that they were preparing a terrorist attack.

In retaliation, the NLA abducted five civilian construction-workers -- four Macedonians and one Rom -- on the same day. The five were released the following day. They alleged they had been ill-treated by the NLA. On 9 August the NLA reportedly abducted another six Macedonian civilians from a village near Tetovo.

After ten Macedonian soldiers were killed, reportedly by the NLA, in an ambush near Tetovo on 8 August, the fighting between the NLA and the Macedonian security forces in Tetovo intensified. Amnesty International is concerned about the reported killing of two ethnic Albanian civilians during these clashes. The organization is further concerned about reports from the Tetovo hospital that a three-year-old Macedonian girl and her father were injured in the fighting.

Background

Following the death of the 10 soldiers on 8 August, in Prilep, the soldiers' home-town, shops owned by Muslims - including Turks, Roma and Bosniaks - were looted, and the mosque was burned to the ground, reportedly by crowds of Macedonian men in

revenge for the death of the soldiers. In Skopje, on the same day, several hundred Macedonian Slavs allegedly looted Albanian shops in protest against the announcement of the peace agreement. Amnesty International calls on the Macedonian authorities to conduct prompt and impartial investigations, and to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice. Amnesty International also recommends that the police and judicial authorities in Macedonia exercise due diligence to prevent ethnically motivated violence. The authorities should also make clear that such violence is a criminal offence and will not be tolerated.

Despite negotiations and cease-fire agreements, clashes continue between the ethnic Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA) and the Macedonian police and military forces. The NLA claims that its aims are to secure the political, social and economic rights of ethnic Albanians in Macedonia, who make up between a quarter and a third of the country's population. Since the first clashes between the NLA and Macedonian police in January 2001, fighting has taken place in the villages of the Shar mountains to the north of the predominantly Albanian town of Tetovo in the west of Macedonia, and around Kumanovo in the north of the country near the border with Kosovo.

The violence continued even after the formation of a government of national unity in May, which includes the main Macedonian and ethnic Albanian parties. In June, the European Union and the United States appointed special envoys to facilitate talks between Macedonian Slavs and ethnic Albanian parties. On 5 July a cease-fire was agreed between the Macedonian security forces and the NLA, and the dialogue between the political parties continued. This cease-fire has been breached constantly during the peace negotiations, but, after many setbacks, the political parties agreed that they would sign the peace agreement on 13 August.

\ENDS

public document

For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566

Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW web : <http://www.amnesty.org>

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

The copyright for all information available at this Web site rests with Amnesty International. You may download and read these documents. You may not alter this information, repost or sell it without permission. If you use any of these documents, you are encouraged to make a donation to Amnesty International to support future research. The address of your nearest AI office can be found here.

[back](#)

Nakedonien - (117)

Amnesty International On-line. <http://www.amnesty.org>

back

23/10-01

ai-index EUR 65/005/2001 15/08/2001
Public Statement

15 August 2001

AI Index EUR 65/005/2001 - News Service Nr. 144

Macedonia (FYROM): A durable peace depends on respect for human rights

The Framework Agreement, signed Monday in Ohrid, represents the best opportunity to ensure greater respect for the human rights of all people in Macedonia by establishing the principle of non-discrimination and equal treatment of all under the law. It provides a legal framework through which respect for the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of ethnic Albanians and other ethnic minorities could finally be realized.

As sporadic fighting continues in Macedonia, Amnesty International calls on the Macedonian government, representatives of the ethnic Albanian community and the international community to ensure that the peace agreement is effective in bringing an end to the human rights abuses experienced by civilians over the past six months.

Since February this year both the Macedonian forces and the armed opposition group, the National Liberation Army (NLA), have been responsible for indiscriminate killings of unarmed civilians. Macedonia has also seen incidents of "disappearances" and abductions, torture and ill-treatment, arbitrary arrests and the massive displacement of both the ethnic Albanian and Macedonian populations, within and outside of the country.

Those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law and serious human rights abuses in Macedonia must be brought to justice before the courts, in proceedings which respect the rights of each person suspected, as guaranteed under national law and international standards.

The Macedonian authorities have said they will investigate and prosecute war crimes allegedly perpetrated by members of the NLA. Amnesty International reminds the authorities of their obligations under domestic law, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and other international standards relating to arrest, detention and fair trials. The organization also calls on the Macedonian authorities to promptly and impartially investigate allegations of human rights violations perpetrated by the Macedonian military and police forces, and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

As part of the Framework Agreement troops from 12 of the 19 member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will be deployed in Macedonia to collect arms voluntarily surrendered by the NLA, provided there is a "durable cease-fire". Amnesty International is also calling on NATO to ensure that the human rights of all civilians are respected and protected by the 3,500 NATO troops, due to be deployed in "Operation Essential Harvest".

The organization further calls on all parties to the agreement, and the international community, to ensure the safe and sustainable return of displaced persons and refugees - including those who fled without documentation.

Amnesty International reiterated that a durable peace depends on respect for the human rights of all people from all communities in Macedonia.

The Framework Agreement

The Framework Agreement was signed on 13 August 2001 by the Government of Macedonia - which includes the leaders of the two main Albanian political parties - and representatives of the European Union and the USA. The NLA - who were not a party to the talks - have generally welcomed the agreement; it has been opposed by another smaller armed opposition group, the Albanian National Army.

Amnesty International welcomes the provisions of the Framework Agreement which aim to redress the past human rights abuses and institutionalized discrimination which have contributed to the current crisis.

Amnesty International particularly welcomes proposed constitutional amendments which guarantee the internationally recognized human rights of all citizens of Macedonia, and the expansion of the Public Attorney's mandate to redress alleged violations of those rights by public authorities.

The organization also welcomes measures proposed for human rights training - with the assistance of the international community - of members of the police force and other actors in the criminal justice system. Amnesty International and other human rights organizations have, over the past ten years, documented many cases of ill-treatment and torture, and unfair trials of ethnic Albanians and other minorities.

The agreement aspires to create a multi-ethnic police force reflecting the overall make-up of the population by July 2004. Amnesty International notes that, in effect, this will increase the numbers of ethnic Albanians serving in police forces where that community is in a majority. The police will remain under the control of the central government.

Provisions of the Framework Agreement, which require amendment of the Constitution are due to be approved by the Macedonian parliament within the next 45 days. These, and proposed changes to the law, aim to ensure respect for the ethnic identity and interests of all Macedonian citizens, and aspire to improve respect for the economic, social and cultural rights of ethnic minority communities, and in particular, the ethnic Albanians, who make up an estimated one third of the population of Macedonia.

Reflecting the demands of ethnic Albanians and others to be acknowledged as citizens, the preamble to the constitution will be amended to refer to "citizens of the republic of Macedonia", rather than listing Albanians, Turks, Vlachs and Roma and others - as in the previous constitution - as minorities.

Laws regulating employment in public administration will be amended to ensure an equitable representation of all communities. Other measures aim to ensure that where ethnic Albanians - or other ethnic minorities - make up at least 20 per cent of the population of a municipality, that minority groups will be able to conduct official business in their own language and educate their children up to university level in their own language. Albanian will also be recognized as a second official language throughout Macedonia.

In order to achieve these aims, the Framework Agreement requires the international community to come forward with the necessary financial and technical assistance.

\\ENDS

public document

Makedonien (117)

Amnesty International On-line. <http://www.amnesty.org>

back

23/10-01

ai-index EUR 65/006/2001 06/09/2001

6 September 2001

AI Index EUR 65/006/2001 - News Service Nr. 158

News Flash

Macedonia: Ohrid Agreement - a starting point for the protection of human rights

Amnesty International considers that today's vote in the Macedonian Parliament - by a substantial majority - in favour of the Framework Agreement represents an opportunity to ensure greater respect for human rights in Macedonia through the establishment of the principle of non-discrimination and equal treatment of all under the law.

Amnesty International welcomes those provisions of the Framework Agreement which aim to redress the past human rights abuses and institutionalized discrimination which have contributed to the current situation, and the commitment made by all parties to ensure the safe return of internally displaced persons and refugees.

The organization particularly welcomes proposed constitutional amendments which guarantee the internationally recognized human rights of all citizens of Macedonia.

Amnesty International also welcomes measures proposed for human rights training - with the assistance of the international community - of members of the police force and other actors in the criminal justice system (particularly in the light of concerns addressed by Amnesty International and other human rights organizations, over the past 10 years, about many documented cases of ill-treatment and torture, and unfair trials of ethnic Albanians and other minorities).

The organization has a number of concerns about the implementation of the constitutional amendments included within the Framework Agreement, particularly with respect to the rights of the Roma and Egyptiani, Turkish, Serb and Vlach minorities.

\ENDS

public document

For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566

Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW web : <http://www.amnesty.org>

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

The copyright for all information available at this Web site rests with Amnesty International. You may download and read these documents. You may not alter this information, repost or sell it without permission. If you use any of these documents, you are encouraged to make a donation to Amnesty International to support future research. The address of your nearest AI office can be found here.

back



Nakedonien (117)

Amnesty International On-line. <http://www.amnesty.org>

back

23/10-01

ai-index EUR 65/007/2001 07/09/2001

7 September 2001

AI Index EUR 65/007/2001 - News Service Nr. 159

Macedonia: Adoption of agreement - a step forward for human rights.

Amnesty International considers yesterday's vote by a substantial majority in the Macedonian Parliament in favour of the Framework Agreement, as an opportunity to ensure greater respect for human rights in Macedonia through the establishment of the principle of non-discrimination and equal treatment of all under the law.

The agreement provides for redress of past human rights abuses and the institutionalized discrimination against ethnic minorities which has contributed in the past months to political instability and serious violations of basic human rights. It also provides for constitutional amendments which guarantee the internationally recognized human rights of all citizens of Macedonia and, in particular, the expansion of the mandate of the Public Attorney (Ombudsperson) to redress alleged violations of those rights by public authorities.

The organization welcomes measures proposed for human rights training - with the assistance of the international community - of members of the police force and other actors in the criminal justice system. "This is particularly important in the light of concerns expressed by Amnesty International and other human rights organizations, over the past 10 years, about many documented cases of ill-treatment and torture, and unfair trials of ethnic Albanians and other minorities," the organization said.

The commitment of all parties to ensure the safe and sustainable return of all displaced persons and refugees, including those who fled without documentation, was also welcomed by the organization.

However, despite the encouraging messages sent by the signing of the agreement, and yesterday's vote in approving the Ohrid Agreement, Amnesty International is concerned that explicit references to international human rights standards are missing from the document.

The organization is further concerned that many provisions of the agreement do not adequately address the rights of other minorities - Roma and Egyptians, Turkish, Vlach and Serb - who do not constitute 20% of any regional population. The agreement is primarily focussed on ensuring the social, economic and cultural rights of minorities who comprise more than 20% of a local community, enabling them, for example, to use their own language at an official level and enabling its use at all levels of the education system.

The parliament now has until the end of October to begin introducing legislation to implement certain provisions of the agreement. However, the process may be derailed should problems arise in the course of the weapons collections programme conducted by NATO, and in the related amnesty offered by President Trajkovski to NLA members who disarm voluntarily. Amnesty International reminds the government that "amnesties for human rights abuses are inconsistent with international law and the state's duty to bring to justice those responsible for such abuses".

Given the organization's previous concerns about arbitrary arrests and detentions, and torture and ill-treatment, Amnesty International is also concerned by recent statements from the Interior

Minister Ljube Boskovski, reported in the Macedonian media, promising a 'crackdown on the rebels' as soon as NATO troops deployed in Operation Essential Harvest leave the country.

Finally, despite statements by the authorities promising redress for human rights abuses and crimes committed during the recent period of conflict, no plans have as yet been made public as to how this process will be implemented. "The Macedonian Government should ensure that investigations into alleged abuses carried out by all parties to the conflict are conducted promptly and impartially, with respect for the rights of detainees, and that proceedings are carried out in compliance with international standards for fair trials," Amnesty International concluded.

Background

The Ohrid Agreement was signed on 13 August by leaders of the Macedonian and Albanian political parties which comprise the coalition Government of National Unity, following an international diplomatic initiative to save the country from civil war.

Recent reports in the domestic media have indicated a wide range of attitudes towards the Agreement. The Albanian media is largely in favour of the Agreement, but shows concern over its implementation and the withdrawal of NATO. The Macedonian media is divided between those who favour the Agreement, and supporters of hardline nationalists such as Prime Minister Georgievski and Interior Minister Ljube Boskovski who regard it as a betrayal of the Macedonian state and people.

\ENDS

public document

For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566

Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW web : <http://www.amnesty.org>

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

The copyright for all information available at this Web site rests with Amnesty International. You may download and read these documents. You may not alter this information, repost or sell it without permission. If you use any of these documents, you are encouraged to make a donation to Amnesty International to support future research. The address of your nearest AI office can be found here.

[back](#)