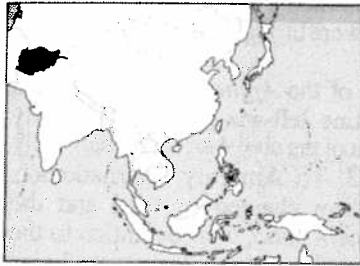


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COUNTRY DOSSIER	SECTION 1
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**This report covers the period
January to December 1983**



Afghanistan

Amnesty International's concerns were the imprisonment of prisoners of conscience, the detention of political prisoners without charge or trial, the torture and ill-treatment of detainees, the use of the death penalty and reported extrajudicial executions. Amnesty International was also concerned that the few trials of political prisoners it learned of appeared to fall far short of internationally recognized standards.

The continuing civil war between the government of President Babrak Karmal, supported by forces of the Soviet Union and various Islamic militia was accompanied by allegations of human rights violations on both sides. The civil war itself and the continued denial of access to the country by the Afghan Government to international humanitarian organizations and most of the world press hampered Amnesty International's collection of information and the verification of such allegations.

It was therefore difficult for Amnesty International to gauge the full extent of political detention, but the available information indicated that several thousand detainees were held in the Kabul area alone.

Amnesty International continued to be concerned about the imprisonment of several academics from the University of Kabul whose arrest was reported in the *Amnesty International Report 1983*. Although several members of this group were released, at least three – Professor Hassan Kakar, Dr Osman Rustar and Shukrullah Kohgadai – were tried *in camera* for “counter-revolutionary offences”. The three men had reportedly participated in a discussion group at the University of Kabul which tried to suggest possible peaceful solutions to the civil war which has been fought in Afghanistan since the establishment of the

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government of President Babrak Karmal on 27 December 1979 and the intervention of the armed forces of the Soviet Union. During their trial all three defendants were reported to have pointed out that their actions had not violated in any way the Afghan constitution, known as the Fundamental Principles. The three men were reportedly denied access to a lawyer during their period of detention and at their trial. Dr Rustar received a sentence of 10 years' imprisonment, Professor Kakar was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment and Shukrullah Kohgadai was sentenced to seven years'. All three were denied any right of appeal and were adopted as prisoners of conscience by Amnesty International.

Amnesty International also investigated the case of another university teacher, the nuclear physicist Dr Mohammad Younis Akbari, who was arrested on 27 April 1983. No charges were brought against him and his place of detention was not known.

Several hundred alleged members of the *Afghan Mellat*, Afghan Social Democratic Party, a clandestine left-wing nationalist party which advocated a negotiated settlement of the civil war, were reportedly arrested between May and July 1983. To Amnesty International's knowledge none of those detained were charged or tried and the organization continued to express concern about their detention to the authorities. The cases of 35 alleged members of the party were being investigated by Amnesty International.

Most people detained in Afghanistan for political reasons are held without charge or trial. The few trials which took place were reportedly held *in camera* without the defendants being legally represented. Visits by relatives appeared to be strictly forbidden during the period when prisoners were interrogated, which in some cases lasted for up to two years. Defendants were sometimes not informed of the charges against them before appearing in court.

Amnesty International received reports that 19 alleged members of the central committee of *Sama*, a Maoist group actively opposed to the government of President Babrak Karmal, had been arrested and secretly tried in August 1982. It would appear that the accused were tried *in camera* without legal representation and with no right of appeal. Amnesty International received no response from the government as to the fate of 18 of the prisoners. However, the family of one of the accused, Engineer Zamari Sadique, was reportedly informed that he had been executed.

Throughout 1983 Amnesty International was disturbed by consistent reports of torture and ill-treatment of people taken into custody by the *Khedamat-e Atla't Dawlati, Khad* (State Information Police). Political arrests were usually said to take place at night without warrant, in many cases without the arresting officers identifying themselves. Detainees' families were generally not informed of the place of detention.

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Detainees were allegedly subjected to beatings, deprivation of sleep and electric shock torture involving the use of electric shock batons or electrodes wired to a telephone. Former detainees interviewed by Amnesty International, and other reports the organization has received, indicated that the use of such torture techniques during interrogation was systematic in eight *Khad* interrogation centres in Kabul. Most ex-detainees also complained of a complete absence of medical care.

In an international news release and background paper issued on 2 November Amnesty International identified the eight interrogation centres in Kabul where torture was known to take place. The eight were: (1) *Khad* "Office Number Five", known as *Khad-i Panj*; (2) the headquarters of the *Khad* in the Shashdarak district; (3) the Internal Affairs Ministry building; (4) the Central Interrogation Office, known as the *Sedarat*; (5) the office of the military branch of the *Khad*, known as *Khad-i Nezami*; (6) and (7) two private houses near the *Sedarat* building – the Ahmad Shah Khan house and the Wasir Akbar Khan house – and (8) the *Khad* office in the Howzai Barikat district.

Those arrested and subjected to torture included not only people accused of involvement in armed resistance to the government but civil servants, doctors, teachers, students and many others seized on suspicion of non-violent opposition. In most cases torture was apparently used either to extract information or to force confessions from detainees.

In some cases detainees reportedly suffered serious physical and mental injuries as a result of their torture and ill-treatment. Several cases of detainees dying as a result of these injuries were reported to Amnesty International. The organization received reports at the end of 1983 alleging the death in detention following torture of Gholam Shah Sarshar-e Shomali, a poet and former manager of the newspaper *Anis*.

As in previous years, Amnesty International continued to be concerned about the use of the judicial death penalty and about reported extrajudicial executions. In April four men were executed following conviction for alleged terrorist offences; six more executions were officially announced in November, four of those executed being members of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan accused of the abduction and execution of a fellow party member. Two further executions involving alleged members of an Islamic fundamentalist group were reported in December. There were allegations of unpublicized death sentences and executions but Amnesty International received neither details of these nor the names of those concerned other than that of Engineer Zamari Sadique of the *Sama* group referred to above.

Amnesty International also received reports of the execution of individuals detained by the many Islamic groups which were carrying

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out insurgent activities against the government of President Babrak Karmal and which effectively controlled territory, although these were rarely officially acknowledged by the groups. At the end of December 1983 an Afghan Army Captain, Mohammad Naim, was reportedly executed following a "trial" by one such group in Nangarhar province. More than 20 members of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan were reportedly captured and later executed in November by insurgents in Herat.

Amnesty International also received occasional reports of extrajudicial executions by both government and Soviet forces. On 30 June Soviet forces were allegedly involved in the killing of 23 unarmed civilians in the village of Rauzda in Ghazni province, outside the context of combat. On several occasions Amnesty International urged the Afghan Government to establish an inquiry into such reported extrajudicial executions and, if the reports were found to be true, to charge and try responsible officials in conformity with the penal code of Afghanistan. No reply was received from the government.

Afghanistan ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on 24 January 1983.