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AMMESTY INTERNATIONAL CONCERNED AT DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEAN GOVERNMENT'S

LACK OF RESPONSE TO APPEALS

Amnesty International today (Sunday 8 May 1977) expressed concern at the lack of response by the Government of Democratic Kampuchea (Cambodia) to its past appeals and inquiries.

The international human rights organization said that in February this year it had appealed to President Khieu Samphan to look into the fate of 26 Cambodian citizens forcibly returned to Cambodia by Thailand in November 1976. The 26 persons, mainly farmers, but including an 11-year-old child, were later reported to have been executed shortly after their return to Cambodia.

AI had also made a separate appeal to the Prime Minister of Thailand urging that refugees should not be compelled to return to their country of origin when there were possibilities of reprisals.

The appeal to President Khieu Samphan was contained in a letter which also referred to reports alleging summary executions and maltreatment of civilians by local authorities in some areas of Cambodia. As with previous inquiries made by AI to the Government of Democratic Kampuchea, the letter has remained unanswered.

Commenting on past reports of executions in Cambodia, Amnesty International said today: "Allegations of executions have been numerous. Many reports, especially of isolated killings, remain uncorroborated, but the number and gravilty of allegations of summary executions cannot be ignored".

Amnesty International is a worldwide human rights movement which works impartially for the release of prisoners of conscience: men and women detained anywhere for their beliefs, colour, ethnic origin, religion or language, provided they have neither used nor advocated violence. Amnesty International opposes torture and capital punishment in all cases without reservation and advocates fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners. Amnesty International is independent of all governments, political factions, ideologies, economic interests and religious creeds. It is financed by its membership and by subscriptions from all parts of the world. Amnesty International has consultative status with the United Nations (ECOSOC), UNESCO and the Council of Europe, has cooperative relations with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States, and has observer status with the Organization of African Unity (Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refug