

activist

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50
YEARS



Tawakkol Karman (right) leads a protest in Sana'a, Yemen's capital, on February 13, 2011. The protestors were calling for the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Tawakkol Karman is a Nobel Peace Prize winner who has long campaigned against human rights violations in Yemen.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA:

WOMEN CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY

Throughout the Middle East and North Africa, women have been on the front lines of the ongoing struggle for rights and reform. Yet for them, the “revolution” will not truly start until their involvement is both recognized and genuinely valued.

Part of that recognition came in October when leading Yemeni pro-reform activist Tawakkol Karman was one of three women to jointly receive the Nobel Peace Prize (the others were two Liberian women, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and human rights activist Leymah Gbowee).

As a journalist and president of the non-governmental organization Women Journalists without Chains, Tawakkol Karman had long campaigned against human rights violations in Yemen and was briefly detained in January 2011. She is the first Arab woman to win the prize.

“This Nobel Peace Prize recognizes what human rights activists have known for decades: that the promotion of equality is essential to building just and peaceful societies worldwide,” said Salil Shetty, Secretary General of Amnesty International. “The tireless work of these and countless other activists brings us closer to a world where women will see their rights protected and enjoy growing influence at all levels of government.”

Yet women in Yemen find themselves still very far from achieving equality. Dozens of women were reportedly injured in the south-western city of Ta'izz after rock-throwing government supporters attacked a rally celebrating Tawakkol Karman's award.

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BRIAN JOHN



Brian John, who died on January 23, will be dearly missed by many people in or associated with Amnesty International—in Canada, Ireland, the UK, in Myanmar and throughout Asia and in many other places around the world. Brian was an

amazingly dedicated, hardworking and gifted human rights worker; a tower of strength in all kinds of ways; a participant in and leader of Amnesty's work in Southeast Asia for many years before becoming our country expert on Myanmar. And throughout all of this, he was the lifelong and beloved partner of Margaret, one of this organization's greatest human rights activists. Brian has given so much to Amnesty that we cannot help but feel we will be much less without him—even though, thankfully, Amnesty has the great fortune to draw continually so many wonderful people into the organization. For many of us, it has been an immense privilege to know Brian, to have worked with him, to have enjoyed his company and shared his efforts to improve the lives of people.

—*Bob Goodfellow, Executive Director, Amnesty International Canada*

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S VISION AND MISSION

Amnesty International's vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. In pursuit of this vision, Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of these rights.

RECEIVING ACTIVIST MAGAZINE

To receive Activist magazine, phone **1-800-AMNESTY (1-800-266-3789)** and become a member of Amnesty International or confirm your current membership. Published in print four times a year, Activist is free to all Amnesty members who request it. Change of address or problems receiving Activist? Contact Sue Bellefeuille at our National Office by email at sbellefe@amnesty.ca.

AMNESTY.CA

BRANCH FINANCIAL UPDATE

Preliminary unaudited financial results for Amnesty International Canada (English speaking) for the calendar year 2011 are depicted in the table below. Fundraised revenues amounted to \$11.237 million, an amount less than the \$11.416 million budgeted for the year, resulting in a shortfall from budget of \$189 thousand. In spite of being slightly below the target which had been set, the fundraised revenue is the most ever raised by the Branch in a twelve-month fiscal period. Furthermore, we are optimistic that the Branch will raise an even greater amount in 2012.

In addition to fundraised revenue, annual income from other sources amounted to \$84 thousand, resulting in total revenue for the year amounting to \$11.321 million.

Expenditures for 2011 totalled \$11.240 million, an amount which, due to cost-cutting measures taken throughout the year, is significantly less than the amount of \$11.429 million which had been budgeted for expenditures.

Table of Revenue and Expenditure (unaudited Actual and Budget in 000s of dollars):

	Actual to December 31	Budget to December 31
Revenues		
Fundraised	11,237	11,416
Other	84	150
Subtotal	11,321	11,566
Expenditures	11,240	11,429
Net surplus (deficit)	81	137

The above-noted variances from budget have resulted in a net surplus from operations for 2011 of \$81 thousand as compared to the budgeted surplus of \$137 thousand. Trends noted in the course of executing the 2011 budget have been taken into account in the course of establishing budgetary levels for 2012.

It is important to note that these figures are preliminary, and that there may be changes as a result of the external audit which is scheduled to take place in March of 2012.

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MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA: WOMEN CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY



Egyptian women demonstrating in Cairo on December 20, 2011. They were protesting the authorities' human rights abuses against women.

(cover story continued)

In July 2011, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces in Egypt cancelled a quota system that would have guaranteed seats in the parliament to women. Instead, they created a requirement that each political party have at least one woman on its candidate list, but did not require that women candidates be included near the top of the list. Some of the women who did run for election were harassed, their posters torn down and their supporters threatened. Smear campaigns attacked female candidates' reputations and accused them of infidelity. It is expected that few women will be elected.

In a positive move, the interim government in Tunisia withdrew long-standing reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, an important step towards gender equality. But many women expressed concern that during the October elections they were denied equal status with men and were marginalized by political parties that mostly put forward men as their main candidates.

In Bahrain, thousands of women risked arrest in 2011 as they took part in anti-government demonstrations. Among those detained and tried by military courts was Jalila al-Salman, vice-president of the Bahrain Teachers' Association. She was sentenced in September to three years in prison for her involvement in peaceful protests and criticism of the government. The Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry report, released in November 2011 amid fresh protests in the capital

Manama, was deeply critical of the authorities' handling of demonstrations. Bahrain's king and cabinet welcomed the report, and announced new initiatives, including the criminalization of torture and the prosecution of some 20 cases against security officers. Whether reforms will extend more broadly remains to be seen.

As International Women's Day on March 8 approaches, it's important to remember that this day was grounded in the idea of revolution. For many that revolution has yet to be realized and systematic discrimination continues.

In 2012, as women continue to fight for equal access to public space, they must be fully involved on an equal footing with men in the process of political and human rights reform in the Middle East and North Africa. Women and men must have equal access to political participation and decision-making, equal rights in law, including in relation to marriage, divorce, child custody and inheritance. Women must have legal protection from gender-based violence, including domestic violence and marital rape, and sexual harassment.

For women throughout the Middle East and North Africa, the real revolution is inclusion. This revolution must also be our revolution.

For more information and to take action, visit amnesty.ca/women and amnesty.ca/middleeast.

YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS

GROUP NEWS

IN THIS ISSUE OF ACTIVIST, WE ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS REGARDING OUR BRANCH'S 2012 PRIORITY CAMPAIGNS.

WHAT ARE THE PRIORITY CAMPAIGNS FOR OUR BRANCH IN 2012?

We'll be working on human rights in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), campaigning for an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and continuing our work on the *Demand Dignity* campaign.

TELL US MORE ABOUT THE WORK ON MENA.

We'll demand accountability for the unlawful detentions, harassment and deaths of human rights activists in the region. We want to ensure that human rights (and especially women's human rights) are protected as interim governments shape the region's future.

WHAT IS THE BRANCH DOING ON THE ARMS TRADE TREATY?

The global trade in conventional weapons—from warships and battle tanks to fighter jets and machine guns—remains poorly regulated. Ahead of the UN Conference on the ATT in July 2012, we'll be campaigning to ensure that the Canadian government plays a positive role in the treaty discussions. Help us bring the ATT to the attention of Canadians, the media and our government leaders.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THESE CAMPAIGNS?

The *Spring Activism Guide 2012* was sent out to groups in January. The guide outlines our major campaigns and activities, with contact information and a list of current resources. Please discuss the contents with your group. If you need another copy (electronic or print version), please contact Lily Mah-Sen (contact details below). As the MENA and ATT campaigns unfold, our website amnesty.ca will be featuring special campaign activities.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Join us in Vancouver for Amnesty's 2012 Annual General Meeting (AGM), which will be held at the University of British Columbia, June 15-17. Expect some great speakers, challenging debates, and rousing calls to action.

The first AGM package was mailed to all community groups, action circles, and fieldworkers in mid-January. As in recent years, AGM registration will be online. AGM documents will be emailed to registrants (paper copies will be available upon request).

Dates to keep in mind:

- › March 21: Deadline to submit resolutions to the AGM Resolutions Committee
- › April 16: Membership renewal deadline. You must be a member at least 60 days before the AGM in order to vote.
- › May 14: Deadline for AGM registrations
Register online at amnesty.ca/agm2012/register.

For more information about the AGM, or to ask for another copy of the first mailing, please contact Louise Mulvihill at lmulvihill@amnesty.ca.

UPDATE YOUR GROUP CONTACT INFORMATION ON OUR WEBSITE!

The "Find a Group" page is one of the most popular on our website. Please make sure that your group's information is correct. Click on the "Find a Community Group near you" link on the *Take Action* menu of amnesty.ca and follow the instructions for updating your information.

ENCLOSURES FOR GROUPS

1. Guide to online petitions and letter-writing
2. Campaign digest on Niger Delta
3. Alex Neve's 2011 end-of-year message.

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH

Have any questions? Need support or advice? Changing your group address? Interested in joining your local Amnesty group? Please contact Lily Mah-Sen of the Activism Team in the national office: 613-744-7667, ext. 244 or Lmah-sen@amnesty.ca.



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The Human Rights College is a three-day training session for young Amnesty activists.

youth

2012 HUMAN RIGHTS COLLEGE FOR YOUTH

Amnesty International Canada will hold the 2012 Human Rights College (HRC) for Youth from June 12 to 17 in Vancouver, British Columbia.

The HRC is a three-day training session that brings 40 young Amnesty activists together from across Canada. The HRC empowers young activists within Amnesty and supports their active leadership within Amnesty International's youth program. The college takes place right before Amnesty Canada's Annual General Meeting which all members of the HRC then go on to take part in.

Applications for the HRC are now being accepted and are due by April 2. If you have any questions regarding the HRC, or would like an application, please contact youth@amnesty.ca.

BOB DYLAN TRIBUTE ALBUM CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



Music can be a powerful force for change and Amnesty International has had a long history of working with musicians from across the globe to help spread the human right message and inspire people to take action. To help celebrate 50 years of work,

Amnesty International created *Chimes of Freedom: The Songs of Bob Dylan*.

This four-disc specially-priced collection contains 76 newly-recorded Bob Dylan songs by more than 80 artists from across the generational and musical spectrum. The performers, including many of Amnesty International's long-time supporters, range in age from Miley Cyrus, 19, to folk music legend Pete Seeger, who, at 92, recorded Dylan's poignant *Forever Young* with a children's chorus.

The diversity of the musicians and musical genres—from rock and hip-hop to pop, folk, country, jazz and blues—shows Amnesty's depth of support in the music

community, the universal appeal of the core message of human rights, and the breadth of Dylan's impact on culture. Every track but one on the album is being released for sale for the first time (the title song, Dylan's recording of *Chimes of Freedom*, was originally released in 1964).

You can pick up your copy at most major record stores and on iTunes, or you can order it at amnesty.ca/chimesoffreedom. A special two-disc version of *Chimes of Freedom* will be available at Starbucks. Proceeds from sales will go to support Amnesty International's human rights work.

GET IN TOUCH

Need to get in touch? Got questions about the Youth and Student program? Interested in joining or starting a group? Email us at youth@amnesty.ca or visit amnesty.ca/youth.



The organizers and volunteers of the Amnesty International Reel Awareness film festival in Toronto, November 2011. The event was one of several Amnesty film festivals held across Canada in fall 2011.

© Florin Zamfirescu/Amnesty International

Anti-death penalty activists marked *Cities for Life Day* by holding a candlelight vigil at St. James Cathedral in Toronto on November 30, 2011.



© Florin Zamfirescu/Amnesty International



Amnesty members around the world marked December 10, International Human Rights Day, by holding *Write for Rights* letter-writing marathons. Amnesty members in Ottawa held their *Write for Rights* event at the Canadian Museum of Nature, which was lit up in Amnesty yellow.

© Susame Jire/Amnesty International



© Paul Thompson/Amnesty International

On December 10, Amnesty activists gathered petition signatures outside the Mayfair Movie Theatre in Ottawa. Inside, Amnesty International and the Embassy of the Netherlands hosted a screening of *Coming out of the Nkuta*, a documentary about lawyer Alice Nkom who stands up against the law in Cameroon banning homosexuality.



© Susanne Ure/Amnesty International

On December 10, International Human Rights Day, Niagara Falls was illuminated in Amnesty yellow to mark Amnesty's 50th anniversary year.



© Florin Zamfirescu/Amnesty International

January 11, 2012, marked the tenth anniversary of the opening of the Guantánamo Bay detention centre. Amnesty members in Toronto joined a global day of action calling for Guantánamo's closure.

DON'T SEE YOURSELF ON THESE PAGES?

If you attend or organize an Amnesty International event in your community, please share your photographs with other Amnesty members across Canada. Email high resolution images with captions to members@amnesty.ca.



© Paul Thompson/Amnesty International

AMNESTY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

Each year at our Annual General Meeting (AGM), members of Amnesty International Canada elect new leadership to the Branch's volunteer governing body, the Executive Committee (EC). Could you be a candidate? EC work is divided into four broad areas:

- › Governance: managing the affairs and business of the Branch on behalf of Amnesty members. EC members implement decisions made by the AGM as well as provide leadership between AGMs.
- › Policy, Programs, and Finance: setting organizational policies and priorities, approving the planning framework and budget.
- › Oversight: Monitoring the operations of the organization and progress on its plans and goals—this involves oversight of the work of senior management (and by extension, the work of staff).
- › Representational and promotional work: Representing Amnesty International to its own members, the public, and to the international movement.

The positions of President, Vice-President, Treasurer and two Directors are up for election at this year's AGM to be held in Vancouver from June 15 to 17. If you're interested, or if you know someone who might be interested, please contact Renee Saviour at rsaviour@amnesty.ca, Margaret Flynn at mflynn@amnesty.ca, or George Harding at gharding@amnesty.ca of the nominations committee for more information.

JOIN YOGA DAY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ON APRIL 28

On Saturday April 28, studios, schools, workplaces, and community centres across Canada will roll out yoga mats with one common goal of raising money and awareness for Amnesty International's work on women's human rights. This year, Yoga Day will shine the spotlight on the work of courageous women's human rights defenders, who face harassment and imprisonment as a direct result of their activism.

Join us for Amnesty International's Yoga Day for Human Rights, and help raise money towards building a more just world for women around the world.

To hold your own Yoga Day event or fundraiser through an Amnesty International Yoga Day event near you, visit yogaday.ca. For more information, contact Hala Al-Madi at yoga@amnesty.ca or **1-800-266-3789**.

VOLUNTEER POSITION: CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY COORDINATOR

Are you interested in volunteering more deeply with Amnesty? Do you have a background in conflict resolution and strong communication and organizational skills? Amnesty International is seeking applications for a volunteer Conflict Resolution Policy Coordinator.

The Conflict Resolution Policy Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that the new Branch Conflict Resolution Policy is implemented and that resources and training are developed and available for Amnesty members and staff to access when they need advice and support moving through a conflict. If this is an area of work in which you are skilled and interested, we welcome your application. For a detailed job description and the Conflict Resolution Policy, please contact Aden Seaton at aseaton@amnesty.ca or 613-744-7667 ext. 263. To apply for this position, please submit a letter and résumé outlining how you meet the criteria by March 30, 2012, to aseaton@amnesty.ca.

INTRODUCING TOSHIO RAHMAN



Toshio Rahman recently replaced Don Wright as Regional Activism Coordinator for British Columbia and Yukon during Don's 2012 sabbatical leave. If you live in British Columbia or Yukon and would like to contact Toshio directly to find out about

the opportunities to get involved locally with Amnesty's work, please email him at trahman@amnesty.ca or phone **604-294-5160**.

Children of the Al-Sir family coming out of a foxhole that the family dug in their courtyard. They hide in it whenever they hear Sudanese army planes above. The children's mother, brother Yasser, 9, sister Amani, 2, and cousin Musa'ab, 4, were killed when the area around their home in Um Sirdeeba village was bombed on June 19, 2011.



DEATH FROM THE SKIES

© Amnesty International

CONFLICT CONTINUES IN SOUTHERN KORDOFAN, THE SUDANESE STATE BORDERING THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT SOUTH SUDAN. WHILE UNARMED MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN ARE KILLED, THE WORLD LOOKS THE OTHER WAY. CAMPAIGNER KHAIRUNISSA DHALA REPORTS.

Sitting on boulders, overlooking the lush green that surrounds the Nuba Mountains in Southern Kordofan, you could almost forget that an internal armed conflict is taking place. But not for long. The group of people sitting there suddenly hear the familiar drone of an Antonov plane, and before the aircraft has emerged from the clouds, they have run to seek shelter in the caves they now call home.

A few minutes later, the sound of three explosions booms from across the mountain. Everyone on this side of the mountain is safe, today. However, the way the Sudanese government is carrying out the bombings—using bombs that cannot be targeted with precision—means that tomorrow they could be less fortunate.

On June 26, 2011, Hawatef Kober and her two teenage daughters Iqbaal and Maryam Musa Al-Rahima, came down from the mountains. They had been seeking shelter in caves, one hour from their home, for the past month, only going down to collect water and food from their home. “We were afraid of the planes which have been flying above us about three or four times every day”, Hawatef told us.

“I was in the house when the planes came. It was about 4pm and my daughters went to fetch water at the borehole. After they had dropped the bombs, neighbours brought Maryam to the house. She was dead—she was hit on the head—part of her head was gone. A neighbour told me to go to the graveyard because they had taken my other daughter Iqbaal there. I went and her injuries were so terrible, I could not even look”, Hawatef said.

Thirteen people, mostly women and children, were killed and over 20 injured on that day when six bombs dropped near Kurchi market.

A few days before, on June 19, in the village of Um Serdiba, Mahasin, a mother of 10 who was expecting her 11th child, was planting crops in a field near her home. “We heard a plane, an Antonov, circle above. There was an explosion and my wife was killed instantly; she was decapitated”, her husband Angelo al-Sir told us.

“My son Yasser, aged nine, was in the kitchen helping his older sister Amal, who was cooking. Yasser was hit in the head [by bomb fragments]. He ran outside screaming ‘Daddy, daddy, I’m hurt’. My daughter Amani, not yet two years old, was outside [in the courtyard] and was hit in the chest by fragments which went through her back. Her cousin Musa’ab [Al-Fakih], aged four, was killed next to her.”

Both Yasser and Amani died before Angelo could get them to safety. Several others died or were injured in the strike.

DEATH FROM THE SKIES



A displaced family shelters in a cave in Southern Kordofan, Sudan, August 2011. More than 200,000 people have been forced to flee their homes for fear of aerial bombardments by the Sudanese Armed Forces.

CONFLICT SPREADS

On June 5, fighting erupted between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the armed opposition Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army-North (SPLA-N) in Kadugli, the capital of Southern Kordofan, and Um Durein, and quickly spread to other towns and villages. On September 1, it reached neighbouring Blue Nile state.

Tensions had been growing between Sudan's ruling National Congress Party (NCP), and the ruling party of the newly independent South Sudan, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), in the context of the government's attempts to disarm the SPLA and the disputed outcome of the elections for the governorship of Southern Kordofan in May. These elections were narrowly won by the NCP candidate Ahmed Haroun, wanted since 2007 by the International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur.

Following the independence of South Sudan on July 9, 2011, the SPLM operating in Sudan became known as the SPLM-N (SPLM-North), and the SPLA became known as SPLA-N.

Southern Kordofan lies on the border with South Sudan and is home to large populations of Nuba people. During the 22-year civil war which ended in 2005, the Nuba took up arms against the Sudanese government.

In August 2011, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch spent a week in Southern Kordofan to investigate the impact of the conflict. The team was not able to reach the front lines or areas controlled by the SAF, but interviewed scores of people from those areas who had escaped the fighting.

GOING HUNGRY

Zenab Al-Ameen Hamis and her 10 children fled from Serifiya in late June, after the village was attacked by the Sudanese army and its allied militia. "I ran with my children and left everything behind," Zenab said. "I had five tukuls (huts) and two sorghum stores. They all burned, and they stole cattle. I am waiting here for plastic sheeting. We received sorghum, but now we don't have any."

More than 200,000 people have been forced to flee their homes in Southern Kordofan, in fear of aerial bombardments by the SAF, fighting between the SAF and SPLA-N, and the threat of arrests and extrajudicial killings of Nuba people believed to support the SPLM-N.

Many of the displaced in areas controlled by the SPLA-N live in and around the Nuba Mountains, with little more than the clothes on their backs and some plastic sheeting for shelter. The bombings mean that people live in constant fear and many abandoned their fields at prime cultivation time.

The Sudanese government has actively blocked or severely restricted humanitarian aid to the region, in violation of international humanitarian law. The World Food Program, which supplied aid to the Kadua region, left in June (as did most international NGOs), after the fighting started. The supplies that remained in their storerooms were distributed by local organizations over 60 days. However, supplies have since dwindled and many families survive only on soup made from berries and leaves.

INTERNATIONAL INACTION

The conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile continues with no signs of any resolution, but the international community has done little to stop it. On August 15, the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights released a report based on research carried out by human rights monitors of the UN Mission in Sudan before their mandate ended on July 9. The report's findings include accounts of unlawful killings, mass destruction and looting of civilian property, which could amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Shortly after the report was released, the UN Security Council met, but failed to condemn the indiscriminate bombings and other human rights violations, and the lack of access to aid agencies in Southern Kordofan. Following this, in September, during the UN Human Rights Council session on Sudan, the international community failed to take a stand and call for independent human rights monitors in both Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. Until action is taken, civilians will continue to bear the brunt of the conflict.

TAKE ACTION

Please write politely to the Sudanese president, calling on him to:

- › immediately cease all indiscriminate bombing and other violations in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile
- › allow unhindered access to independent human rights monitors and aid agencies so that they can assist the civilian population across Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile

WRITE TO:

H.E. President Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir
Office of the President
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum
Sudan

FAX: 011 249 183 770 621

SALUTATION: Your Excellency



Yusef Abdallah, aged 15, Southern Kordofan, Sudan, August 2011. He lost his right eye and part of his nose when Sudanese Armed Forces bombed the field where he was grazing his family's cows in Korungo village on July 8, 2011.

Amnesty activists in Belgium hold a vigil to demand clemency for Troy Davis. In a letter to one Amnesty member, Davis wrote, “I just wanted to say thank you for the handmade cards. They put a smile on my face despite the sadness that surrounds me. Please continue to join Amnesty and others in our fight to save my life and free me.”

“THE STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE

DOESN'T END WITH ME”

THESE WERE THE WORDS OF TROY DAVIS, WHO WAS EXECUTED IN THE USA IN SEPTEMBER 2011. ROSEANN RIFE, HEAD OF SPECIAL PROJECTS AT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, BELIEVES THE LEGACY OF THE CAMPAIGN TO SAVE TROY COULD HELP OTHERS ON DEATH ROW.

Working for the abolition of the death penalty is hard. It is an issue dealing in the most fundamental way with life, death and justice.

The numerous people who devote time to this effort often make strong and emotional connections with death row inmates and their families. After the execution of Troy Davis in Georgia, USA, on September 21, 2011, activists grieved alongside his family and friends. It is difficult not to be discouraged when so much effort is still not enough to stop a state from killing.

Many of us have been asked since then how we feel about our failure to stop Troy’s execution after years of campaigning. It is important to realize that, despite the tragic outcome, our efforts on his behalf had a huge impact.

Our members around the world participated in over 300 events or vigils that were held in the week preceding the execution. Troy made global headlines and exposed the cruellest deficiency of the death penalty—the fact that it is irrevocable. The enormous attention enabled abolition activists to re-engage with the media, governments and the public.

Many of our members have told us that people in their countries are questioning the death penalty because of the intense focus on this execution. This is a significant step forward towards abolition.

WORLDWIDE IMPACT

The doubts raised about Troy’s conviction also gripped the attention of many people in Taiwan. It allowed activists to draw parallels with the case of Chiou Ho-shun. Like Troy, Chiou Ho-shun has spent over two decades on death row and there are doubts about the case against him.

Chiou Ho-shun and his co-defendants say they were prevented from communicating with anyone for the first four months of their detention and were tortured into confessing to murder and kidnapping, which they later retracted. In 1994, after an official investigation, two public prosecutors and 10 police officers handling the case were convicted of extracting confessions through torture.

In Japan, international attention has also helped to further public debate. Hakamada Iwao was convicted for the murder of four people after an unfair trial and confessed after 20 days of interrogation by police without a lawyer present. He later retracted his confession and testified during his trial that police had beaten and threatened him. Hakamada Iwao is suffering from mental illness after almost 30 years in solitary confinement, and is at daily risk of being executed.

During this 50th anniversary year of Amnesty International, our members are also focusing on two cases of migrant workers in Saudi Arabia, where foreign nationals are particularly vulnerable and frequently receive unfair trials. Suliamon Olyfemi, a Nigerian national, was sentenced to death for murder in 2004 after a trial conducted in Arabic, which he does not speak, and without access to a translator or a lawyer. Siti Zainab Binti Duhri Rupa reportedly confessed to the murder of her employer in 1999 while mentally ill and did not have any legal representation.

THE FIGHT CONTINUES

Activists often campaign for respect for international standards on the use of the death penalty but it is the individual cases, the names and faces of those on death row, that grab the public's attention.

In countries with vigilant media and transparent legal systems, we are able to follow cases fairly closely and plan strategies. In the USA, India and Taiwan, we have worked with and for individual death row inmates for years, even decades.

But the unknown executed need to be remembered and counted as well. Many death penalty cases in North Korea, for example, never get reported in the news, do not have lawyers working on appeals and the executed are listed in our reports simply by numbers.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty for all crimes, in all cases, and in all countries. We continue to fight in the name of all individuals facing execution, even when we don't know their names.

Troy Davis knew this. Shortly before his death, he said "The struggle for justice doesn't end with me. This struggle is for all the Troy Davises who came before me and all the ones who will come after me."

All those people around the world who work for abolition should not only feel angry and grieve when a person is executed; they should also recognize that their efforts are having results. The global trend is demonstrably toward abolition and together we are powerful—and we will prevail.

TAKE ACTION

Make your voice heard in the fight to end the death penalty everywhere.

- › Join Amnesty International's Death Penalty Abolition Network. Email Aubrey Harris, Amnesty Canada's Death Penalty Abolition Coordinator, at dpacoordinator@amnesty.ca to get news, updates and find out about events
- › Visit the Amnesty International Canada death penalty blog at amnesty.ca/deathpenalty
- › Sign online actions to end the death penalty at tinyurl.com/end-death-penalty



Amnesty activists in Toronto rally on September 16, 2011, to stop the US state of Georgia executing Troy Davis. Despite a global outcry, Davis was executed five days later.

ETHIOPIA: NEW LAWS PREVENT HUMAN RIGHTS WORK



Recent repressive legislation is badly hindering the work of the Human Rights Council (HRCO), an NGO that monitors and documents human rights violations in Ethiopia. HRCO's bank accounts have been frozen, costing the organization about US\$566,000. The Charities and Societies Proclamation (2009) is impeding HRCO's ability to conduct its vital work and to support victims of human rights violations in Ethiopia. Other organizations have stopped working on human rights altogether.

HRCO is the country's oldest human rights organization. It has conducted high quality research and advocacy throughout Ethiopia for 20 years. As an independent body, HRCO was able to speak out on even the most sensitive issues. From its 12 regional offices, HRCO also conducted human rights training, election monitoring, detention centre visits and provided legal support to victims of violations.

The Proclamation prohibits organizations that receive more than 10 per cent of their funding through foreign sources from working on human rights issues. A Charities and Societies Agency was also established, with broad powers, including surveillance and direct involvement in the management and operations of organizations, which could place victims of violations at further risk.

As a result of these restrictions, HRCO have been forced to close nine of their 12 offices and cut 85 percent of their staff. A number of staff members have fled the country.

The Ethiopian authorities have long been hostile to human rights work and HRCO staff have been threatened, attacked and arrested. The Proclamation has intensified this threatening climate.

TAKE ACTION

Please write to the authorities:

- › Call on them to amend the Charities and Societies Proclamation to remove provisions restricting human rights activities carried out by NGOs, both local and international.
- › Urge them to unfreeze the bank accounts of the Human Rights Council (HRCO) and allow it to access its funds unconditionally.

WRITE TO:

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi
P.O. Box 1031
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

FAX: 011 251 155 2030

SALUTATION: Dear Prime Minister

SEND A COPY TO:

Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
3506 International Drive, N.W.
Washington, D.C., DC 20008
United States of America

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Juan Almonte Herrera, a member of the Dominican Committee of Human Rights, has been missing since September 28, 2009. He was reportedly abducted in the capital, Santo Domingo, by armed police officers.

Juan Almonte was walking to the office where he worked as an accountant when he was abducted. The following month, two charred bodies were found in a car in the city. One of the bodies was identified by Juan's sister as being that of Juan Almonte. However, DNA tests were negative. The family has contested how the tests were carried out.

Juan Almonte's relatives and lawyers have reported being under surveillance by individuals identified by

eyewitnesses as police officers. They have been followed by people in cars and watched from the street in front of their house. His sister received anonymous telephone calls asking her to stop publicizing her brother's disappearance. When they reported the incidents to the authorities, they were told to seek protection from the same police body that they claim is harassing them.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has repeatedly described the investigation by the Dominican authorities as totally inadequate and has criticized their failure to adopt concrete measures to establish Juan Almonte's whereabouts.

In May 2010, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights ordered the Dominican state to provide protection to Juan Almonte's family and lawyers. However, they have yet to receive protection.



BAHRAIN: STUDENT ARRESTED FOR READING POETRY

Twenty-year-old student Ayat Alqormozi could be sent to prison at any time for reciting poems she wrote criticizing the King of Bahrain and the Prime Minister. She read the poems aloud during the February 2011 pro-reform rallies. On March 30, 2011, she was arrested after being forced to surrender herself to the authorities in order to protect her family. Prior to turning herself in, security forces had twice raided her parents' home and threatened to kill her brothers.

Ayat Alqormozi was detained until July 2011 and was tortured in detention. A military court sentenced her in June to one year in prison, and in November the High Criminal Court of Appeal, a civilian court, ruled that her case had been stopped pending further notice. However, her legal status remains uncertain and the charges against her have not been dropped. In September, she was prevented from returning to Bahrain University to complete her studies when a guard stopped her from entering the campus. University authorities have given her no explanation for this, although in January 2012 she signed some documents stating she could resume her studies.

At least 1,000 people have been detained in Bahrain in relation to the pro-reform protests that began in February. Five people have died as a result of torture in custody.

Dozens of those detained were brought to trial before military courts, including Ayat Alqormozi. The trial of civilians by military courts breaches international fair trial standards. As of October 2011, all cases have been transferred to civilian courts.

TAKE ACTION

Please write to the authorities:

- › Call on them to ensure that Ayat Alqormozi's conviction is rescinded and any charges against her are dropped.
- › Urge them to investigate her allegations of torture and other ill-treatment in detention, and bring those responsible to justice.

WRITE TO:

Dr Fatima Mohamed Al-Balooshi
Minister of Human Rights and Social Development
Ministry of Human Rights and Social Development
Manama
P.O. Box 32868
Bahrain

FAX: 011 973 1710 4977

EMAIL: pr@social.gov.bh

SALUTATION: Your Excellency

SEND A COPY TO:

Her Excellency Huda Ezra Ebrahim Nonoo
Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain
3502 International Drive North West
Washington, DC, DC 20008
United States of America

TAKE ACTION

Please write to the authorities:

- › Urge them to establish the whereabouts of Juan Almonte Herrera, who was abducted on September 28, 2009.
- › Call for a full, impartial and independent investigation into his enforced disappearance
- › Call for his family and lawyers to receive adequate protection from threats and harassment.

WRITE TO:

Lic. José Ramón Fadul
Ministro de Interior y Policía
Ministerio de Interior y Policía
Ave. México, Esq.
Leopoldo Navarro, Edif. Oficinas Gubernamentales
Santo Domingo
Dominican Republic

FAX: 1 809 685 1194 or 1 809 686 6599

EMAIL: jfadul@mip.gob.do

SALUTATION: Dear Minister/ Sr. Ministro

SEND A COPY TO:

His Excellency Jose Del Carmen Urena Almonte
Embassy of the Dominican Republic
130 Albert Street, Suite 418
Ottawa, ON K1P 5G4



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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CANADA

2012 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING / HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE

In addition to our Friday and Sunday Annual General Meeting, we invite you to be part of our first **Human Rights Conference** on Saturday June 16.

Expect great speakers, challenging debates, and rousing calls to action.

June 15, 16 and 17, 2012, at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, BC.

Register at amnesty.ca/agm2012/register.

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