

# AMNESTY NEWS

[www.amnesty-volunteer.org/uk/southampton-city](http://www.amnesty-volunteer.org/uk/southampton-city)

November 2005



## AI'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 standards.

## AI's MISSION

is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.

## AI's CORE VALUES

remain those of : international solidarity, effective action for the individual victim, global coverage, the universality and indivisibility of human rights, impartiality and independence, and democracy and mutual respect.

## AI launches Protect the Human

AI is launching a new drive to get a million more people standing up for human rights in the UK, under the banner of "**Protect the Human**".

Some 300,000 **Protect the Human** mini-placard badges will go on sale as the campaign symbol, each one carrying the unique access code for [www.protectthehuman.com](http://www.protectthehuman.com), where people will be able to join Amnesty's online movement.

Various events will take place including an interactive exhibition at London's Bargehouse gallery featuring works by Tracey Emin, the Guerilla Girls and Alison Lapper among others, supporting AI's work to stop violence against women; the screening of a short film with a hard-hitting message on the arms trade, to be seen by an estimated two million cinema-goers; a global music download project and a major new comedy event.

**Protect the Human** will be supported by a new style of charity advertising, celebrating the ordinary people that stand up for human rights as part of their everyday lives. Nearly 400 posters will be displayed at 50 London Underground stations, 25,000 postcards

**Group Meeting**  
**Monday November 14th 2005**

**Workshop on Business & Human Rights**  
**Peter Hammond-Seaman**  
**(AI Trainer)**

**Avenue St Andrew's**  
**United Reformed Church**  
**The Avenue, Southampton**  
**(Use main Church entrance)**  
**7.30pm**  
**ALL WELCOME**

will be distributed at cinemas all over the UK and over half a million drinks mats will be used at 500 pubs around the country.

Kate Allen Amnesty International's UK Director says:

"It has never been more important to stand up for human rights and now it has never been easier, by wearing a badge, going online, watching a film or taking part in an exhibition, you can show you support for our message. The more people who join us in speaking out in defence of hard-won human rights, the louder our voice becomes."

Southampton AI announced the start of the campaign in its recent concerts.

## Worldwide Appeal: SUDAN: Young offender at risk of execution

Seventeen-year-old Nagmeldin Abdallah may be executed in the town of Al-Damazin, Blue Nile State, eastern Sudan. He was 15 years old when he was arrested and charged with murder in May 2003.

Nagmeldin Abdallah was tried at the Criminal Court in Al-Damazin. He did not have a lawyer at the time of the trial because his family could not afford one. He was able to have legal representation later and his lawyer at the time of the trial has now submitted an appeal to the Constitutional Court. Nagmeldin Abdallah is currently held in the prison of Port-Sudan, awaiting the decision of the Court.

The new interim Constitution of Sudan, ratified in July, failed to abolish the death penalty in Sudan, in particular as it applies to those under the age of 18. It states that: "The death penalty shall not be imposed on a person under the age of 18 or



a person who has attained the age of 17 except in cases of retribution or hudud". This last exception makes the first safeguard almost worthless since hudud crimes include murder and burglary over a certain amount. This provision is incompatible with Sudan's international obligations that prohibit child executions.

There is no official record of executions or those on death row in Sudan. However, every year AI receives reports of people

sentenced to death, often after unfair trials, for crimes committed when they were under 18 years old.

**Please write**, calling on the authorities to annul the death sentence against Nagmeldin Abdallah and to commute all death sentences against child offenders in line with Sudan's obligations under international law. Call for the interim Constitution for Sudan and the Sudanese Penal Code to be amended to preclude offenders from being sentenced to death.

### **Send appeals to:**

Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir,  
President of the Republic of Sudan,  
President's Palace,  
PO Box 281,  
Khartoum,  
Sudan.

Fax: +249183 779977

### Letter writing guide

- \*Always be polite. This rule is essential and invariable. Your aim is to help, not to relieve your own feelings. Governments don't respond to abusive or condemnatory letters (however well deserved!)
- \*Always write your letters on the basis that the Government concerned is open to reason and discussion.
- \*It is important where possible to stress a country's reputation for moderation and justice, to show respect for its constitution and judicial procedures, and to demonstrate an understanding of current difficulties. This will give you more scope to point out ways in which the human rights situation can be improved.
- \*Follow strictly the instructions given by AI.
- \*Never use political jargon. Don't give the impression that you are writing because you are ideologically or politically opposed to the government in question. It is far more effective to stress that your concern for human rights is not politically based in any way, but in keeping with basic principles of international law.
- \*If appropriate, explain who you are and what you do. It shows your letter is genuine, and that people from varying walks of life are following events in the country concerned.

## Group News: October

The focus of the Group meeting was on letter writing to China.

The session was opened by Judy Horton who initially referred to the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Egyptian lawyer and diplomat Mohamed El Baradei and the UN nuclear watchdog that he heads for their efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Judy quoted Irene Khan the AI Secretary General who said of the Nobel Peace Prize:

“Before the prize (1977), we had to write letters to Governments stating “as you may know”, explaining who we were. After wards we didn’t have to. The award gave us credibility, recognition and respectability. It put human rights on the international political agenda and showed its link with peace. It is still useful to us when we deal with countries like China.”

Various issues in China were highlighted for the letter writing activities:

- ◆ In Ningxiang, clues can be found to a problem once thought inconceivable. The world’s most populated nation is experiencing shortages of about 2m workers. Young migrant workers, coveted by factories are gaining bargaining powers and are choosing to leave low pay and miserable conditions in Guandong. As a result of two decades of strict family planning China is becoming the most rapidly aging countries in the world.
- ◆ 29m people live on less than £50 per year
- ◆ China has a shortage of oil, consuming 6m barrels of oil a day, of which 40% comes from imports and they are snapping up oil and gas assets from Sudan to Venezuela, Australia and West Africa.

- ◆ The outmoded conventions and inequalities between men and women handed down from China’s history and culture have not been completely eradicated. Women were denied education and had little say in whom they married. Whist the increased wealth in China is improving the lot of women, there are still no women sitting on the Communist party’s all powerful nine member politburo standing committee.
- ◆ The Death Penalty: murder, rape and other crimes of violence all attract the death penalty, as do many non-violent offences including bribery, embezzlement, forgery, tax fraud, car theft and cattle rustling. Official sources have indicated that the recent preoccupation with applying the death penalty to economic crimes has been to help China meet the challenges of World Trade Organisations membership. Between 1990 and 2000, 19,520 executions are known to have taken place in China and the rate may be as high as 10,000 per year. Amnesty is concerned that executions are orchestrated to meet the needs of the organ transplant industry. The death penalty will remain a major feature of Amnesty’s campaigning on China in the run up to the 2008 Olympics. One of the public infrastructure projects mooted for Beijing, in connection with the games, is a new execution chamber!

The Group has recently heard some very sad news.

Richard Green died on Saturday 5th November.

It is understood that he was admitted to hospital with a chest infection and died of pneumonia.

As yet we do not have details of the funeral arrangements.

Richard was a longstanding member of Amnesty and worked with a variety of organisations concerned with human rights.

He will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

**Southampton Group Who's Who:**

**Group Officers:**

Chair:

*Becky John*

Vice-Chair:

*Jenny McConnell*

Secretary & Press:

*Mary Brown*

Treasurer:

*Giampaolo D'Alessandro*

Membership Secretary:

*Jenny McConnell*

Outreach:

*Veronica Tippets*

Parliamentary Officer:

*Frank Capocci*

News Letter Editor:

*John Williams*

**Subgroups:**

CASA/Victor Pineda Henestrosa:

*Frank Capocci*

CHINA:

*Judy Horton*

Administration of Justice (Death Penalty):

*Giampaolo D'Alessandro*

*John Williams*

Refugees:

*Jilly Cooke*

Stop Violence Against Women:

*Becky John*

Business and Human Rights:

*Becky John*

Control Arms Campaign:

*Barbara Lupton*

Korea:

*Avenue St Andrew's Church Group*

- Diary:
- ◆ **Thursday 10th November:** Tenth anniversary of execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa. Event tba.
  - ◆ **Monday 14th November:** Group Meeting: "Workshop on Business and Human Rights" with AI trainer Peter Hammond-Seaman. 7.30pm at Avenue St Andrew's. All welcome.
  - ◆ **Saturday 19th November:** Collection at Sainsbury's, Shirley Shopping Precinct, Shirley High Street 10.00am to 5.00pm
  - ◆ **Saturday 26th November:** Kitchen sale see below.
  - ◆ **Sunday 27th November:** Christmas Card Stall at University of Southampton Craft Fair.
  - ◆ **Saturday 10th December:** Human Rights Day, Public Greetings Card Writing in the Marlands Centre tbc.
  - ◆ **Monday 12th December:** Group Meeting, Greetings Card Campaign and Social.

**Highlights from Amnesty's web page**

**If you are interested in any of these topics and have access to the internet, dial up to:**  
**[www.amnesty.org.uk/news/](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news/)**

Japan: New report shows "comfort women's" appeals for compensation fall on deaf years.

UK: Terrorism Bill dangerous and ill-conceived.

Control Arms: Campaign reveals arms trade realities behind new Nicolas Cage film Lord of war.

Amnesty International launches Protect the Human.

UK Sex Trafficking: Amnesty welcomes Birmingham Police crackdown, but UK must do more to protect victims.

Greetings Card Campaign 2005 runs between 1st November 2005 and 31st January 2006.

**KITCHEN SALE**  
**SATURDAY 26th NOVEMBER**  
**"GOODIES FOR CHRISTMAS"**  
**CHURCH GATE HOUSE**  
**ELING NR TOTTON**  
**10.00am to 4.00pm**  
**All welcome**

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