

AMNESTY NEWS

www.amnesty-volunteer.org/uk/southampton-city

December 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 UK Business Group

Peter Hammond-Seaman (AI UK Trainer) led a workshop on Business and Human Rights at the November Group Meeting. AIUK Business Group was established in 1991 and is comprised of people with expertise in industry, law, social auditing and reporting, academia and ethical investment. The Group works with AI staff to encourage companies to:

- ◆ be aware of human rights impact of all aspects of their operations,
- ◆ use their legitimate influence in support of human rights, in countries where they operate,
- ◆ give effect to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- ◆ implement AI's Human Rights Guidelines for Companies,
- ◆ include a specific commitment to human rights in their statements of business principles and codes of conduct,
- ◆ make their human rights policies explicit, ensuring they are integrated, monitored and audited across all functions.

AI in conjunction with Cafod, Christian Aid, Friends of the Earth, New Economics Foundation and Traidcraft formed the CORE Coali-

Group Meeting
Monday December 12th 2005

Letter Writing
GREETING CARD CAMPAIGN
&
SOCIAL
Avenue St Andrew's
United Reformed Church
The Avenue, Southampton
(Use main Church entrance)
7.30pm

ALL WELCOME

tion to build support for appropriate reforms in UK Company Law. CORE is also supported by many Trade Unions. The CORE Bill was introduced into Parliament on 19 June 2003. **The Principles of the Core Bill:** 1. Mandatory Reporting on economic, environmental and social impacts of companies with a turnover greater than £5m.

2. Stakeholder Consultation: before embarking on major projects reasonable steps are taken to consult and respond to concerns.

3. Clearly Defined Directors' Duties: To endeavour to minimise negative impacts.

4 Enforcement: Establishment of a Standards Board.

Worldwide Appeal: EGYPT: Academic detained for challenging mainstream religious views

"I demand his release," said Um Saleh, wife of Mitwalli Ibrahim Mitwalli Saleh. Speaking to AI in July 2005, she explained how her husband had been on hunger strike since June in protest against his continued detention in Wadi El-Natroun prison about 100km north-west of Cairo. "Mitwalli was not seen by any doctor although he is diabetic and is suffering from high blood pressure," she said. "For 20 days the prison authorities did not inform the Public Prosecutor about his hunger strike." His health deteriorated so rapidly that he was transferred to the prison hospital. He is now held at the Al-Wadi al-Gadid prison in southern Egypt.

Mitwalli Ibrahim Mitwalli Saleh, father of three, was arrested on 18.05.03 at his home in Giza by State Security Intelligence officers following the discovery of his unpublished religious study. The study challenges Islamic



scholarly views on apostasy and marriage between Muslim women and non-Muslim men. With degrees in Islamic law and Arabic language he used the disciplines of linguistics and Islamic jurisprudence to refute two opinions common among mainstream Muslim scholars: that is a religious duty to kill "apostates" who reject Islam, and that a Muslim woman may not marry a non-Muslim man.

Two months after his arrest he was charged with

"contempt of the Islamic religion", a criminal offence under Egypt's Penal Code carrying a prison sentence of six months to five years.

On 29.10.03 the prosecution decided to drop the charges and release him, however, the Interior Ministry placed him under administrative detention. Since then, the (Emergency) Supreme State Security Court has ruled 7 times in his favour, ordering his release, but none of these decisions have been implemented.

Please write, calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Mitwalli Ibrahim Mitwalli Saleh, who is detained solely on account of his religious beliefs.

Send appeals to:

General Habib Ibrahim El Adly

Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior

Al-Sheikh Rihan Street
Bab al-Louk

Cairo

Egypt

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: November

Jenny welcomed all to the Group Meeting.

The following business items were referred to:

1. **Group Action:** A letter to be signed addressed to MPs concerned with the Human Rights of UK citizens detained in Guantanamo Bay.
2. **Kitchen Sale (26th November):** Flyers for sale at Mary's House were distributed.
3. **Stop Violence Against Women:** 16 days of activism starts on 25th November. This includes a questionnaire to be used in the community. This will be available at the Marlands Public Greeting Card Writing Event. There are also plans to make a "sound sculpture" check the web site for information.
4. **Remember Ken Saro-Wiwa:** a window display in October Books, 17th November to 28th November. October Books may also hold a speaker event.
5. **Tin Rattle-Shirley Precinct:** Sign up requested for this fund raising event to be held on 19th November. NB note from the treasurer this event raised £230.44. See next months News for more details.
6. **Tin Rattle-Morrisons, Portswood:** advanced notice of this fund raising event to be held on 24th & 25th February.
7. **Christmas Card Sale at University of**

Southampton: Sign up requested for this fund raising event to be held on 27th November.

8. **CASA:** Post Cards available for signing for Human Rights Defender in Mexico.
9. **Finances:** Giampaolo reported that the "ARCORDA" concert in October had raised £240; and the "Dinner Jazz Revolutionaries" at Talking Heads in October had raised £200. That left a balance of £1091 in our account. Agreed that £400 should be sent to AIUK. Giampaolo mentioned a fund raising idea put forward by the York Group, ie leaving Collecting Tins at various restaurants. This idea will be investigated.
10. **Membership:** Currently only 29 people have registered their membership for Southampton Group 2005/6. **Please sign up!**
11. **Regional Meeting:** Jenny and Veronica attended.
12. **World Regional Conference:** Giampaolo reported on this event.
13. **Groups News:** was circulated, it contains interesting information and ideas for Campaigning

RICHARD GREEN

Richard's friends and family are hoping to set up a trust in his memory, to enable one person suffering from MS to sail on a Tall Ship each year. Donations will be collected at the December meeting. Below are some memories of Richard from Mary and Fran.

"He suffered from MS for 25 years, he was 59 years old, a humanist who at his own request had a humanist funeral followed by a very jolly party in a real ale pub! During his time as a solicitor, he took 3 years out and went around the world. This experience shaped his concern for poverty and suffering which led to his work for Amnesty and asylum seekers. He was a bell ringer, and had rung in many churches, including Winchester Cathedral. He was the only one who still wrote an annual letter about Victor-shows his tenacity!"

"Pasta and Real Ale spring to mind! Richard was a party animal who could rouse himself to celebrate even the most unfortunate times in life. Generous spirited, behind the stern and frugal appearance, it was a joy to eat and drink with him and to share the wonderful mystery of his huge garden-which felt half tamed but still naturally wild (a metaphor perhaps of how many of us perceived the man!) The AI Outreach sub-group gave a few of us time to get to know each other in greater depth, at that time some ten years ago, we were exploring how to work with ethnic and religious minority groups in Southampton. Belonging, remembering, sharing the gift of friendship and of life, what a lovely way to recall a very committed Group member who will be missed "hugely", not just by us, but by those near and far who no doubt benefited from his knowledge, understanding and willingness to get involved in their lives. Wherever you are Richard, enjoy the party!"

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 (023 8058 3749)

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:**
- ◆ **Saturday 10th December:** Human Rights Day, Public Greetings Card Writing in the Marlands Centre 9.00am to 4.00pm.
 - ◆ **Monday 12th December:** Group Meeting, Greetings Card Campaign and Social. 7.30pm at Avenue St Andrew's. All welcome.
 - ◆ **Monday 9th January:** Group Meeting: UK anti-terrorism legislation and its implications for human rights. Speaker: Doug Jewel of LIBERTY. 7.30pm at Avenue St Andrew's. All welcome.



SOCIAL

At our December Group Meeting bring some drink and a few nibbles to share!

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/

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

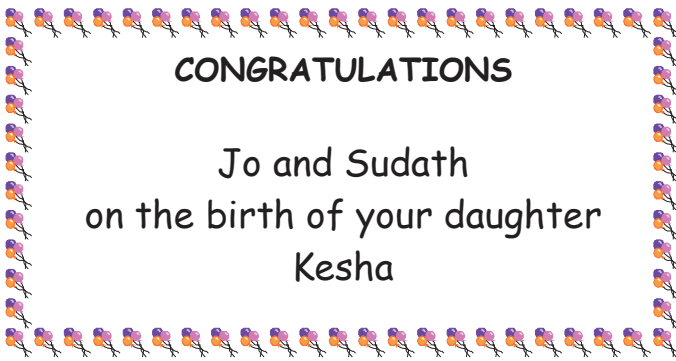
USA executes its 1000th prisoner.

Brazil: Authorities have abandoned poor to violence, says major new report.

UK: New poll finds a third of people believe women who flirt are partially responsible for being raped.

UK: New report slams lack of government leadership on violence against women in the UK.

Counter-terrorism and human rights: Spotlight on the UK.



CONGRATULATIONS

Jo and Sudath
on the birth of your daughter
Kesha

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