

AMNESTY NEWS

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

March 2006



Iraq: New Amnesty International Report

Amnesty International has today (6 March) called for an end to the internment of thousands of detainees in Iraq by the Multinational Forces, as it released a new report showing that approximately 14,000 prisoners are being held without charge or trial in breach of international law.

Amnesty International UK Director Kate Allen said:

“After the horrors of life under Saddam and then the fresh horror of US prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib, it is shocking to discover that the Multinational Forces are detaining thousands of people without charge or trial.

“Not only have there been recent cases of prisoners being tortured in detention, but to hold this huge number of people without basic legal safeguards is a gross dereliction of responsibility on the part of both the US and UK forces.”

Amnesty International’s 48-page report, *Beyond Abu Ghraib: Detention and torture in Iraq*, condemns the fact that the US and UK forces have justified internments on the basis of secretive and unaccountable procedures that detainees are unable to effectively challenge.

Interned prisoners are not allowed a

**Group Meeting
Monday March 13th 2006**

**ZIMBABWE
Franco HENWOOD
AI UK Zimbabwe Coordinator**

**Avenue St Andrew’s
United Reformed Church
The Avenue, Southampton
(Use main Church entrance)**

**7.30pm
ALL WELCOME**

visit by a lawyer or relatives for the first 60 days of their detention and many prisoners have despaired of ever being released or being given an opportunity to challenge their detention.

Those held are regarded as “security detainees” and include over 200 who have been imprisoned for over two years. Nearly four thousand have been held for over a year without charge or trial.

Amnesty International’s report expresses alarm at the fact that detention without judicial oversight could expose detainees to the risk of torture. Recent cases of torture by Iraqi forces - especially by individuals connected to the Iraq Interior Ministry - is a particular concern.

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.

Worldwide Appeal: RUSSIAN FEDERATION: 'Disappearance' from police custody

Zalina Medova was pregnant with her second child when her husband, Adam Medov, "disappeared" in June 2004. 24 yr old Adam Medov left his house in the Russian Republic of Ingushetia on 15 June 2004. He called later that night to say that his car had broken down, but did not leave time for his family to ask any questions. Two days later his family received a call from a policeman they knew, who said that Adam Medov was in a police station in the Sunzhenskoi district of Ingushetia. When the family went to the police station, they heard that Adam Medov had been found that day by Ingush traffic police in the boot of a car driven by members of the Federal Security Service (FSB). The FSB officers, who were apparently about to take him to Chechnya, were detained by the police. Adam Medov told the police that he had been detained on 15 June and forced to call his family so that they



would not worry about him. He said that he had been beaten by the FSB officers. A police officer allowed the family to hand over food for Adam Medov and agreed to arrange a meeting between Adam and his brothers. But before the meeting could take place, the family was told that, under orders from the FSB, the FSB officers had been released and had taken Adam Medov out of the police station via the back door. The police said the FSB were taking him to Chechnya. It was the last time the family had any information about his whereabouts.

When Zalina Medova lodged a case with the

European Court of Human Rights regarding the "disappearance" of her husband, she received numerous threats which appeared to be from the FSB. She was told that she would make her children orphans if she pursued the case. Zalina Medova and her two children had to flee the Russian Federation, as she was not willing to give up the search for her husband.

Please write, calling for an investigation into the detention and "disappearance" of Adam Medov, including the actions of the FSB officers who had attempted to take him to Chechnya in the boot of their car.

Send appeals to:
Procurator General Vladimir Ustinov,
General Procuracy of the Russian Federation,
Ul. B. Dimitrovka 15a,
103793 Moskow K-31,
Russian Federation.

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: February

The evening started with a letter writing session. Three new people arrived and five tables were needed to accommodate all the people who were present.

During the break Giampaolo took several photos to add to the Million Faces Control Arms Campaign.

Business:

1. Control Arms Campaign:

AI UK have asked everyone who is going to the AGM in April to bring 20 photos on a CD. Jilly asked for suggestions about ways to get these photos. Ann Parry said she would find out if the AI Group at Peter Symonds College (where she works) could help. She will contact Jilly about this.

2. Tin Rattle at Morrisons February 24th/25th:

Frank Capocci passed around the rota for these two days which is now complete. He has received new tins and arm bands from AI UK. The possibility of getting tabards printed for this kind of event was discussed and Jilly will look into costs etc.

3. International Women's Day-March 8th:

There is a possibility of having a presence at

the Body Shop on March 8th. Jenny is looking into this and asked for more help if this takes place.

4. Local Group Involvement in Campaigns 2006-2007:

These were decided upon as follows:
Stop Violence Against Women-Jo
Control Arms-Barbara
Business-Gareth
Guantanamo Bay-Fran

5. Report on Group's Activities in the Past Year for AI UK:

Mary Brown (secretary) took the Group through the form received from AI UK and filled it in with the Group's help.

6. Financial Matters:

Giampaolo D'Alessandro (treasurer) reported that £50 has been given to the Urgent Action Pledge. Our current bank balance is £800.

There was agreement to Giampaolo's suggestion that Heena be asked if she wanted to attend the AI UK AGM on behalf of the Group. Giampaolo will contact her.

The F-Word: Images of forgiveness

An exhibition illustrating the stories of people who have discovered that the only way to move on in life, is to lay aside hatred and blame.

St Mary's Church
St Mary's Street Southampton

March 25th –31st (entry free)

Supported by Paris Smith & Randall LLP and
St Faith's Mission Trust

Further information from John Williams (see who's who)

