

AMNESTY NEWS

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

June 2006



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.

New Structures & Focus in Amnesty

Virginia Segal, AI International Secretariat described the changes in Amnesty International.

She explained that 3yrs ago at the International Council Meeting an Integrated Strategic Plan had been agreed. The thinking behind the Plan was that AI was not able to do everything in every country, we must become more strategic.

NB Work on individuals remains core to AI's work. This includes Urgent Actions, Case Sheets, Appeals Cases, Web Actions, Human Rights Defenders etc.

The Plan has five elements:

- 1 Thematic work/projects
- 2 Country Action Plans (CAPs)
- 3 Non-CAP Countries
- 4 Campaign Planning (Bulletin)
- 5 IS team restructuring.

1 Main themes:

- ◆ Discrimination
- ◆ Justice/impunity
- ◆ Death penalty/torture/POCs etc
- ◆ Abuses in armed conflict
- ◆ Refugees/Migrants
- ◆ Rights of women and girls

**Group Meeting
Monday June 12th 2006**

**“Update on North Korea”
FRAN STANFIELD
Southampton AI Group
Plus
Letter-writing Prisoners of
Conscience world-wide
Avenue St Andrew's
United Reformed Church
The Avenue, Southampton
7.30pm
ALL WELCOME**

(SVAW Campaign)

- ◆ ESC rights
- ◆ War on Terror

2 Country Action Programme (CAPs) Each country eg UK has a number of priority countries to work on, these countries are divided into four levels. AI UK CAPs are:

Level 1: DRC; Colombia; India; Turkey; Israel/OT

Level 2: China; Sudan; USA; EU; Iraq.

Level 3: Zimbabwe; Mexico; Afghanistan; Indonesia; Balkans; Russia; North Africa.

Level 4: Nigeria; Brazil (cont p 3)

Action on Individuals: Democratic Republic of Congo: Bitondo Nyumba and SOFAD

On 11 May 2005, 56 yr old widow and mother of four Bitondo Nyumba was attacked in her home, in the village of Katungulu, South-Kivu province, by 7 FARDC government army soldiers. She was beaten with sticks and rifle butts across her stomach and genitals, and was then raped by three soldiers.

During the rape one of the soldiers forced a piece of wood inside her. While this was happening, the soldiers looted the family home. The attack caused life-threatening injuries. After a first operation in the state hospital at Nundu, doctors reportedly suspended treatment because Bitondo Nyumba's family could not afford to pay. On 19 May the Uvira-based non government organisation Solidarity Movement of Women Human Rights Activists, SOFAD, arranged for her to be taken to the general hospital in Uvira, and paid for her to have a second operation.



In early June she was transferred to Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, South-Kivu province, which specialises in the treatment of rape victims. The hospital is subsidised by international humanitarian funds and treatment is free. Sadly, on 21 June Bitondo Nyumba died, due to an infection as her injuries had not been properly treated early on. To date, no action has been taken by the authorities to bring the perpetrators to justice. Tens of thousands of

women and girls have been raped in the course of the DRC conflict, and yet hardly any of the perpetrators have been brought to justice for their crimes. The situation of almost total impunity encourages further rapes. As Bitondo Nyumba's case illustrates, rape survivors face immense obstacles in seeking medical treatment. Women's NGO's are often the only support available.

Please write: to the Democratic of Congo authorities calling on them to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice.

Write to:

Mme Marie-Madelaine Kalala-Ministre des Droits Humains
Ministre des Droits Humains
Boulevard du 30 juin,
No. 33/C
Kinshasa-Gombe
Republique Democratique du Congo.

NB this letter is electronically available on the web.

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: May

The meeting started with a presentation by Virginia Segal of AI International Secretariat, explaining the new structures and new focus in AI.

Business Meeting:

- 1) **Mary Brown** took the chair and welcomed all to the meeting.
- 2) **Mary Brown** (secretary) outlined the **Monthly Action**: DRC, children as soldiers and sex trade.
- 3) **Refugee Week**: 19th to 25th June. Post cards circulated plus leaflets on defending female refugees. On Saturday 24th June at YMCA, we have been invited to have a stall at a Refugee Week event to include PUKAR music Group. Entry to the concert is free. Jilly is organising, please contact (see who's who if interested).
- 4) **Next month**: Mary reminded us that we needed to bring letter writing material on world-wide prisoners of conscience.
- 5) **Review of Action Files**: AI is currently reviewing individual action files. Southampton Group has held the Action File on Victor Pineda Henestrosa for many years. A great deal of highly imaginative campaigning had been carried out. The Group agreed that it was now

time to hand back this File and to take on a different one.

- 6) **Hedge End Churches together**: June 3rd 2.00 to 6.00pm. Mary and Jilly organising.
- 7) **Guildford Group**: Two events in Guildford Book Fair in October, see Mary for details.
- 7) **Southern Region Rep**: Still no one has come forward, Mary has the information.
- 8) **Financial Position**: Giampaolo reported at end of financial year we had a balance of £1063. He reported that the current venue's cost will rise from £18.50 to £21.60, agreed we would continue. Agreed we would send £300 to AI UK.
- 9) **CASA sub group**: Continue to get plenty of mailings. Received a DVD from Dutch Section about killings of women in Mexico.
- 10) **One World Shop**: Gareth reported that the local council are hoping to "smarten up the area" where we previously had a book shop. Information about current ownership would be helpful.

New Structures & Focus in Amnesty (cont from page1)

3 Non-CAP Countries:

Information on any country can be found on AI web site (amnesty.org.uk).

4 Campaign Planning (Bulletin):

The International Secretariat send out a Campaign Planning Bulletin to Sections every six months.

5 International Secretariat Restructuring:

Virginia illustrated this change in relation to the work with Americas, the team at IS now work primarily on the four CAP countries ie Brazil, Colombo, Mexico and USA., using the key themes.

Trying to Make Campaigning More Effective

The emphasis is on AI being more realistic and more focussed. This means that campaigns focus on a smaller number of strategic actions. It is important to

note that although the shift has been made to themes, there is a continued emphasis on individual stories to illustrate the themes and motivate the campaign.

The International Secretariat's responsibility is to interpret the information and supply the movement with good campaigning actions.

Our response to the Group Profile Form will be the mechanism for enabling AIUK to know what information to send to us. It should also be noted that there is a great deal of information on the web. Also worth noting that the web page has been upgraded.

"Individuals at Risk" information will continue to be important in informing campaigns eg Christmas Card Campaign.

Southampton Group Who's Who:

Group Officers:

Chair:

Becky John

Vice-Chair & Membership Secretary:

Jenny McConnell

Secretary & Press:

Mary Brown

Treasurer:

Giampaolo D'Alessandro

Outreach:

Veronica Tippetts

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

End Violence Against Women:

Jo Dixon

Business and Human Rights:

Gareth Davies

Control Arms Campaign:

Barbara Lupton

Terror, Security and Human Rights

Fran Stanfield

North Korea:

Avenue St Andrew's Church Group

- Diary:
- ◆ **Monday 12th June:** Group meeting: Update on North Korea, from Fran Stanfield. Plus letter writing focusing on Prisoners of Conscience worldwide. 7.30 pm Avenue St Andrew's. All welcome
 - ◆ **Saturday 3rd June:** Stall at Churches together in Hedge End
 - ◆ **19th to 25th June Refugee Week**
 - ◆ **Saturday 24th June:** AI Stall at music event at YMCA
 - ◆ **Monday 10th July:** Group Meeting, Southampton Group AGM, and "Stop Violence Against Women" videos. 7.30 pm Avenue St Andrew's.

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

Amnesty has a new website.

New features include:

What we do: about us, jobs, UK regional/national offices, our campaigns, world regions, education

What you can do: take action, action on individuals, local, student and youth groups, join us, join a network, shopping, giving, fundraising.

News and Events: news, events, media unit, boards and blogs, RSS, features and opinions.

Books and Publications: shopping on line.

Online action centre: send quick appeals by e-mail.

Events search: find events.

News: database searchable by date, country and theme.

My Amnesty: tell us what matters to you.

A day in the life: our online journal.

Discussion boards: we are starting with one but much more to come.

RSS feeds: keep you up to date with the latest news, actions and events on the site.

CONTROL ARMS CAMPAIGN

The arms trade is out of control.
Join us in demanding tougher controls.
Add a photograph of your face to the
"Millions Faces Petition"
www.controlarms.org

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