

AMNESTY NEWS

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

January 2008



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.

Trafficking and Slavery

Gemma Wolfes of Anti-Slavery International spoke at the December meeting.

Anti-Slavery International was created in 1839, its work currently focuses on three areas:

- ◆ campaigns for the eradication of slavery and trafficking,
- ◆ carries out research, and
- ◆ puts on pressure for the implementation of laws.

What is slavery? Today a slave has one or more of the following characteristics:

- ◆ forced to work, through mental or physical threat,
- ◆ controlled by an "employer", under the threat of some form of punishment,
- ◆ dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as "property",
- ◆ physically constrained or has restrictions placed on their freedom of movement.

What types of slavery exists today?

Forced labour:

This is any work or service which people are made to do against their will under the threat of some form of punishment.

Descent-based slavery:

Some people are compelled to work for others or treated as if they were owned

**Group Meeting
Monday December 14th 2008**

**"Still Human Still Here"
Destitution of refused asylum seekers**

**Introduced by:
Jilly Cooke,
Southampton Group**

**Avenue St Andrew's
United Reformed Church
The Avenue, Southampton
7.30 pm
ALL WELCOME**

by another person simply because of their caste or ethnic group.

Trafficking:

Human trafficking is the movement of people from one place to another using violence, coercion or deception for the purpose of forced labour or sexual exploitation.

Bonded labour:

A person becomes bonded when their labour is demanded as a the means of repayment for a loan or an advance. Once in debt they lose all control over their conditions of work and what, if anything, they get paid. Their debt is then inflated (for example, through charges for food, transport or interest on the loans) often making it impossible to repay and trapping them in a cycle of debt.

Cont on page 3

Trafficking and Slavery

What you can do about it:

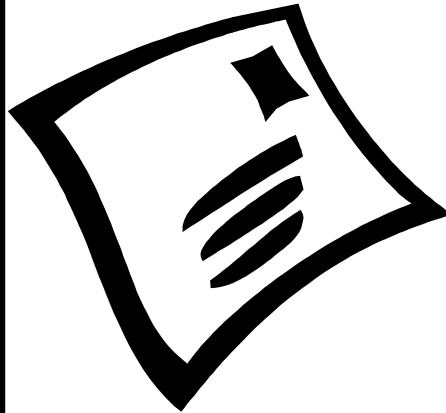
Please write a politely worded letter to the British Prime Minister Gordon Brown MP, and also to your Member of Parliament requesting that they raise your concerns with the Prime Minister.

Welcome the progress made so far, the details of that progress can be found on page 4 of this News, but underline the need to approach the issue of trafficking for forced labour from a human rights perspective.

This focuses on the exploitation a person suffers, rather than considering it only as an immigration issue.

Please urge the UK Government to:

- ◆ Ratify the Council of Europe “Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings, 2005.
- ◆ Retain the 1998 rule relating to migrant domestic workers which gives them one year re-



newable visas and the right to change their employer.

- ◆ Establish an independent National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings in the UK, with a similar role to that of the Dutch National Rapporteur.

NB: You can find out the name of your MP and their contact

details by calling the House of Commons On 020 7219 3000 or online at:

www.theyworkforyou.com.

Please write to:

Prime Minister Gordon Brown
MP
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

(name of your MP)
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

If you would like any additional information contact:

Kate Willingham,
Campaigns Officer.
Anti-Slavery International

020 7501 8933

E-mail:
k.willingham@antislavery.org

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.

December Group

Jenny welcomed all to the meeting. She expressed her thanks to the wide range of new members who had turned up for this speaker meeting.

Jenny reminded all present about the “Greetings

Card Campaign” and the materials available at the meeting.

£173.20 worth of Christmas cards had been sold at the University Craft Fair, thanks to all who helped.

Trafficking and slavery, continued from page 1

Worst forms of child labour:

Around 126 million children are in the worst forms of child labour. Of these some eight million are living in conditions which constitute slavery. These are called the unconditional worst forms of child labour and include situations where children are sold, bonded, trafficked, subjected to commercial sexual exploitation, recruited into armed conflicts and forced to work as domestic workers or in a variety of other industries.

Fair Trade

There is a strong connection between what we buy and slavery. Fair trade products guarantee no slavery has been involved in their production. You can use your consumer power to show you care-by buying Fair Trade products.

Progress and Challenges:

The UK Government introduced a law in 2004 that makes trafficking for all forms of labour exploitation a criminal offence and 2006 it established a national Human Trafficking Centre which has a mandate to pursue trafficking for both labour as well as sexual exploitation.

Despite these positive initiatives there has not been a single successful prosecution brought for trafficking for labour exploitation to date. Nor is there any specialised assistance available to people who are trafficked for forced labour. The UK Government has only just signed the Council of Europe Convention on trafficking, which would ensure that people trafficked into forced labour are provided with minimum standards of protection and support. However, the UK is yet to ratify and implement the convention.

Trafficked people’s stories:

1) Two Vietnamese men in their twenties were recruited in Vietnam to work in a hotel in the UK. They paid the agent £18,000 to arrange the job and came to the UK under the work permit scheme with a promise to receive £4.95 per hour for their work. On arrival in the UK an agent met them at the airport and took their passports away. The men worked in a major hotel chain for two months without receiving any pay. All they were given was food. They attempted to organise a strike at the hotel, but shortly after this their families in Vietnam received threats. The men were too frightened to approach the Vietnamese Embassy or the police, but eventually approached a Citizens Advice Bureau office via a Vietnamese speaking person they met on the street.

2) A domestic worker interviewed in the research recounted her friend’s experience: “She managed to escape through a window, from the family that treated her like a slave. She was terrified and had bruises on her body. Her passport was locked in the house. The policemen at the station asked her for her documents. She of course did not have them and wanted to tell him what happened, but he insisted on her documents first and said he must know who she was.”

Southampton Group Who's Who:

Group Officers:

Chair & Membership Secretary:

Jenny McConnell

Secretary :

Mary Brown

Treasurer:

Giampaolo D'Alessandro

Outreach and Parliamentary Officer:

Veronica Tippets

Press:

Cheryll Pitt

News Letter Editor:

John Williams

Subgroups:

Stop Violence Against Women:

Jo Dixon

Terrorism, Security and Human Rights

John Williams

Death Penalty:

Giampaolo D'Alessandro

Control Arms Campaign:

Barbara Lupton

Refugees:

Jilly Cooke

Central America:

Paul Humphrey

China & East Asia:

Paul Humphrey & Anne Parry

- Diary:
- ♦ **Monday 11th January:** 6th Anniversary of Guantanamo Bay.
 - ♦ **Monday 14th January:** Group Meeting. "Still Human Still Here", the destitution of failed asylum seekers. Introduced by Jilly Cooper, Southampton Group. Avenue St Andrews. 7.30 pm. All Welcome
 - ♦ **Saturday 19th January:** Regional Conference, Swindon
 - ♦ **Monday 11th February:** Group meeting: Update and Letter Writing on Central America; and discussion of Group Planning Pack.
 - ♦ **Saturday 8th March:** International Woman's Day
 - ♦ **Monday 10th March:** Group meeting: Human Rights in South America, Speaker tbc. Avenue St Andrews. 7.30 pm. All welcome.

Happy New Year!

Please ensure you have paid your subscription for this year.

10 Facts about CHINA

Fact 5

TIANANMEN PRISONERS

Nearly 20 years after the crackdown on demonstrators in Tiananmen Square, dozens of people arrested then remain in prison.

The government still refuses to hold a full, independent and impartial investigation.

Issues from AI Web Page

Check "www.amnesty.org.uk" for more details

Iran: Trade Union leader collapses in prison

USA: Kenny Richey, to be released from death row after 20 years.

Niger: Unlawful killings by army on increase.

Sudan: Obstructions and delays endanger UN deployment and civilian lives in Darfur.

Nigeria: Government misleads world about death penalty record.

Zimbabwe: Police still torture while political solution to crisis being sought.

AI reacts with dismay to the use of tasers.

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