

AMNESTY NEWS

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

November 2008



Terrorism and Human Rights

Dr Ed Bates, University of Southampton spoke on the issue of Terrorism and Human Rights at the October meeting of the Southampton Group.

The Government has a dilemma, on the one hand the history of our legal heritage ie “innocent until proven guilty” etc and on the other hand individuals determined to commit acts of terrorism including indiscriminate killing. The dilemma of security versus liberty.

The Government has a duty to protect the country from international terrorism, and is committed to target international terrorists. It is difficult to deport suspected terrorists-particularly if there is a realistic possibility that people would be tortured etc in their own country if they were returned.

Detention/internment interpreted as a presumption of guilt has been found to be illegal by the House of Lords. Consequently the government introduced “control orders” instead. They are very restrictive-virtual house arrest, contacts/visits are controlled etc. Control orders apply indefinitely and can be used for any citizen, not just those suspected of international terrorism. 16 people are currently subject to control orders-some individuals for more than 3 years to date.

Legal challenge for an individual is

**Group Meeting
Monday November 10th 2008**

**Southampton Group
“Stop Violence Against Women”**

**Speaker from:
Domestic Violence
Advocacy Service**

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

difficult-not allowed to attend court etc. A “special advocate” is appointed to represent the individual in court. However, neither the individual, nor the “special advocate” is allowed to know the full evidence against them for security reasons, therefore hard to present an effective case!

Human Rights challenge focuses on two articles:

- ◆ article 5– loss of liberty
- ◆ article 6– right to a fair trial.

Law now established that 16 hours a day house arrest is not a loss of liberty, 17 hours plus is.

Control order can be applied for on the grounds of a person being suspected of “more likely than not in-

**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.

Iran: Release women's rights activist Zeynab Bayzeydi

Zeynab Bayzeydi is a member of the Human Rights Organization of Kurdistan (HROK) and the One Million Signatures Campaign, which aims to collect a million signatures of Iranians on a petition demanding changes to laws that discriminate against women.

Amnesty International considers her a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for the peaceful exercise of her right to freedom of expression and association.

She was convicted of a number of offences, all of which she has denied, except the one arising from her work on the One Million Signatures Campaign.

Background information:

The Human Rights Organization of Kurdistan (HROK), which has over 200 members, was founded in April 2005. The authorities have never granted it official recognition as an NGO. Its founder, Mohammad Sadiq Kabudvand, is serving an 11-year prison sentence for "acting against state security by establishing the Human Rights Organization of Kurdistan" and



"propaganda against the system."

Iran's Kurdish population live mainly in the west and north-west of the country, in Kordestan and neighboring provinces, bordering Kurdish areas of Turkey and Iraq. They have long suffered extensive discrimination. Kurdish human rights defenders, including community activists and jour-

nalists, risk arbitrary arrest and torture.

Parents are banned from registering their babies with certain Kurdish names, and religious minorities that are mainly or partially Kurdish are targeted by measures designed to stigmatize and isolate them. Kurds are also discriminated against in their access to employment, adequate housing and political rights, and so suffer entrenched poverty, which has further marginalized them.

Send an appeal:

Calling on Iranian authorities to quash the four year sentence passed on Zeynab Bayzeydi and release her immediately and unconditionally, as she is a prisoner of conscience.

Please write to:

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi - Head of the Judiciary
Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave.
south of Serah-e Jomhour
Tehran 1316814737
Islamic Republic of Iran

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.

October Meeting

Kulbir and Madeleine (joint chairs) welcomed every one to the meeting: The business issues dealt with as follows:

- ◆ Thanks to Veronica for 21st September display for “International Day of Peace”. A petition was also forwarded to the Council for a “Peace Day” in Southampton.
- ◆ Thanks to all those who helped out on 4/10/08 for 2 hours prior to the screening of the Secret Policeman’s Ball. £10.61 was raised in tin donations.
- ◆ Thanks to Mary for running the Christmas card stall in Lyndhurst. £39 was taken over 3 hours. Please contact Mary with ideas to sell Christmas Cards.
- ◆ Phoenix Film Society are presenting “Persepolis 1” on 22/10/08. A stall is planned from about 7.15 pm. May highlight current case on AI website about an Iranian woman who has been exiled in Kazakhstan.
- ◆ NB there is a petition on AI website protesting against discrimination laws against women in Iran.
- ◆ UN day ceremony on Friday 24th October at 11.45 in the Civic Centre. Jilly and Veronica volunteered to attend.
- ◆ Southern AI Conference in Basingstoke 29/11 (see page 4 for more details)
- ◆ Christmas Fair at University where AI cards will be sold. Volunteers required, see next Group meeting.
- ◆ Greetings Card Campaign 6th and 7th December, volunteers required, see next Group meeting.
- ◆ China Sub Group feedback from Anne: One of the cases highlighted at previous Borders event should have been released in July, but delayed because of Olympics, still not released. Please go to AI website and sign the petition for his release.
- ◆ A new AI website has been set up for joint action: www.protectthehuman.com. Videos, images, blogs and actions available.
- ◆ 17/10/08 a West Papua event in Reading, music dance and storytelling. Caroline Lucas MEP and leader of the Green Party will be attending. NB some West Papuans are also due to give a talk at our January Group Meeting.
- ◆ Giampaolo (Treasurer) reported we have £359.79 in the bank. 26 membership renewals so far.
- ◆ Tin at October Books has raised £76 over last 8 months. Any suggestions for other local Collecting Tins are welcome. Fair Trade Store in Shirley and Arthouse Café to be approached. Please note who ever places the Tin must be responsible for collecting it bi-monthly.
- ◆ 60th Anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights soon, we have not yet planned anything, any ideas welcome.

Billy Robinson

Sadly Billy Robinson died on 28th September 2008 at the age of 93.

Unfortunately the Group was not aware of his death until after his funeral and therefore no one was able to attend to pay their respects.

Billy will be remembered with great affection by all members of the Southampton Group, he regularly attended monthly Group meetings and had been particularly active in the China Sub Group.

Information on AI Web site www.amnesty.org.uk

CONGO: Urgent UN reinforcements needed to avert catastrophe.

Arms Trade Treaty Progress: Politicians from

around the world have demanded the UN take action on an effective international Arms Trade Treaty.

Jordan: Treatment of women migrant workers condemned see new report October 2008.

Colombia: One step forward, many to go.

