

# AMNESTY NEWS

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

May 2009



## Business & Human Rights

All companies have a responsibility to respect human rights in their operations. Amnesty International believes that the business community also has a wider responsibility - moral and legal - to use its influence to promote respect for human rights.

We aim to change law and regulations to ensure that companies are accountable for the human rights impacts of their operations.

The Business and Human Rights programme also aims to encourage companies to:

- use their legitimate influence in support of human rights, in all countries where they operate
- give effect to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- avoid complicity in human rights violations committed by other parties
- include a specific commitment to human rights in their statements of business principles and codes of conduct
- produce explicit human rights policies and ensure that they are integrated, monitored and audited
- put in place the necessary internal management systems to ensure that their stated human rights policies are acted upon

**Companies Act passes into law: Am-**

### Group Meeting

**Monday 11th May 2009**

**China: 20 yrs on from  
Tiananmen  
Giampaolo D'Alessandro  
Southampton Group**

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

### **Amnesty urges Brown to go further**

The biggest changes to company law have now come into effect. But in an open letter today (1 October) the CORE Coalition, Trade Justice Movement and Compass Group ask Prime Minister Gordon Brown to make corporate accountability central to his government's policies.

### **Companies Bill strengthened in Parliament**

Thank you to all activists who helped us strengthen the Companies Bill in Parliament. The UK now has a globally unprecedented set of regulations which forces large companies to show more respect to people and the environment.

### **European Parliament demands environmental and social regulation for business**

**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.

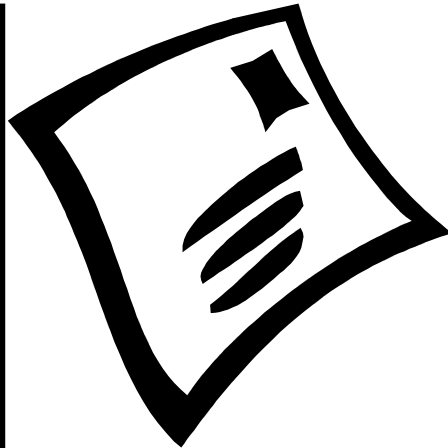
**AI's  
CORE VALUES**  
remain those of :  
international solidarity, effective action for the individual victim, global coverage, the universality and indivisibility of human rights, impartiality and independence, and democracy and mutual respect.

## Canada: Lubicon Cree Action

### Background:

The Lubicon were overlooked when a treaty was negotiated with other indigenous peoples in the region in 1899. As a result, their legal rights to their land have never been recognized by either level of government. They have no reserve and have been denied any say in the management of their larger traditional territory. In the 1970's the Alberta government initiated a programme of massive oil and gas development on what it considered to be Crown land. The Lubicon economy, the health of their community, their way of life and culture itself have been devastated by these developments.

Almost 20 years ago the United Nations Human Rights Committee (UNHRC) concluded that the scale and pace of development on the Lubicon territory endangered their culture and way of life and would constitute an ongoing violation of the Lubicon's fundamental human rights until such time as the Lubicon and the federal government reached a negotiated settlement.



### 1. Write to the Prime Minister of Canada:

Office of the Prime Minister of Canada,  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON  
K1A 0A2

Making the following points:  
- Note that the United Nations Human Rights bodies have repeatedly expressed concerns over devastating impact of industrial development on the fundamental rights of the Lubicon Cree, including their livelihoods, culture and way

of life.

- Urge the federal government to return to negotiations with the Lubicon with a clear commitment to finding a just resolution to the land dispute. Such a resolution must fully uphold the rights of the Lubicon Cree under domestic and international law.

### 2. Make the Province of Alberta aware of your concerns.

Write to:

The Honorable Ed Stelmach  
Premier of Alberta  
307 Legislature Bldg  
10800-97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB  
Canada, TSK 2B5

Making the following points:

- Same as to Prime Minister of Canada above

- Urge the Government of Alberta to agree that pending final resolution of the Lubicon land dispute no new development activity should be permitted on Lubicon land except with the agreement of the Lubicon Cree

### 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.

# April Meeting

Kulbir Chahal took the Chair:

**Concert:** Mary gave a report on a very successful event. Around 70 people attended; £382 was raised and lots of cards signed. Big thanks to all who helped.

**Monthly Action:** Regarding destitution of refused asylum seekers. Please note this is also available on line.

**Amnesty Skills Share:** A variety of workshops which Rob and Kulbir had attended. The next one will be in July 11th and 12th at HR Action Centre, London. Two nights accommodation and travel is provided. Need firm booking by 15th May, contact Mary Brown if interested.

**Euro Elections:** June 2009. Details for the South East England Constituency from Valerie Agar (John has the information so far) More information at the next meeting.

**Urgent Actions:** E-mail contacts to continue, but not money to AI.

**Group Planning Pack:** In future death penalty, terrorism security and human rights, refugees and arms control will appear as monthly actions.

Group will focus on Stop Violence Against Women, Dignity Campaign, Central America and China & East Asia. See "who's who" for details of contact.

In the China & East Asia we will focus on Hu Jia and Zeng Jinyan.

**Probation Officer Conference:** May 1st at Jury's Inn. Jenny, Jilly and Jean will cover a stall on Women's Issues.

**Car Boot Sale:** Rob, Kulbir and Trish to organise. Date to be fixed at May meeting, please bring items to May meeting.

**Finances:** Currently £653.94 balance. Currently subs amount to £435 and expenditure on meetings and news letter amounts to £340 and expenditure on AGM amounts to £200.

**Xmas Cards:** This year the University Craft Fair will be asking for £40 fee. No longer financially viable for us to continue at this venue.

**Individual at Risk News Letter:** sent around by e-mail plus paper version.

**Outreach:** Veronica provided information on Palestinian Group for City.

**United Nations Association:** Jilly reported that UNA had hosted a meeting about coordinating actions across various HR issues, ie an umbrella group.

## Feed Back From AGM

Rob provided a report: Friday night there had been a series of workshops. Focus on Dignity Campaign which is featuring three areas: Deep Sea Settlement– Nairobi; Maternal Mortality– Peru and Corporate Responsibility. NB see letter on page 3 relevant to corporate responsibility..

Around 450 delegates attended and heard from a range of speakers including:

- Ed Husain, co-director of the Quilliam Foundation
- David Petrusek, independent advisor to Amnesty's Secretary-General
- Jenni Williams, regional coordinator for WOZA (Women of Zimbabwe Arise)
- Mahendra, Indonesian student activist, ex-POC
- Nyamalo, resident of the Deep Sea community
- Opiata, Director of Kenyan NGO Hakijamii

We were also delighted to be joined by Amnesty colleagues from around the world including Peru, Canada, Sweden, France, and Denmark and we would like to thank them for their contribution.

