

Amnesty International UK  
Section Report 2012

# PREPARING THE GROUND FOR CHANGE



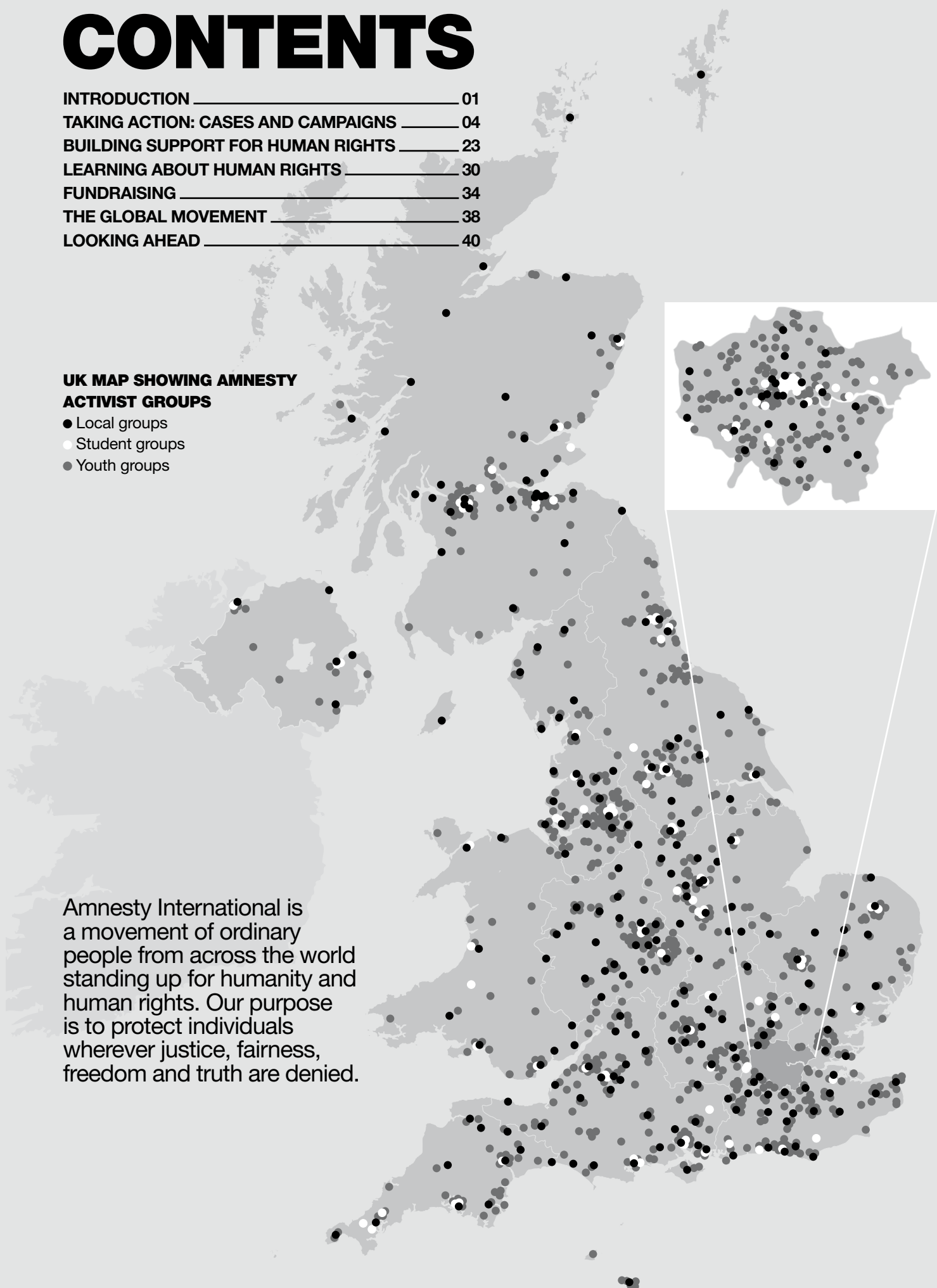
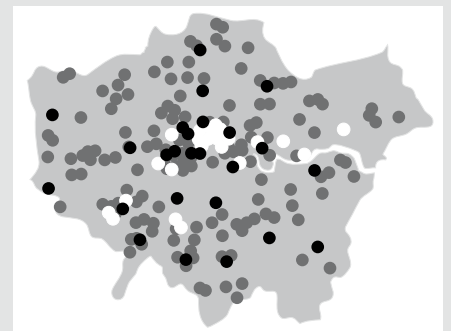
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## UK MAP SHOWING AMNESTY ACTIVIST GROUPS

- Local groups
- Student groups
- Youth groups

Amnesty International is a movement of ordinary people from across the world standing up for humanity and human rights. Our purpose is to protect individuals wherever justice, fairness, freedom and truth are denied.



# INTRODUCTION

## AN ANNIVERSARY TO REMEMBER



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St Martin-in-the-Fields, 28 May 2011, left to right: singer Reem Kelani, campaigner and artist Dan Jones, ex-prisoner of conscience and human rights activist Maria Gillespie, Kate Allen, author Michael Morpurgo, Amnesty secretary general Salil Shetty, actor Julian Rhind-Tutt, Manya Benenson, daughter of Amnesty's founder

Amnesty's 50th year was a memorable one. It was, naturally, a time for celebration of all that has been achieved since Peter Benenson made his *Observer* newspaper 'appeal for amnesty' for prisoners of conscience around the world on 28 May 1961. This campaign was initially meant to last for a year; the fact that it turned into the largest human rights organisation in the world, with more than three million members in 150 countries and territories, is certainly worth celebrating.

The anniversary was also an opportunity to reflect on all that still needs to be done in a world where scores of governments fail to uphold the promises of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Almost two-thirds of humanity lack access to justice. Poverty goes hand-in-hand with human rights abuses. Discrimination against women is rife. Homophobia is on the rise in Africa and Eastern Europe. Fifty-eight nations retain the death penalty.

There is certainly much work to be done before the dream of Burmese democracy campaigner Aung San Suu Kyi, expressed in a birthday message to Amnesty, can be realised: 'I wish, on this 50th anniversary of Amnesty International, that its work will continue to be so successful, that there will no longer be any need for such an organisation.'

Hers was one of many messages of support and recognition, including one from Foreign Secretary William Hague, who said: 'I congratulate Amnesty and its members on their achievements over years of tireless campaigning. Their work to protect and promote human rights, often at risk to themselves, has resulted in many lives saved and prisoners of conscience released.'

What I will particularly remember about our anniversary will be the great family gathering of activists, supporters and former prisoners

### AMNESTY AT 50 CELEBRATIONS

#### WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

The 50th birthday party on 28 May 2011 went back to Amnesty's roots at St Martin-in-the-Fields church, Trafalgar Square, where our founder Peter Benenson first envisaged the movement. There were speeches, music, readings and a gigantic cake. The guestlist included former prisoners of conscience, members of the Benenson family, activists and supporters such as children's author Michael Morpurgo and actors Tim McInnerny and Eva Birthistle.



#### POSTER POWER

The 50th anniversary provided a great excuse to delve into in the Amnesty archives and pull out some hidden gems. We mounted a touring exhibition of 50 posters showing first in London and Belfast, then other venues in Northern Ireland. Hundreds of artists, including Pablo Picasso and Joan Miró, have lent their talents over the years, employing symbolism, dark images and more than a dash of black humour. They bear witness to how far some countries – such as South Africa, Chile, Argentina – have travelled. And they remind us how far other nations – such as Afghanistan and Syria – still have to go.



#### FROM HAY-ON-WYE TO NICARAGUA

Hay-on-Wye's literary festival is all about the written word, but the big draw at Amnesty's stand was the chance to colour in a paper butterfly. More than 1,500 people contributed to Amnesty's special 50th birthday campaign for women's rights in Nicaragua. Throughout the summer 50,000 butterflies were made worldwide – 17,000 in the UK. The butterflies were sent to Nicaragua in a huge solidarity action for 28 September, when thousands of people marched to demand better sexual and reproductive rights for women and girls.

#### EDINBURGH FESTIVAL BACKS UAE 5

The hot ticket in town was Amnesty's now-legendary Stand Up For Freedom gig, showcasing top comedy talent at the Edinburgh Festival. We urged the audience to text their support for the 'UAE 5' – five activists charged with 'publicly insulting' officials in the United Arab Emirates. Their sentences have now been commuted but not expunged. As comic Ed Byrne quipped: 'If you can get locked up in the UAE for insulting officials, I hope no Emirati police ever come to Edinburgh or they'll end up jailing half the festival.'

## INTRODUCTION

### FROM WALES, WITH PEACE AND GOODWILL

In Wales Amnesty teamed up with one of Europe's largest cultural youth festivals, the Urdd Eisteddfod, to help draw up the festival's annual message of Peace and Goodwill. It spoke of war and peace in Afghanistan, showing how conflict damages children's lives and how essential it is to defend human rights. The message, translated into 30 languages, was distributed to every corner of the world through Welsh school networks. All schools in Wales received the accompanying materials to use in their assemblies.



### SONGS AND WORDS IN BELFAST

Long-time activist Bianca Jagger delivered the Amnesty International Annual Lecture at Queen's in Belfast.

She reflected on social media and human rights changes since the Second World War, not least the huge protests in the Middle East and North Africa. Singer-songwriter Billy Bragg (pictured) performed a special night of songs of freedom and protest at the Belfast Festival in October.



© Anthony St James

### CANDLES AND CHOIRS IN NORWICH

Energy and inventiveness marked the response to the 50th anniversary from our network of 270 local groups. Norwich group celebrated with song, a venture with an inspiring local choir that has transformed into a nationwide celebration. The choir's director Sian Croose commissioned special anniversary pieces from leading UK composers for choirs to perform at Amnesty concerts. Choirs in Norwich, Cambridge, Bath, Brighton and other places took part. At Norwich Cathedral's Chapel of Holy Innocents the group lit a candle to burn throughout the year, held in a special holder created by local blacksmith Reg Loveday, and based on Amnesty's famous logo.



### ON A MUSICAL NOTE...

The Minehead group specially commissioned the Amnesty Cantata, which was composed by Emily Feldberg and performed at a concert and tea in May. The Bath group included a Billy Bragg concert in their series of celebrity events, while more than 50 musicians performed for free at Edinburgh St. Marks group's orchestral classical concert. Things took an energetic turn in York when the group staged a 'flash mob' dance to Nina Simone's *I wish I knew how it would feel to be free* and to *The Great Escape* (pictured).



of conscience in St Martin-in-the-Fields, and the warm, spirited celebrations organised by Amnesty local groups all over the country. Thank you to all those who welcomed me to their anniversary events – it was an honour and a pleasure to be with you.

It has been a year of action, as well as celebration. The momentous events unfolding in the Middle East and North Africa showed just how great is the need to take action for human rights, and to stand in solidarity with people demanding freedom and justice.

As a global movement, Amnesty International has played an important part in drawing international attention to the human rights issues at stake in the region. We issued the first comprehensive report on the killings of protesters by security forces in Tunisia. We were one of the first to report on the torture of demonstrators by the army in Egypt. As Libya descended into armed conflict, Amnesty researchers sent eyewitness reports, of the shelling of residential districts and the use of cluster bombs. We raised the alarm about severe human rights violations in Syria that could amount to crimes against humanity and called on the UN Security Council to refer the situation to the International Criminal Court.

Of course, we don't know how this will end. Will the millions of peaceful protesters attain their human rights? Or will structures of repression be imposed anew through brute force or political manipulation?

Amnesty wants these human rights revolutions to succeed. We are working with human rights defenders across the region to ensure that all of those who helped overthrow repressive regimes – including women, young people, independent trade unionists, and the poor – are included, not marginalised, in the new political scene.

I saw the importance of this during three visits to Egypt in the course of the year. With International Secretariat colleagues in April, I met women's organisations and activists to assess how to bring the strength of Amnesty to their cause. Women who spent 18 days in Tahrir Square standing up for a different Egypt all told how, as they braved snipers and Mubarak's thugs, they experienced equality for the first time in their lives – between men and women, Muslim and Christian – and how they want to make that a lasting reality.

In Cairo later in the year to help launch the Amnesty report on forced evictions, I met people from slum communities who were elated that Amnesty was standing with them and asserting that housing is a human right.

By November, ahead of the first round of parliamentary elections, it was clear that the military were not ready to relinquish power. Demonstrators had returned to Tahrir Square and the security forces had attacked them. Forty protesters were killed in November. With the Amnesty team monitoring possible violence during the election, I met people who had lost family members to police violence, people who had been injured, people who had treated the injured in the field hospital in Tahrir Square. Despite the violence and uncertainty, ordinary people were hugely optimistic. After all, together they had overthrown a tyrant: they knew their own power.

In this report you can read about many of our campaign successes over the past year. But of course, not all of our campaigns ended in success. The execution of Troy Davis, despite the passionate efforts of so many Amnesty supporters in the UK and around the world, was devastating. But the courage and dignity shown by Troy and his family throughout their long struggle inspired us and renewed our determination to fight on until the death penalty is abolished, in the USA and around the world. Our campaign for Troy touched millions of

‘Two decades of campaigning and lobbying for a robust international Arms Trade Treaty will reach a decisive moment in July 2012, with the final treaty negotiations.’

people who were horrified that a man could be executed when so much doubt surrounded his case. We are beginning to change the nature of the debate in the USA – and it is heartening to see so many of our younger supporters in schools and universities taking up this campaign.

Many challenges face us in the year ahead. Two decades of campaigning and lobbying for a robust international Arms Trade Treaty will reach a decisive moment in July 2012, with the final treaty negotiations. This is our chance to effect a change that could save millions of lives in years to come: a binding international agreement to stop the transfer of lethal weapons to those who would use them to abuse human rights.

As a global movement, we know we cannot achieve our full potential with most of our resources concentrated in the ‘developed’ world. More of our international researchers and campaigners need to move closer to the people whose human rights we seek to defend, and to our local partners who are working to defend those rights. We want emerging powers such as Brazil, India, South Africa and Nigeria to live up to their national, regional and international human rights responsibilities. To build sustained pressure to make this happen, our movement must be part of civil society in those countries.

To do this, we need to raise more funds for human rights work around the world. We have taken the first steps in this essential shift by opening an office in Brazil and appointing a head of Amnesty India.

The challenge is all the greater in the current economic environment, and our efforts this year were hampered by the news that the international movement’s former general secretary Irene Khan, and her deputy Kate Gilmore, had received enormous sums of money when they ceased to work for the organisation.

All of us were outraged. My colleagues and I, with the AIUK Board and other Amnesty sections, insisted on a strong review of payments to senior international staff to prevent such a thing ever recurring. I believe the measures outlined in Dame Anne Owers’s report, which our new International Executive Committee has accepted, will achieve this. I thank all the members who expressed their views on this issue and who remained loyal to Amnesty while it was dealt with. You played an essential role in a democratic movement by helping to hold the leadership to account.

I would also like to thank all our supporters for continuing to donate money and to raise funds for our human rights work. In a year of persistent economic gloom the average sum donated by individual supporters has actually risen: this is testament to your enormous generosity and commitment.

So what have we learned as we look back on this anniversary year? At Amnesty’s birthday event at St Martin-in-the-Fields, Salil Shetty said: ‘Fifty years of standing up to tyranny and injustice has shown that change is possible and that people united in common action across borders and beliefs can achieve extraordinary things. Every individual can make a difference, but millions standing together and uniting against injustice can change the world.’

Now that is something worth remembering.

Kate Allen, Director

**DRESSED FOR FREEDOM IN MANCHESTER**

With the help of local artist Helen Davies, and funding from the City Council, the Manchester group made



Amnesty candle costumes, complete with snaking black barbed wire and yellow flame headpieces for the city’s Day Parade in June. The group waved bright windsocks and a huge ‘Happy Birthday’ banner as they strode through the city to rousing renditions of ‘happy birthday to Amnesty’. A human rights-themed walk ended with a toast to freedom at the People’s History Museum.

**TRURO’S TWO-WEEK CELEBRATIONS**

The Truro and Falmouth group devised a series of ways to celebrate and raise awareness. 200 Cornish secondary school



students produced a piece of art on human rights themes, with the support of artist Phil Whiting. On 28 May, the Mayor of Truro was one of 50 people volunteering to be photographed inside a cage prison, set up outside the cathedral as part of the group’s stall. The group performed the *Rendition Monologues*, by the theatre company *iceandfire*, and also held a panel discussion on human rights.

**SAYING IT WITH FLOWERS (AND TREES)**

Monty Python star Terry Jones planted a hawthorn in Colwyn Bay (pictured), its thorns reflecting



Amnesty’s barbed wire, and its flowers symbolising hope and suffering. Buckingham group chose a double white-flowered cherry, planted by local MP John Bercow at the University of Buckingham. Business Secretary Vince Cable planted a tree at the New Forest group’s event. Dundee members created a floral display of the Amnesty candle, while in St. Albans council gardeners planted a special Amnesty flower-bed in the city’s Quaker Burial Ground. St. Albans group members met at the burial ground for reflection and recollections from Jennifer Knox, daughter of founding Amnesty member Eric Baker.

**TEA, CAKE AND FLOATING CANDLES**

The Wirksworth group welcomed Kate Allen with an inspired cake decorated with an Amnesty candle and tiny



white doves. The North Wiltshire group baked 50 cupcakes to sell, combining celebration with action for Burmese prisoner of conscience Ko Aye Aung. The Mid-Gloucestershire group’s oldest member, Buntly Biggs, in her 90s, cut two cakes made by members. The Canterbury group meanwhile perched on a float featuring a giant model birthday cake, with Amnesty candle, as they sailed along the canal. Groups large and small raised tea-cups, glasses and much-appreciated funds at ‘AmnesTeas’ up and down the country.

# TAKING ACTION CASES AND CAMPAIGNS

[www.amnesty.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/campaigns)



Supporters creating their solidarity butterflies at the Hay Festival

© Alison Jordan

Amnesty International campaigns to convince governments, corporations and other powerful institutions to respect human rights. In 2011, Amnesty activists, working individually or in groups, helped to show the strength of support for our campaigns, bringing them to life in communities, schools and campuses around the country. In our 50th year we achieved notable successes, such as forcing one of the country's biggest banks to abandon its policy of funding companies producing cluster munitions. We also experienced some setbacks – and new challenges, such as the upsurge of protest against repressive regimes right across the Middle East and North Africa, which forced us to re-assess our priorities.

## **WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS**

Amnesty champions the rights of women and girls, holding governments accountable for ending discrimination and inequality. We have a particular focus on women human rights defenders, sexual and reproductive rights, violence against women, and the impact of conflict on women's human rights.

### **Defending women's rights in Nicaragua**

Amnesty's first global action for its 50th anniversary was a solidarity campaign to support Nicaraguan women and girls in their fight against sexual abuse – *La Mariposa* (Spanish for 'butterfly', chosen by Nicaraguan women's organisations as a symbol of freedom and hope).

Reports have documented the disturbingly high level of sexual violence against women and young girls in Nicaragua. At the same time the country's complete ban on abortion endangers the lives of those who become pregnant because of rape, threatening their psychological as well as their physical health. The government has done little to combat this widespread sexual abuse, to provide care to survivors, or to ensure they receive justice.

Amnesty's campaign called on supporters to create multi-coloured butterflies, with messages of support and solidarity, to send to the women's and girls' organisations in Nicaragua fighting to protect their rights.

Over 50,000 butterflies were collected from 40 countries – 17,000 of them from the UK alone. Local and youth groups worked hard to reach this total, with stalls at the summer’s festivals proving to be a good source of support. Visitors to the Hay Festival alone made over 1,500 butterflies at the Amnesty stand, and youth groups sent in 1,200. Many of the butterflies were used by the thousands of women, men and children who marched through the streets of Nicaragua on 28 September, the Day for the Decriminalisation of Abortion in Latin America and the Caribbean, to demand the authorities uphold women’s rights. Other butterflies now hang on the walls of women’s centres, inspiring those who pass by with their bright colours and hopeful messages.

Amnesty has been working with women’s groups in Nicaragua to lobby for a better response to sexual violence, better access to services and a repeal of the total ban on abortion. When a high level mission of Amnesty delegates visited the country, they persuaded four of the five presidential candidates in Nicaragua’s presidential election to pledge zero tolerance for violence against women. The delegation also presented a petition of 212,165 signatures from people in 115 countries to eradicate sexual violence against women and girls.

Our work lets the women in Nicaragua know that they are not alone in their struggle to free themselves from sexual abuse.

### Defending women’s rights in Afghanistan

In October 2011, Amnesty launched a new campaign on Afghanistan and women’s rights to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the military intervention. The focus was the Bonn Conference on 5 December where the Afghan government and its international partners (including the UK) gathered to discuss the future of Afghanistan. Despite significant advances in women’s rights and gender equality, including a constitution giving women and men equal legal status, many Afghan women are concerned that their hard-won rights would be traded away in the search for a political settlement with insurgent groups. The campaign aim is to ensure women’s human rights and equality are central in any peace processes and to ensure the UK government is vocal on the need for Afghan women’s rights to be guaranteed in all negotiations. It is vital the UK government makes Afghan women’s meaningful participation in all peace processes a key priority.

Amnesty groups and individual activists were key to getting the issue onto the political agenda. Over 130 MPs from all political parties responded positively to letters from their constituents, the vast majority promising to raise Afghan women’s rights within their parties.

In addition, Amnesty petitioned Foreign Secretary William Hague directly. Activists designed and produced handmade kites with a message or slogan calling on William Hague to make sure Afghan women were at the negotiating table in Bonn and their rights were not sacrificed in the name of peace. A staggering 10,000 kites were received from youth, student and local groups, and with online and other signatures from our coalition partners, the petition total reached 22,000. The petition was handed to Alistair Burt, the minister responsible for Afghanistan, and Lynne Featherstone MP, the UK government’s international champion against violence against women.

As a result of the number of MP responses and kite petitions, a photo event was held in parliament where 80 MPs turned up to be photographed in front of some of the kites made by activists, pledging support for Afghan women’s rights.

The impact of Amnesty’s petitioning could be seen in Bonn where William Hague included women’s rights in his statement to the



© Al/Grace Gonzalez

Thousands march for women’s rights in Nicaragua

### THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

‘We are deeply thankful for all this synergy that has been created around the world – painting and decorating all the lovely butterflies....We thank everyone for all their solidarity which gives us energy to continue our struggle.’

Argentina Espinoza, director of Ixchen, a network of centres for survivors of sexual and domestic violence



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Glasgow University students say it with kites



© FCO

Amnesty Afghanistan researcher joins GAPS Coalition partners to deliver the petition to UK government minister Alistair Burt MP and international violence against women champion Lynne Featherstone MP

## REFUGEES: UGANDA

In November, Amnesty was contacted by lawyers acting for a Ugandan man who said he had been forced to flee the East African country because he was gay. His asylum application, a subsequent appeal, and an application to the European Court of Human Rights were all rejected. However, Amnesty identified important flaws in the decision-making process, which were used by his lawyers to make another claim. Although the UK Border Authority refused him again, a judge then granted an injunction against his removal two hours before it was due to take place.

## REFUGEES: CHINA

In June 2011, Amnesty helped to halt the deportation of an ethnic Uighur woman who would have been at great risk of harm if returned to China because of her active involvement in Uighur groups in the UK. The Chinese government is known to monitor the activities of diaspora communities. The woman's asylum application and a subsequent appeal had both been rejected. However, Amnesty prepared an expert opinion on the case, and after urgent judicial review proceedings, a High Court judge granted an injunction against the removal. Amnesty had previously helped secure refugee status for two other ethnic Uighur asylum seekers.

Newcastle University students raise awareness of the plight of destitute asylum seekers



conference (although his statement could have been stronger), the Afghan delegation included 11 women and 39 men (which meant women made up 22 per cent of the official delegation), and Afghan women made up 50 per cent of the civil society representation. The Bonn Outcome document reaffirmed the commitments in the Afghan constitution, including those on women's human rights.

■ **Women's rights in the Middle East and North Africa:**  
see pages 9-10

## REFUGEES AND ASYLUM

Amnesty aims to bring about a fair and effective asylum system by carrying out research, then developing proposals and promoting them. Over the past year, we have given evidence in cases, and campaigned on issues such as asylum destitution and enforced removals.

### Asylum destitution

In February 2011, Amnesty student activists and Student Action for Refugees (STAR) campaigners slept on the streets for a night to raise awareness about the destitution of refused asylum seekers. More than 1,000 people took part in 32 sleep-outs across the UK.

Local groups lobbied their local politicians, and more than 125 MPs signed a declaration supporting the right to work for some asylum seekers.

Other achievements in 2011 include cost-of-living increases and access to hospital care for more than 15,000 asylum seekers in England. These are particularly significant given the tough economic times and often negative public opinion of refugees and asylum seekers.

### Enforced removals

In June 2011, Amnesty helped to secure an injunction against the forcible removal of a group of Iraqi asylum seekers, just hours before they were due to be put on a charter flight. Since then, there have been no more attempts to fly refugees back to Iraq on chartered planes, although a few have been returned by scheduled flights. Amnesty International continues to oppose the UK government's view that asylum seekers can safely be returned to Iraq and the Court of Appeal has given us permission to challenge that view in the courts.

In July we released *Out of Control*, a report that called for a complete overhaul of the system of enforced removals by private contractors. Prior to the report's publication, Amnesty submitted evidence to the parliamentary Home Affairs Committee, which – in January 2012 – published its own report endorsing many of our recommendations. Local groups wrote to their MPs calling on them to support an overhaul of the system. More than 5,000 people saw Amnesty TV's spoof training video on 'carpet karaoke', a potentially lethal control and restraint technique used by private sector contractors during forced removals.

Amnesty has since met with Home Office ministers and the new chief executive of the UK Border Agency, which has now agreed to improve its training programmes.

### Legal casework

In 2011, Amnesty gave evidence in more than 50 asylum appeals – in the overwhelming majority of these, the appellant won. Several of the cases set important legal precedents. For example, a judgment in early 2012 significantly improved the situation for Afghan children seeking asylum in the UK.



The European Court of Human Rights relied upon Amnesty evidence when it ruled that the forcible return of two Somali refugees would be unlawful. In a ruling significant for Somali refugees across Europe, the court ruled in favour of the duo, rejecting UK government calls for the Grand Chamber to reconsider the matter. Amnesty also lobbied for the UK to accept refugees from post-conflict Libya, but the government is so far refusing to take them in.

## END THE DEATH PENALTY

Amnesty aims to abolish capital punishment worldwide and works to save the lives of individuals under sentence of death.

### Troy Davis

The execution of Troy Davis on 21 September 2011, after 20 years on death row in Georgia, USA, showed the death penalty in all its cruelty and unfairness. The state of Georgia insisted on going ahead with the execution, despite the serious doubts about his guilt. Troy himself remained a campaigner to the last, seeing his own story as part of the long struggle to abolish the death penalty. In his final statement before being put to death, he maintained his innocence of the crime and asked his friends and family to ‘continue to fight the fight’.

Arrested in 1989 for the murder of police officer Mark Allen MacPhail, Troy was sentenced to death in 1991. No physical evidence linked him to the crime and the murder weapon was never found. The prosecution case rested on witness testimony, but since Troy’s conviction, seven of the state’s nine non-police witnesses had recanted or contradicted their testimony. Of the remaining two, one was the principal alternative suspect for the murder. Nevertheless, the US courts refused the appeal for a retrial.

Amnesty had campaigned on Troy’s case since 2007, in an international campaign led by Amnesty USA, supported by 15 other Amnesty sections, including the UK and France. Many Amnesty supporters in the UK developed a connection with Troy and his family, through the 2010 Greetings Card Campaign and during the visit to the UK earlier that year of his sister Martina Correia and her son De’Jaun.

At the beginning of 2011 the campaign was low key, awaiting the outcome of an appeal against the results of an evidentiary hearing in the previous year. In March, the US Supreme Court refused to consider the appeal and the campaigning effort then focused on asking the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles for clemency.

Amnesty supporters collected 25,000 signatures on a petition (including more than 600 gathered in just two hours by students attending our Action for Change conference), and members of the Urgent Action network sent a series of appeals. When the September execution date was announced, the campaign gathered momentum. We asked artists to help raise the profile of Troy’s case. Richard Hughes of the rock band Keane, a committed supporter of the campaign for many years, spoke at our solidarity vigil outside the US embassy on 16 September. Bands including Mogwai and Franz Ferdinand used Twitter and Facebook to spread the word to their fans, and some artists tweeted about the campaign even without us asking them to.

Social media played a big role in drumming up action in the week before the execution: almost half of the traffic to our campaign webpage came from Facebook and Twitter. Nearly 80,000 people sent email appeals to the Georgia Parole Board through the webpage – most of them on the day before the execution. Although the Parole Board ignored the pressure, they clearly felt it: on 20 September they



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‘The struggle for justice doesn’t end with me. This struggle is for all the Troy Davises who came before me and all the ones who will come after me. I’m in good spirits and I’m prayerful and at peace. But I will not stop fighting until I’ve taken my last breath.’

Troy Davis, September 2011



© Ben Smith

Vigil outside the US embassy, 16 September

## URGENT ACTION ON THE DEATH PENALTY

### ILLINOIS GOVERNOR SIGNS ABOLITION BILL

On 9 March Illinois became the 16th state in the USA to stop executing people when Governor Pat Quinn signed a bill to abolish the death penalty. Governor Quinn said that since the legislature had approved the bill, he had heard from a wide variety of people on both sides of the issue. Illinois is the third state to enact legislation to abolish the death penalty since 2007.

### DEATH PENALTY COMMUTED FOR SHAWN HAWKINS

Shawn Hawkins was convicted of the murders of Terrance Richard and Diamond Marteen in Ohio. He was due to be executed on 14 June 2011. After the trial, he maintained his innocence and Hawkins's appeal lawyer presented evidence that cast doubt on the conviction. The Ohio clemency board voted 7-0 to commute the death penalty, saying they were '...not confident in the death sentence in this case'.

### OREGON HALTS EXECUTIONS

On 23 November the Governor of Oregon, John Kitzhaber, announced that he would refuse to sanction any further executions. The de facto moratorium makes Oregon the fifth state in four years to halt executions. Over the next year votes to overturn the death penalty are expected in California, Connecticut and Maryland.

'We went to the embassy and gave them our letter – we know they got our message. Maybe it will take a million people to watch the film and get involved for it to make a difference for Sakineh. When I watch the film now I'm amazed and surprised at what we did. When you're doing it you don't realise how it all adds up.'

Sama, Eastlea school



Eastlea School student protests against stoning

© Marie-Anne Ventoura

blocked all emails coming from the Amnesty International UK server. We adapted the webpage so that users could send emails from their personal accounts but on the following day the Parole Board blocked all incoming emails.

It is often difficult to get the UK media interested in death penalty cases, but this one was an exception. From 19 September, when clemency was denied, coverage grew dramatically and added momentum to the campaign. On the night of the execution more than 500 people – many more than expected – turned up to the vigil outside the US embassy at 10pm. Amnesty supporters in Scotland, meanwhile, held a vigil outside the US consulate in Edinburgh. Leicester Amnesty group also held a vigil for Troy outside the town hall.

Although the campaign failed to save Troy Davis, it generated unprecedented attention to his case and to the death penalty in general. Worldwide, more than 300 events and vigils were held in the last few days of the campaign, and a million people took action against the death penalty. The challenge now is to harness this outpouring of solidarity to continue the fight to end the death penalty once and for all.

## End stoning in Iran

Amnesty is working alongside Iranian campaigners to end stoning, a particularly cruel method of execution. The Iranian authorities declared a moratorium on stoning in 2002, but at least six people have been stoned to death since then. At present, four men and 10 women are believed to be under sentence of death by stoning.

The case of one of these women, Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani, a 43-year-old mother of two, made headlines in the UK press in 2010. Her story moved the Amnesty youth group at Eastlea School in East London to take action to end stoning. In February 2011 we started filming their campaign, which culminated in a demonstration outside the Iranian embassy on 18 May. The film, *I Talk Out Loud*, inspired at least 48 schools to set up new Amnesty youth groups and was used in our human rights work in schools (see p31). Later in the year, the group was invited to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to present the film at the FCO's World Day Against the Death Penalty event. Their idealism and determination impressed Minister of State Jeremy Browne and an international audience of ministers and civil servants.

In September, after learning that the Iranian authorities are reviewing the Penal Code, we stepped up our campaign. Amnesty groups sent action cards to Iran calling for stoning to be removed from the code. We also worked with Iranian comedian Shappi Khorsandi to make a short campaign film for Amnesty TV which was seen by over 23,000 people. We hope to see results when the review of the Penal Code is completed.

## World Day Against the Death Penalty

Amnesty student groups organised events and stunts for the World Day Against the Death Penalty on 10 October. In Scotland, Amnesty used the occasion to persuade 50 MSPs to declare support for the campaign against the death penalty.

Amnesty groups also took action in March and June 2011, calling on the Mongolian authorities to end the death penalty. In January 2012 the Mongolian parliament took an important step towards abolition when it ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

In autumn 2011 Amnesty activists helped to gather signatures for a global petition, calling on President Alyaksandr Lukashenka of Belarus to establish a moratorium on executions and commute death sentences as a first step towards abolition. Originally launched by the

Belarusian human rights organisation Viasna, the petition became the focus of the global Amnesty movement's 50th anniversary anti-death penalty campaign. More than a quarter of a million people around the world signed the petition: playwright Tom Stoppard was the 100,000th signatory and the closing signature was Vanessa Redgrave's. However, when Amnesty and Belarusian campaigners attempted to deliver the petition to President Lukashenko, they were turned away. The petition was sent by post.

## MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

In 2011 repressive leaders were overthrown in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen, and a continuing tide of mass protest threatens authoritarian rule in other countries in the region. But removing a tyrant – while it is an enormous achievement – does not make a human rights revolution. Amnesty International is working to support human rights reform and dismantle structures of repression, as well as to prevent the suppression of peaceful protesters demanding basic human rights.

Over the year Amnesty researchers made multiple visits to Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, Iraq, Lebanon, Algeria, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates, sometimes at considerable risk to their lives and safety.

Much of our work in the first half of the year focused on responding to severe abuses of human rights. Amnesty supporters took action through our website, demanding an end to arms transfers to repressive states in the region, calling on the European Union to protect migrants and refugees fleeing the fighting in Libya, and asking the Egyptian authorities to ensure women's rights to participate in the political process. They also called on members of the UN Security Council to help stop the bloodshed in Syria by imposing an arms embargo, freezing the assets of President Assad and referring the situation to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The Urgent Action network sent weekly appeals to governments in the region on behalf of individuals who had been beaten or detained for exercising their right to peaceful protest and dissent. Country coordinators – Amnesty volunteers with specialist knowledge of countries in the region – gave talks at public meetings and Amnesty regional conferences, and helped to coordinate campaign activities. The Tunisia country coordinator, for example, not only mobilised local groups to take action, but also raised Amnesty's concerns with the FCO and worked with the media team to draft letters to the press.

## Agendas for change

As the year went on Amnesty was able to develop its strategy in the Middle East and North Africa, with the aim of laying the groundwork for lasting human rights improvements. We drew up manifestos for human rights reform in Tunisia and Egypt, and in the run-up to elections in those countries we asked candidates to pledge their support to essential human rights reforms.

In Tunisia Moncef Marzouki, a human rights activist and former prisoner of conscience, has become the country's interim president. In a meeting with civil society after the October elections, he signed Amnesty's manifesto.

In Egypt nine political parties signed up to some or all of our manifesto. Most pledged support for combating torture, protecting slum residents' rights and ensuring free trials. However, all but two had reservations about ending the death penalty, and a number were reluctant to support equal rights for women. The Freedom and Justice

## HAKAMADA IWAO



Hakamada Iwao has spent 43 years on death row in Japan, convicted of a crime he says he did not commit, on the basis of a confession made under torture. He is believed to be the longest-serving death row inmate in the world.

Amnesty is calling on the UK government to press the Japanese authorities to grant a retrial or stay Hakamada's execution. The Lewes group talked to Foreign Office Minister Jeremy Browne (pictured) who agreed to press for a review of the case and local groups and individual activists continue to send appeals. Hakamada's case featured in the 2011 Write for Rights campaign, with a video made by Richard Hughes from the band Keane to promote action on the case.

Recent developments in Hakamada Iwao's case may strengthen the grounds for a retrial. DNA tests on his clothing found no specimens matching the victims' blood. And in December public prosecutors disclosed evidence on the case which was never presented at the original trial.

## WOMEN WORKERS' RIGHTS

Trade unionists played a key role in mass protests in Tunisia, Egypt and elsewhere. In Egypt women factory workers were prominent in the industrial protests that preceded the 2011 uprising, but like women in other walks of life they were totally marginalised afterwards, at official levels but also in the ranks of the revolutionary forces. In the autumn we invited Nawla Darwiche of the New Woman Foundation, an organisation that supports women factory workers, to the TUC Congress, where she met representatives of UK trade unions who can help secure greater participation of women in Egypt's new independent trade unions. Nawla's message was very clear: now is the time for women's rights in Egypt.

## EMBASSY CRAWL



The Wandsworth group's annual Embassy Crawl in September visited nine embassies from countries of North Africa and the Middle East to express solidarity with peaceful protesters and defiance of repressive regimes. Country coordinators lent their expertise, helping to prepare letters to embassies and orchestrate chanting in Arabic.



© Amy Summers

March for Syria, London, October 2011

## MEDIA SPOTLIGHT



At the beginning of 2011, as protests in Tunisia and Egypt gathered momentum, we gave interviews to Sky News, the BBC News channel and Channel 4 News.

Coverage grew in April, when Amnesty sent a team to Libya, and the Today programme cited information from Amnesty as one of the things prompting a public statement by Foreign Secretary William Hague expressing concern about violence against protesters in Bahrain. In Egypt Kate Allen was interviewed from Cairo by BBC Radio Five Live and the BBC Arabic Service.

We made sure Amnesty was part of two key debates in June, when we provided interviews for the BBC on allegations of rape being used as a weapon of war in Libya and on Bahrain's human rights record, as a row raged over whether the country should host the Formula 1 Grand Prix.

In September an Amnesty report revealing atrocities on both sides of Libya's armed conflict was picked up widely and drew an immediate response from the country's new leadership which promised to 'move quickly to act on Amnesty's findings to make sure similar abuses are avoided'.

## GLOBAL MEDIA

by James Lynch, press officer, International Secretariat of Amnesty International

The most satisfying moments for me throughout the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa have been when Amnesty has challenged the prevailing media narrative or broken a new story: when we brought abuses by the rebels in Libya to global attention in September; or published a leaked version of a secret Saudi Arabian anti-terror law seemingly designed to squash possible protests.

In Egypt, we broke the horrific story of forced 'virginity tests' used by the army against female protesters, and hit the Egyptian front pages again when a general told the Secretary General the tests were to 'protect' the army from charges of rape.

Al Jazeera has been a key media target – when we released a major report into deaths in detention in Syria, the channel delivered a compelling, uncensored and hard-to-watch package which was repeatedly broadcast.

Responding quickly to breaking news is a constant challenge. Within an hour of the news of Mu'ammarr al-Gaddafi's death, our calls for an investigation were widely reported, winning us plaudits (for consistency) and criticism (for appearing to sympathise with al-Gaddafi) in equal measure.

party, which won the largest number of parliamentary seats, did not respond to our request for a meeting or comment on the manifesto.

Ultimately, the agents of change in the region are local human rights defenders and activists. They are the people who will hold the new governments to account and insist on respect for human rights. Amnesty International has begun building relationships with these activists, to work out how we can support them most effectively. A particular focus for Amnesty International UK is building relationships with women's rights activists (see below).

We are also working with Syrians, Egyptians and Libyans based in the UK, helping them to build their capacity to mobilise support for peaceful human rights change in their home countries. This has included policy advice, training and public activities such as a photo-stunt in front of the Syrian embassy, when Amnesty issued its report on the Syrian regime's attacks on Syrian activists overseas. We worked with Syrian diaspora groups to organise a demonstration of 2,000 people outside the Syrian embassy in late October.

## Working for women's rights

Women played a vital role in the waves of protest that spread across the Middle East and North Africa since January 2011. Building on years of activism, women fronted street protests, led union strikes, drew the attention of the international media to human rights violations as journalists and bloggers, and delivered humanitarian aid. However, more than one year on women activists are increasingly marginalised in transition, but remain defiant in the face of discrimination, repression and attacks. In Egypt, for example, women activists played a prominent role in the protests but since the fall of Mubarak there is a real risk that women are being left on the sidelines, without a voice and unable to shape the 'new' Egypt. Women protesters have been brutally attacked by the authorities, and Islamist parties such as Al Nour and the Freedom and Justice party (the two biggest in the new parliament) have issued public statements condemning women's rights activists.

Egyptian women's organisations are determined to defend women's civil and political rights, their rights to work and to participate in political processes, and Amnesty International UK plans to provide them with the support they need.

In autumn 2011, we brought three Egyptian women activists to meet UK politicians and trade unionists (see page 9) at their annual conferences, to ensure that those who shape UK government policy on the region grasp the importance of promoting women's rights.

We have started to develop joint projects, focusing on the needs identified by the Egyptian women activists. At present it is important to take time over this joint planning and to be sensitive to the demands of the Egyptian political context, where visible support from the West for women's concerns can sometimes be counter-productive.

We hope in the future to call on activists to get involved in shared campaigns.

## EYNULLA FATULLAYEV

In 2007 Azerbaijani newspaper editor Eynulla Fatullayev was jailed for eight and a half years on charges including terrorism, defamation and tax evasion. Amnesty believes these charges were fabricated and an attempt to silence his reporting which was critical of the government. In 2010 the European Court of Human Rights ruled that Azerbaijan had violated Eynulla's rights to freedom of expression and a fair trial, and called for his release. During the three-month period before this

judgment became final, the Azerbaijani authorities tried Eynulla on a new trumped-up charge of drugs possession, and side-stepped the European Court judgment by convicting and sentencing him to a further two and a half years in prison.

Amnesty had worked on Eynulla's case for many years, and built a high-profile campaign which included solidarity actions, appeals to the Azerbaijani authorities, urgent actions, media work both within the UK and Azerbaijan region, lobbying, and demonstrations. Local groups sustained ongoing action, with a wider pool of supporters and online activists taking part in special efforts. Amnesty also collaborated with other UK-based freedom of expression organisations (Article 19, English PEN, Index on Censorship, and the Media Diversity Institute).

When Eynulla was given (in absentia) the Special Award for Journalism Under Threat at our annual Media Awards in 2009, it generated significant media coverage, including within Azerbaijan, demonstrating the level of support from Eynulla's respected UK peers.

With his continued imprisonment despite the European Court judgment calling for his release, the Amnesty Media Awards 2011 was an opportunity to increase the pressure on the Azerbaijani government again. The awards have recognised the work of some of the most courageous and inspiring journalists in the profession and was the ideal forum to continue Eynulla's fight. The occasion was used to launch a Twitter action, targeting President Aliyev and demanding Eynulla's release. Presenter Jon Snow and John Mulholland, editor of the *Observer*, got the ball rolling on their Twitter accounts. At the awards more than 80 guests were photographed holding a placard with the slogan in Azeri 'Eynulla Fatullayevi azad et!' (*Free Eynulla Fatullayev!*). These were then tweeted direct to President Aliyev's Twitter account.

At the same time Amnesty supporters were encouraged to join the action by taking a photograph of themselves holding a placard with the same slogan and sending that with a tweet to the president.

This new way of getting interest in and support for Amnesty actions resulted in nearly 850 action tweets.

The sustained international campaign, involving many people and organisations around the world, came to fruition when, two days later, Eynulla was pardoned by the president and released.

## LETTER WRITING ON A GLOBAL SCALE

Amnesty members understand better than most the power of personal messages of solidarity and support to give comfort and encouragement to people whose human rights are denied or abused. Every year thousands of people in the UK join in the Greetings Card Campaign (GCC), sending cards to prisoners of conscience, human rights defenders and others suffering human rights abuses, to raise their spirits and give them hope.

In 2011, Amnesty UK joined the movement's global letter writing marathon for the first time, combining it with our annual GCC. There were events in 83 countries, generating over a million actions across the world in what became our biggest letter-writing campaign ever. In the UK alone over 200 letter-writing events took place in towns, cities, schools and universities across the country as supporters wrote tens of thousands of letters and cards. The project was particularly popular in schools, with more than 123 schools taking part. Amnesty groups also used the campaign to encourage members of the public to get involved with our work.

Twenty-five cases were selected to receive GCC solidarity cards, while 10 were selected for a focus on appeal letters. Activists were



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'I am very happy to be released. I am extremely grateful to Amnesty International, who have campaigned since the beginning. In my opinion you saved me. Thank you to all those who tweeted.'

Eynulla Fatullayev



© Natalie Smith

Jon Snow at the Amnesty Media Awards



Hull University Write for Rights event



Diss local group Write for Rights

## WORDS OF SUPPORT FROM STEPHEN FRY

'I love texting, tweeting, blogging and emailing as much, if not more, than the next person, but there are some occasions when nothing, but nothing, can replace the power of the handwritten letter.

Over the years I've followed and tried to support the unique and astoundingly important work of Amnesty International. One of the simplest and most effective things any of us can do is write letters of support to prisoners of conscience languishing in the gaols of the world, or under house arrest or in other situations of stress that result purely from their attempts to use their voice freely in their own country.

Handwritten letters too, politely but passionately putting the case for such prisoners, addressed to ambassadors, prime ministers, presidents and monarchs of countries where freedom of speech has resulted in prisoners of conscience, these too can work surprisingly well. I can't recommend highly enough the experience.

So look up the Amnesty website, join the organisation and get out a fresh sheet of paper and a pen and compose a letter that might help unlock doors and remove gags.'

encouraged to organise events on or around 10 December, Human Rights Day. Amnesty UK called this Write for Rights Day. On that day letters targeted people in authority, calling on them to free a prisoner of conscience, end the harassment of human rights defenders, or bring perpetrators of abuse to justice.

As well as Amnesty activists, each of the Write for Rights cases was brought to life by an Amnesty supporter in the public eye who made a short film of their story. Ian Hislop, editor of *Private Eye*, called for letters to be written on behalf of Jabbar Savalan (see opposite) while actress Saffron Burrows urged people to support Inés Fernández Ortega and Valentina Rosendo Cantú (see below).

In the UK Stephen Fry got the campaign off the ground with a tweet that sent 5,000 people to the Write for Rights webpage. During the campaign over 30,000 people visited the Write for Rights webpages, with almost 8,000 actions taken online and over 1,000 people pledged to write a physical letter.

## Making an impact

Write for Rights has already contributed to some successes: Jabbar Savalan has been released and many others have spoken of the comfort they have taken from knowing so many people are prepared to speak up on their behalf.

In many cases, Write for Rights appeals backed up our long-term campaigning on behalf of abuse survivors and people at risk. We have seen progress on these cases over the year. The Mexican government has formally taken responsibility for the rape and abuse of Valentina Rosendo Cantú, through a Public Act of Acknowledgement on 15 December. There is expected to be a separate Act of Acknowledgement for Inés Fernandez soon as well. This was one of the steps demanded by the Inter-American Count of Human Rights. Valentina has said: 'Without your letters, your action and your solidarity, we would have not achieved this moment. To each one of you, "nomaá" [Thank you in Me'phaa]'

Through the Write for Rights campaign, the website and local and youth group actions, thousands of supporters took action for members of Women of Zimbabwe Arise; who speak out on the social, economic and human rights conditions in Zimbabwe. Dr Who actor Arthur Darvill told their story of harassment, detention and torture in an online film of support. After meeting with leaders Jenni Williams and Magodonga Mahlangu, the FCO committed to continue supporting human rights defenders in Zimbabwe. Jenni Williams filmed a message for the Amnesty AGM thanking everyone for their ongoing support.

Patrick Okoroafor has been in prison in Nigeria since the age of 14, having been sentenced to death following an unfair trial. His sentence was subsequently changed to 'indefinite detention', then 10 years, and finally reduced again to two years. He featured in the 2010/11 GCC, which generated thousands of cards of support from Amnesty activists. His situation in prison has improved and he is no longer ill-treated. He feels special knowing there are people all over the world showing concern for his life and safety. Patrick is due to be released in 2012.

In December 2010 Amnesty launched a visual solidarity action for the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó in Colombia by inviting activists to photograph themselves holding up messages of support to the community. Well over 100 photos from local groups, around 50 from youth groups, and many self-portrait drawings from younger activists were used to make three posters. These were delivered to the Peace Community in March 2011, just before its anniversary. They said, 'We have received the posters and used them in diverse ceremonies

as well as for educational activities in the community.’ The Community featured in the 2011 GCC.

## CASEWORK PROGRESS

We have also seen progress in cases featured in last year’s GCC.

Moroccan human rights defender Chekib El-Khiari was jailed in 2009 after alleging corruption among high-ranking officials and criticising the Moroccan authorities. He was released in April 2011 following a royal pardon. Chekib, who featured in the 2010/11 GCC, thanked Amnesty activists for sending thousands of cards of support during his years in jail:

‘I don’t have enough words to express my gratitude to everybody... Every week I was waiting for those letters. I was reading them again and again, thinking of those people who took five minutes, or maybe more, to write or to draw. Five minutes of their time gave me the energy to survive two years of unlawful imprisonment.’

Seven young Syrian prisoners of conscience, jailed solely for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression, were all released during 2011. Maher Ibrahim, Tarek Ghorani, Husam ‘Ali Mulhim, Ayham Saqr, ‘Alam Fakhour, ‘Omar ‘Ali al-‘Abdullah and Diab Sirieyeh had been sentenced to between five and seven years for endangering the State or exposing it to the risk of hostile action. They all denied the charges against them and claimed ‘confessions’ had been extracted under torture. Their only ‘crimes’ had been to develop a youth discussion group and publish pro-democracy articles on the internet.

Mohamed El Sharkawi was extradited from Pakistan to Egypt in May 1995, and held in administrative detention under emergency legislation which has been in force almost continuously since 1981. He was tortured or otherwise ill-treated and has never been given any detailed reasons for his long detention.

Mohamed El Sharkawi was released on 17 March 2011 after almost 16 years in prison. He said that he took strength from the messages sent to him from Amnesty supporters, knowing this meant that the world had not forgotten him.

In May 2011 Cuban journalist and former prisoner of conscience Pablo Pacheco Avila, who has featured in previous GCCs, was invited to the UK by Amnesty. Pablo had been transferred to Spain on his release in July 2010. As well as supporting the media launch of Amnesty’s annual report and 50th anniversary year, Pablo was able to meet local and youth group activists who had worked long and hard on his case. A few days’ stay with the Cuba country coordinator (a member of the Reading local group) gave him a chance to relax and experience life in an English home.

The visit meant a lot to Pablo and to the supporters who were inspired by meeting him in person. He spoke of the power of their letters ‘for they showed our jailers that all their strength was futile against human solidarity’.

## Crackdown in China

Serious human rights violations continue to be committed in China. In the spring of 2011 over 100 bloggers, lawyers, activists and government critics were detained, intimidated and silenced. This repression is believed to have been prompted by online calls for a Jasmine revolution. Artist Ai Weiwei was the most high profile of the people targeted and his arrest provoked an international outcry.

In response to the crackdown Amnesty issued Urgent Actions, and activists across the world sent appeals. In the UK we undertook



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## JABBAR SAVALAN RELEASED

The inclusion of Jabbar Savalan in the Write for Rights campaign was part of a series of high profile activities and actions to focus attention on the Azerbaijani student sentenced to two and a half years in prison on fabricated drugs charges after posting messages on Facebook. On 26 December Jabbar was released following a presidential pardon. Within hours he spoke to Amnesty and said: ‘Amnesty International is a symbol of human rights and freedom, not just in Azerbaijan, but everywhere in the world. I am grateful for all the hard work done by your organisation and other organisations which fight for freedom in Azerbaijan.’

Actions throughout the year had included:

- Online appeals
- A solidarity action for Jabbar’s birthday
- Casefile allocated to local groups
- A Twitter action asking the UK Foreign Office to raise the case
- An AmnesTea hosted by designer Patrick Cox and attended by British artist Sue Webster, Arun Nayar and Richard Hughes, drummer from the rock band Keane, with the guests signing a giant postcard appeal
- A full-page feature in the *Observer* promoting Amnesty UK’s Write for Rights campaign including Jabbar Savalan’s case.



Pablo Pacheco Avila visits the Reading local group

## URGENT ACTION GOOD NEWS

### ZAFFAR SHAFI HAKEEM

Zaffar Shafi Hakeem, 19, was held in administrative detention by police in Jammu and Kashmir, India, in January 2011. According to the authorities the grounds for his detention were: 'You have got separatist allegations and are organising campaigns on a regular basis... aimed at motivating the people to hold demonstrations against the Government.' Zaffar was released on 18 June, after local media highlighted Amnesty's Urgent Action appeal which began in May.

### MANSOUREH BEHKISH

The Iranian human rights activist, Mansoureh Behkish, was arrested twice along with other members of the 'Mourning Mothers' group which campaigns against human rights violations in Iran. Following Amnesty's Urgent Action appeal in June, she was granted access to see her family on 7 July 2011 and released on bail on 9 July.

### SHAMPA GOSWAMI

In October 2011, Shampa Goswami, a Bangladeshi human rights defender and teacher, was threatened by a group of men after she encouraged a rape victim to go to the police. Since Amnesty issued an Urgent Action for Shampa, Bangladesh's State Minister for Women and Children's Affairs has responded. She said that her office had taken up the case with local police and that they were investigating the threats against Shampa Goswami.

■ For more examples of UA successes: see pages 8 and 21

lobbying and media work to increase the pressure before and during the Anglo-Chinese summit in June, when Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao was in the country to meet with David Cameron. We met with the FCO in advance of the summit and Kate Allen was invited to discuss Ai Weiwei's case with David Cameron (see page 26).

Amnesty's actions were part of a high profile international campaign for the release of Ai Weiwei which helped to keep pressure on the Chinese authorities. The artist was released but many other critics of the government remain in prison.

## Urgent Action

The members of our Urgent Action (UA) Network write appeals to the relevant authorities when human rights violations require an immediate response – for example to avert torture or imminent execution. UAs are a global action technique that allows us to respond quickly to cases and issues, and can be updated as the situation on the ground changes.

The UK section takes up every UA case issued by the International Secretariat. In 2011 network members took action on 369 new UAs, compared to an average of around 350 in previous years. Much of the increase was generated by the crisis in the Middle East and North Africa. A spike in numbers in February and March came largely from the region. Things were moving so fast in Egypt that the International Secretariat was issuing updates even before we had distributed the original UAs.

A slow but steady increase in members meant the UA Network in the UK ended 2011 with 9,734 members, and slipped over the 10,000 mark in early January 2011. They are part of a worldwide UA Network of 165,000.

## ARMS CONTROL

Our work on arms aims to prevent the supply of weapons, equipment and training to armed forces that will use them to violate human rights. Since 2003 our top priority has been the development of a robust and comprehensive international Arms Trade Treaty.

## Arms Trade Treaty

Twenty years of campaigning by Amnesty and others comes to a head in July 2012, when final negotiations open at the UN on the international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Over the past year our international research and lobbying has laid the groundwork for a major push in 2012.

Campaigners from Amnesty and the Control Arms Coalition attended two preparatory conferences in 2011. The July meeting in New York produced a strong text on human rights and on broad inclusion of weapon types. But it remained weak on transparency, regulating potentially lethal riot control equipment, and gender-based violence.

These preparatory meetings showed that there are still big challenges ahead. While some states clearly did not want a robust treaty, others tried to strip out key recommendations on a strong human rights rule or the inclusion of ammunition.

This is now a priority campaign for Amnesty UK. We are urging political leaders here to ensure UK support for the treaty does not wane. Ahead of July 2012, Amnesty is boosting activist involvement, and employing all techniques to build pressure: digital, letter-writing, protests, lobbying.

Amnesty Scotland launched a high profile event in Glasgow on 13 February to coincide with the last preparatory meeting before the final negotiations in July. David Grimason, whose infant son was tragically



Manchester group campaign for a robust treaty



shot and killed while on holiday in Turkey, formally launched the event for us, speaking eloquently about the urgent need for arms control. The event received considerable TV, radio and print coverage, raising awareness of our campaign with the public.

## Cluster bombs

All aspects of Amnesty's machinery combined in August to put huge pressure on the Royal Bank of Scotland. More than 10,000 people emailed RBS Chief Executive Stephen Hester to demand the bank stop investing in companies that produce cluster bombs, which kill and maim many more civilians than combatants. We prepared a hard-hitting mass advertising campaign, backed by public donations. Two days before the advertisements were due to go out, RBS announced its intention to stop the controversial funding. RBS now needs to be held to this pledge.

Our next step is to push the government to work with banks and non-governmental organisations to draft a Code of Conduct encouraging all banks and investors to withdraw funding from cluster bomb manufacturers.

We also helped to stop the USA weakening the international Convention on Cluster Munitions, and we are lobbying more countries to sign up.

## Tasers

Amnesty has continued to voice concern about the wider deployment of tasers to non-specialist police officers and about the lack of clarity over their use. We remain in dialogue with the police, government and other bodies and are continuing our advocacy and media work on this issue.

Last year Amnesty's Scottish office repeatedly challenged the necessity and legitimacy of a six-month pilot project which saw Strathclyde Police distributing tasers to beat officers. The pilot has now come to an end, and neither the police force nor the Scottish government have said anything more about taking it further.

## BURMA

After a year of high-profile campaigning in 2010, ahead of Burma's first elections in 20 years, our work in 2011 was less intense. Amnesty activists continued to put pressure on the authorities to release political prisoners, and we completed a project to distribute radios to rural communities in eastern Burma.

Since the elections, there have been signs of considerable change. Following the release of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi shortly after the poll, her National League for Democracy (NLD) was reinstated as a legal political party, and she is running in a by-election in April 2012. In May 2011 the authorities reduced all prison sentences by one year and commuted all death sentences to life imprisonment. In October they announced that – for the first time in 50 years – trade unions would be allowed to organise. And by the end of January 2012, nearly 500 political prisoners – including many that Amnesty campaigned for – had been released.

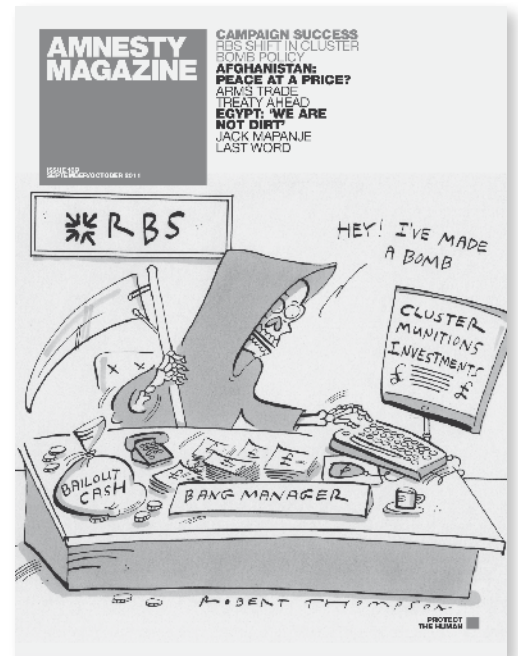
It is not certain how long the improvements will last: Burma has long been a closed country with a highly secretive government and there have been periods of relative liberalisation before lapsing back into repression. Nevertheless, the changes are welcome. And even if we cannot know for sure that our efforts led directly to the release of prisoners, we know that our solidarity was a source of hope and encouragement for them and their families while they were incarcerated.

## MEDIA SPOTLIGHT



Media work played a pivotal role in our campaign to end the Royal Bank of Scotland's investment in producers of cluster munitions. The *Independent* splashed the story in August, along with two further days of coverage and readers' letters. We gave broadcast interviews to BBC Radio Scotland and Sunrise Radio, while BBC Radio Wales featured it in a morning press round-up. A template letter to activists appeared in the regional press in one of our most successful actions to date.

RBS's announcement of a policy change in September was covered by *The Independent*, *The Daily Mirror*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Times*, *The Scotsman*, *The Herald*, Yahoo Finance, DefenceManagement.com, Channel 4 News online and the BBC London website. It generated coverage in *Business Ethics*, *Aviation Week* and *Asian Media Age*, among others.



## ARMS TRANSFERS TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Events in the Middle East and North Africa exposed the failure of many governments, including the UK, to regulate arms transfers to oppressive regimes. Amnesty's report tracking international arms supplies, including those used in the repression of peaceful protests, shored up our call for the UK to tighten its licensing process. It also underlined the need for the ATT to include a strong human rights rule and regulation of riot control equipment.

As a result, the UK government reviewed its licensing process and agreed to improve key areas. These included: a risk assessment for licensing, monitoring of end use, transparency, security assistance and training, and new powers to rapidly suspend licences in developing crises. The government has promised to consult NGOs including Amnesty when developing these points.



Prisoner released: Ko Mya Aye

© AP



Prisoner released: Min Ko Naing

© AP

## FEEDBACK FROM BURMESE PARTNERS

‘[After receiving the radios] people criticise and discuss their issues of interest in small groups or with their neighbours. As the result, people improve their knowledge and critical thinking’

‘Most of the women in the community are not listening to the radio as we had expected them to, because... they have less free time than men.’

‘In the future we need to build on the radio project by conducting ... workshops in the community, in order to show people what to do with the information they get from the radio, how it is relevant in their community, and how they can be active in the development of their community and of Burma as a whole.’

## Radios for Burma

The Burmese media is heavily censored, but Burmese language broadcasts from the BBC, Radio Free Asia, and independent Burmese radio stations such as the Oslo-based Democratic Voice of Burma can be heard inside the country. In an attempt to get more people listening, Amnesty launched an online campaign to raise funds in the UK to buy radios for villagers in eastern Burma. We worked in partnership with Burmese community-based organisations operating on the Thai-Burma border.

The first phase of the project was completed in 2010. The second phase was completed in 2011, with the distribution of 10,000 radios to villagers and provision of video equipment to community groups.

The project worked with 10 Burmese community groups (four in the first phase and six in the second). They told us radio was ideal for spreading information in Burma, given the poor infrastructure, censorship, and patchy literacy levels. Impressed by the success of this project, the NLD has launched a similar project of its own.

## WORKERS' RIGHTS

Activists in Amnesty’s Trade Union Network take action on a wide range of human rights issues, but they have a particular focus on workers’ rights. In the past year, Amnesty continued its work on behalf of trade unionists under threat or in prison in Colombia, Iran, Burma and Zimbabwe.

Now that the economics of austerity dominate the political agenda in many countries, attacks on workers’ rights, including the right to protest, are likely to intensify. Amnesty activists and the trade union movement will need to join forces to defend basic human rights.

### Iranian workers

Amnesty and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) launched a global campaign in support of Iranian workers at the International Labour Conference in Geneva in June 2011. We are calling on the Iranian government to cease the imprisonment, intimidation and dismissal of workers solely for exercising their basic human rights to join and form unions, to bargain collectively and to strike.

### Zimbabwe land workers

Earlier in the year, we joined with the International Union of Foodworkers (IUF) in an effort to promote the rights of agricultural workers in Zimbabwe and to support their exiled union leader, Gertrude Hambira. Amnesty and the IUF distributed action cards through IUF networks in countries with influence on Zimbabwe, such as Brazil, Mozambique and Russia, and through a regional African women’s trade union network. Gertrude remains in exile and we continue to campaign on her and her members’ behalf.

### Labour laws in Turkey

We continued to work with Amnesty International Turkey and Turkish trade unions on a campaign calling on the Turkish government to bring its labour laws into line with the Core Conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Twenty thousand action cards signed by campaign supporters across Europe and the USA, as well as in 81 cities in Turkey, were collected ahead of a meeting with the Labour Minister in January 2012. At the meeting we reminded him of Turkey’s obligations, and pointed to the principal shortcomings in the proposed labour law reform. The Minister agreed to meet us again soon.

## USA and Fiji workers under threat

As the global economic crisis deepened, Amnesty worked with the TUC and global unions to respond to new threats to workers' rights in the USA and Fiji. In the USA, a number of states are attempting to abolish public sector collective bargaining and union rights, while Fiji has introduced new anti-union laws that infringe the rights to freedom of association and assembly, and the right to organise. In the USA anti-union measures are meeting fierce community resistance, while the Australian and New Zealand unions have led a global campaign to pressure the Fiji government.

## CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

Amnesty works to change laws and regulations to ensure that companies are accountable for the human rights impacts of their actions. Over the last year, Amnesty UK has been campaigning vigorously on Vedanta, Shell, the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill and international standards for companies.

### Vedanta

In July 2011, Amnesty published its *Generalisations, Omissions, Assumptions* report, which revealed that the company had failed to adequately assess the impacts of its proposed mining and refinery expansion projects in Orissa, India.

Many of its recommendations are reflected in the conditions that the Environmental Appraisal Committee of the Ministry of Environment and Forests imposed on Vedanta in August 2011. On 27 July 2011, campaigners from Amnesty and other organisations challenged Vedanta's claims about its plans at the company's AGM in London. A delegation led by Bianca Jagger presented a copy of *Generalisations, Omissions, Assumptions* to Vedanta's chair.

Amnesty International continues to monitor developments in Niyamgiri and Lanjigarh in Orissa, where thousands of families face serious risk from threats of leaks from Vedanta's red mud pond. Levels of red mud in the pond have risen and local communities fear that if the pond overflows, toxic waste will flood their homes and fields. Amnesty International is also engaging some of Vedanta's key investors to hold the company accountable for the impact of its past and future operations on the human rights of local communities.

### Shell

In August 2011, Shell Petroleum Development Company (Nigeria) Ltd (SPDC), a subsidiary of Shell, admitted liability in a claim brought in the UK courts on behalf of 69,000 Nigerians concerning two massive oil leaks in 2008. The leaks caused devastating damage to the environment, in particular the waterways of the Bodo community in the Niger Delta. Negotiations about compensation are still on-going.

Following Shell's admission, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) published a report stating that oil contamination is widespread and severe in Ogoniland in the Niger Delta, and that local people have been exposed for decades. The UNEP report highlighted Shell's failure to clean up the oil spills.

In November 2011, Amnesty and the Centre for Environment, Human Rights and Development released *The true 'tragedy': delays and failures in tackling oil spills in the Niger Delta*, a report that called for Shell to commit an initial US\$1bn to begin the clean-up of the Niger Delta, starting with Ogoniland.

We are still waiting for the Dutch National Contact Point of the

## TRADE UNIONISTS RELEASED

Tehran bus workers' leader Mansour Ossenlu was released in June 2011 before the end of his sentence, after a long campaign by Amnesty activists. Burmese labour activist Su Su Nway was one of several political prisoners released in October 2011. Her case was a focus of Amnesty trade union activists' campaigning on Burma.

## CAMPAIGNING FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS

Domestic workers in the UK – as elsewhere in the world – are predominantly women and girls, often migrant workers, and at particular risk of abuse, gross exploitation and even violence because their workplace is hidden from public view. In June 2011, in a significant step forward for women workers' rights, the ILO adopted a new convention to protect domestic workers. The only government to speak against the convention in the debate was that of the UK. Amnesty is working with the TUC and domestic workers' organisations to ensure that the UK government keeps existing protection for domestic workers and signs up to the new convention.



Turkey action card



© Sanjit Das

A villager stands on land he once owned, beneath an unfinished conveyor belt designed to carry bauxite ore from the Niyamgiri hills to the Vedanta alumina plant in Lanjigarh



Cecilia Teela searching the oil-covered shore of Bodo creek, where she used to collect periwinkles. Today, she has to travel to a neighbouring state to make a living

© AI

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to adjudicate on a complaint we filed jointly with Friends of the Earth International and Friends of the Earth Netherlands in January 2011. The complaint is against Shell’s use of discredited and misleading information on the role played by sabotage and ‘illegal’ bunkering in oil pollution in the Niger Delta. In December 2011, Amnesty and Friends of the Earth International submitted a further complaint to the Dutch National Contact Point under the OECD Multinational Guidelines, alleging Shell breached the Guidelines with regard to disclosure of information, human rights, the environment and consumer interests.

Amnesty student groups have been targeting Shell’s exhibits at careers fairs and recruitment events on campus, distributing leaflets and talking to Shell employees to raise awareness of the situation in Nigeria.

### UK Export Finance

Amnesty UK, together with groups such as the Jubilee Debt Campaign, WWF UK and Greenpeace, has been promoting reforms to UK Export Finance (UKEF – previously known as the Export Credits Guarantee Department) to ensure it does more to protect human rights and the environment. UKEF provides government-backed loans, guarantees and insurance to UK companies for their exports and projects overseas, some of which have had adverse impacts on human rights. Amnesty is demanding better screening procedures and better accountability of UKEF to Parliament.

The Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on International Corporate Responsibility, Lisa Nandy, has been at the forefront of generating parliamentary support for this reform. Her 10-Minute Rule Bill on the issue in April 2011 aroused considerable interest in the House of Commons, and received wide media coverage. An Early Day Motion has been backed by 198 MPs. Amnesty aims to bring about a Private Members Bill on this issue during 2012.

### Legal Aid bill

In 2011, many local groups and individual activists wrote to their MPs in protest against provisions of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill, which would make it almost impossible for victims of human rights abuses by UK companies overseas to seek justice in UK courts. The pressure generated by Amnesty’s advocacy and mobilisation on this issue led to several ministerial meetings. Amnesty framed an amendment to the bill in conjunction with a few other concerned bodies, which failed narrowly at the committee stage in the House of Commons. A similar amendment was debated in the House of Lords where it gained strong support. The outcome of this lobbying will be known shortly as the bill reaches its final stages of passing through Parliament.

### Stronger international standards

In June 2011, the UN Human Rights Council endorsed the UN Framework and Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights – the first UN-endorsed framework on business and human rights. The UK government, a key supporter of the resolution, pledged to implement it in the UK. We will be lobbying in the UK to ensure that companies have to comply with the responsibilities set out in the Guiding Principles.

Amnesty International made a submission to the UN Committee that monitors compliance with the UN Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) to highlight failings of the UK government to address the adverse impacts of UK companies on indigenous rights abroad. This submission was reinforced by lobbying

of UN CERD Committee members in Geneva. Amnesty's concerns were taken up by the UN Committee, which issued a Concluding Observation calling on the UK to adopt administrative and legislative measures to hold its companies accountable.

Amnesty UK lobbied the Department of Business Innovation and Skills to press the OECD to integrate human rights into the revision of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. This brought results in so far as the revised guidelines, which were approved by the OECD Ministerial Meeting in May 2011, were drafted to be consistent with the UN Framework on Business and Human Rights.

## SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Security and Human Rights campaign calls for an end to human rights violations perpetrated by governments in the name of national security, as well as accountability for past abuses. Over the past year we focused on developments in the UK and the failure of the US to close the offshore detention centre at Guantánamo Bay.

### Guantánamo Bay

Almost 18,000 people around the world signed an Amnesty petition calling on President Obama to close the detention centre, and many local groups took part in demonstrations to mark the 10th anniversary of Guantánamo Bay on 11 January 2012. Edinburgh University Amnesty Student Group, joined by other groups and members, put on orange jumpsuits and took to the streets in Edinburgh on 14 January to protest and ask people to sign a petition.

During 2011, Amnesty UK lobbied the UK Foreign Secretary William Hague on behalf of Shaker Aamer, a UK resident who has been held at Guantánamo without charge or trial for 10 years. Members also wrote to US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to call on her to take action on the case.

### Security and human rights in the UK

The year began positively in January 2011 as the UK government announced it would allow the law authorising 28 days of detention without charge for terrorism suspects to lapse; the period is now 14 days. However, since then a succession of policy changes has deeply concerned us. We strongly criticised the government's Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act, which allows the Home Secretary to order that people are subject to significant curtailments to their liberty, freedom of movement, association and privacy – all without charge or trial.

In October 2011, the UK government published the Justice and Security Green Paper outlining proposals to change the judicial system, increase the use of secret evidence, and closed court hearings for issues the government deems 'sensitive'. Amnesty UK has submitted a response to the consultation which details our serious concerns.

The UK government scrapped the Detainee Inquiry in January 2012, in light of further investigations by the Metropolitan Police into allegations of British officials assisting with rendition. Amnesty UK said it would not participate in the inquiry because it was not fit for purpose, and called for a fully human rights-compliant investigation.

Amnesty UK welcomed the European Court of Human Rights' ruling in January 2012, halting the planned deportation of Jordanian national Abu Qatada over torture evidence fears, but said the court's ruling in favour of the use of 'diplomatic assurances' is an alarming setback.



Olympic merchandise on sale in east London

### DOW AND LONDON 2012

Amnesty expressed outrage at the sponsorship deal between the London 2012 Olympic Games and Dow Chemical Corporation, owner of the company responsible for the 1984 Bhopal toxic gas leak – one of the worst episodes of corporate negligence in living memory. It led to the death of around 20,000 people and chronic health problems for thousands more. We exchanged letters with Lord Coe, the Chair of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG), and challenged him to explain why LOCOG's procurement policy ignores human rights. We asked why the views of victims of Bhopal were not taken into account in this controversial decision, and why LOCOG is trying to distance Dow from responsibility for the events of 1984.

Amnesty presented Meredith Alexander, one of the ethics commissioners with the Olympics' Commission for a Sustainable London, with evidence that documented the lasting impact of the Bhopal tragedy. She decided she could no longer continue in her role and resigned on-air on *Newsnight* in January 2012.



Edinburgh University Guantánamo demonstration



© Reuben Steains

Ramze Shihab Ahmed's wife, Rabiha, with some of the cards she received from Amnesty supporters

## Ramze Shihab Ahmed

Amnesty UK has been campaigning for Ramze Shihab Ahmed, a British citizen on trial in Iraq on terrorism-related charges. He was arrested in 2009 and held for a year without charge. For the first four months he was held in a secret prison where he alleges he was tortured.

Over 5,000 supporters emailed the Iraq embassy on his case, almost 1,000 youth activists wrote solidarity cards as part of the 2010-11 GCC, 250 people wrote messages of support on our Write for Rights solidarity blog, and an Amnesty campaigner met with Foreign Office Minister Alistair Burt, who committed to raise the case with the Iraqi authorities.

Ramze faced hearings for four charges in 2011, all of which he was cleared of. He was cleared of a further two charges in January 2012.

## LGBT RIGHTS

Amnesty opposes all human rights abuses on the basis of sexual orientation. Our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Network works to expose such abuses and to challenge governments and states to protect LGBT people from rights violations.

### Uganda bill

In 2011 many Amnesty supporters took action to defend the rights of LGBT people in Uganda, where homosexuality is a criminal offence with a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. We called on the country's parliament to reject a draconian new bill that sought to introduce the death penalty for 'aggravated homosexuality' and to punish failure to report violations to the authorities within 24 hours.

In May 2011 the Ugandan parliament dissolved without voting on the bill. In August 2011, after further international pressure, Uganda's cabinet blocked an attempt to reintroduce it.

Earlier in the year, Amnesty activists also sent solidarity messages to Ugandan human rights defenders after the murder of LGBT rights activist David Kato. In August, one of David's colleagues, Kasha Jacqueline Nabagesera, came to Belfast to deliver the annual Amnesty Pride Lecture.



© Sexual Minorities Uganda

LGBT activist David Kato

### Amnesty Pride

Amnesty activists took part in Pride events all over the country in the summer, as a way of expressing solidarity with LGBT communities in the UK as well as raising awareness of human rights violations against LGBT people overseas.

At Pride London, we collected signatures on a petition calling on the newly-elected Turkish government to stop discrimination against LGBT people. The government was about to consider amendments to the constitution and a new anti-discrimination bill. The petition urged them to use the opportunity to outlaw discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

In Birmingham, Pride celebrations coincided with Amnesty's 50th birthday. The central Birmingham Amnesty group brought two activists from Mozaika, the Latvian LGBT organisation that organises Baltic Pride, to the event. The Mozaika delegates talked to local media about the violence and hostility that confronts LGBT people in the Baltic countries, and how solidarity can help to overcome this. Birmingham Pride is now officially twinned with Baltic Pride.

Over the past few years support from Amnesty International has helped groups like Mozaika to organise Pride events in the Baltic. Elsewhere in Europe, however, the struggle continues for LGBT people



© Elizabeth Nelson

Kasha Nabagesera in Belfast, where she delivered the 2011 Amnesty Pride lecture

to be allowed to express their identity through Pride events. The city authorities in Belgrade, Serbia, had allowed a Pride march to go ahead with police protection in 2010. In 2011, however, despite appeals from Amnesty supporters around the world, the authorities bowed to pressure from right-wing extremists and banned the event.

### St Petersburg bill

In Russia, authorities in the country's second largest city, St Petersburg, are preparing to enact a bill that would severely restrict freedom of expression and fuel discrimination against LGBT people. Amnesty UK wrote to Boris Johnson, London's mayor, calling on him to speak out against the bill. In Scotland, Amnesty and other organisations have called on Edinburgh's Lord Provost to use the city's links with St Petersburg to press for the bill to be dropped.

### FORCED EVICTIONS

As part of its work on Poverty and Human Rights, Amnesty campaigns against housing rights violations, takes action to show solidarity with people who have been forcibly evicted, and defends people threatened with forced eviction across the world, including in the UK.

### Port Harcourt waterfronts

When Njemanze, an informal waterfronts settlement in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, was demolished in 2009 as part of an urban renewal programme, between 13,800 and 19,000 people were forcibly evicted from their homes. A month later 12 protesters were shot by security forces while peacefully demonstrating against the demolition.

To express solidarity with the Njemanze community on the second anniversary of their forced eviction in August 2011, Amnesty supporters were invited to draw a picture of a house on a card and include the message 'We haven't forgotten Njemanze'. The cards were given to families that had been evicted in Njemanze. Amnesty supporters around the world sent thousands of postcards as well as visual solidarity messages. The Port Harcourt communities featured in the Write for Rights campaign.

### Across the world

In 2011 Amnesty supporters took action against forced evictions across the world including in Italy, Serbia, Guatemala, Egypt and Kenya. AIUK collected 5,030 signatures on a petition calling on the Serbian authorities for effective legislation to protect against forced evictions.

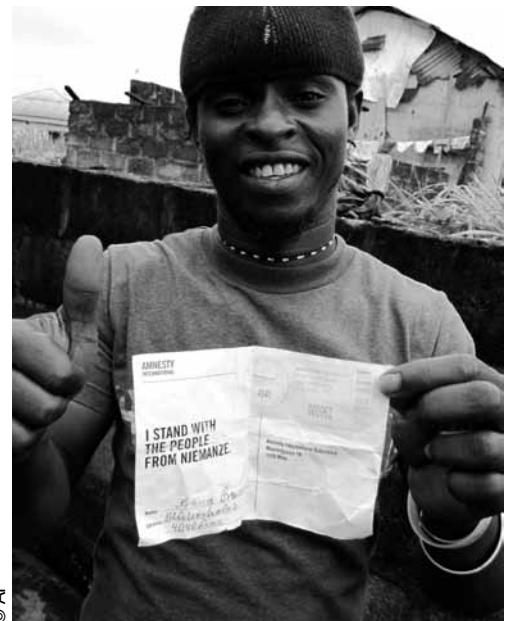
In March 2011, the Deep Sea community in Nairobi suffered a devastating fire where 90 per cent of the community lost their homes and at least one woman died. Amnesty called for emergency provision to be made for the homeless residents as the authorities were slow to respond and hundreds of people were left without food or shelter. In the aftermath, local officials attempted to block residents from returning to the site to rebuild. Amnesty intervened, releasing statements and contacting the authorities directly. Subsequently, residents were allowed back and were able to rebuild most of the community within a few months.

### Dale Farm

Closer to home, and more controversially, Amnesty took up the case of the Irish Travellers threatened with forced eviction from Dale Farm in Essex. Many residents feared they would be left homeless and without access to essential services. Over a thousand people took action by



Baltic Pride float, Birmingham Pride



Prince Peter, a former resident of Njemanze informal settlement, holds up a postcard from an Amnesty supporter, August 2011

### URGENT ACTION ON EVICTIONS: ANGOLA

The authorities in the southern city of Lubango, Angola, were planning to forcibly evict hundreds of families from their homes in August 2011. The planned evictions in the Arco Iris neighbourhood of Lubango never took place. Residents believe the work of Amnesty and a local NGO (Association Building Communities) contributed to stopping the forced eviction.



© Mary Turner

A Dale Farm resident, aged two, shortly before the eviction



© AI

A resident of Deep Sea settlement in Nairobi, Kenya, after the fire that engulfed the settlement in March 2011. Pressure from Amnesty helped persuade the authorities to let the residents rebuild

emailing Basildon Council calling for genuine consultation by the local council on options for alternative culturally adequate housing for those affected. Unfortunately, the forced eviction went ahead in October.

Not everyone supported Amnesty’s stance on this issue. Some people saw the evictions as purely a planning matter not a human rights issue, and thought Amnesty’s support was inappropriate. A few Amnesty members withdrew their financial support in protest. Others, however, were pleased that we had acted on a forced eviction in our own backyard. The eviction was a forced eviction as defined in international law and drew criticism from a number of international bodies and experts, including the UN.

■ **Lobbying for Scottish Gypsy Travellers, see p27.**

**Kenya settlements**

In Kenya, the Prime Minister has announced a halt to all evictions until legal measures are put in place to make sure that residents of settlements are not left homeless. This follows a particularly violent eviction in Mukuru informal settlement in Nairobi in February this year, when three people were reportedly killed. Although not a formal moratorium, the announcement is a positive development for Amnesty’s work on forced evictions in Kenya.

Mukuru is one of the informal settlement communities that Kate Allen visited with our Poverty and Human Rights campaign manager in 2011; they had fruitful discussions with Amnesty Kenya, community representatives from four of Nairobi’s slums and UN and EU representatives on ways to address forced eviction and housing rights in Kenya.

**Rapid response**

The global rapid response mechanism established in 2010 to prevent forced evictions is now up and running. In 2011 it was used to halt an eviction in Accra, Ghana, and also to defend members of the Romani community in Serbia, postponing a planned eviction of Block 61 in Belgrade city.



# BUILDING SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



Glasses are raised at our 50th anniversary conference

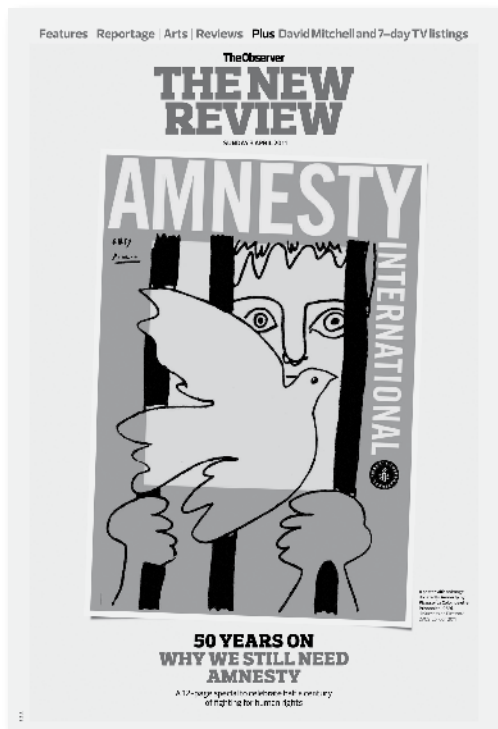
The success of Amnesty's campaigns depends on our ability to convince others. We need to persuade people in government and in the media, work with them, and sometimes to challenge them. We also need to reach out to a wider public in order to increase the base of support for our campaigning and raise funds for our work. Amnesty groups around the country play a key role in this work by lobbying their local politicians, talking to local media, running events, and recruiting new supporters from their communities, schools and universities.

## **AMNESTY@50**

Our 50th anniversary was a tremendous opportunity. It gave us the chance to tell our own story, to talk to new audiences about what an amazing organisation Amnesty is, about what we do and how to get involved.

Our anniversary activities were sharply focused to take advantage of Amnesty's raised profile in the media to spread the message about human rights, to attract new supporters and further inspire existing ones, and to boost fundraising. Our anniversary-themed campaigns focused on areas where 'people power' could create real improvement, including freedom of expression, abolition of the death penalty (see page 7, reproductive rights for women and girls in Nicaragua (see page 4), and ending injustice and oppression in the Middle East and North Africa (see page 9). Write For Rights provided a new twist on AIUK's familiar greetings card campaign (see page 12).

Throughout the year, Amnesty supporters around the country organised all sorts of events to mark the anniversary. There were parties and picnics, theatre and concerts, street parades and sponsored walks. They also used the occasion to get public endorsements from local politicians. Among those expressing support for Amnesty were the First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones, the Lord Provost of Dundee, the Mayors of Cardiff, Truro, Chichester, Bath, Colwyn Bay, Llandudno, Rhyl, Ely and Knaresborough, MSPs Bob Doris, Jamie Hepburn, Angus



'50 years on, why we still need Amnesty'.  
*Observer*, May 2011



**LIGHTING A CANDLE**

Peter Benenson's daughter Manya Benenson and Wai Hnin Pwint Thon, daughter of Burmese political prisoner Mya Aye, light the Amnesty candle together. Wai Hnin had told guests that she feared she would never see her father, who was serving a 65-year sentence for organising peaceful protests against the Burmese regime, again. In January 2012, however, he and hundreds of other prisoners were released.

MacDonald, Joan McAlpine, Liam McArthur, John Pentland, Dave Thompson and Humza Yousaf, and MPs John Bercow, Don Foster, David Jones, Chris Ruane, Anne Main and Business Secretary Vince Cable.

**Amnesty@50 in the news**

UK media coverage of the anniversary began in April with a special edition of the *Observer's* New Review, the equivalent section of the paper where Peter Benenson's article originally appeared. The 12-page supplement included a map of the world detailing the 'Battles for Human Rights', a feature on Belarus, profiles of Amnesty staff around the world and interviews with individuals that Amnesty helped.

In the week before the anniversary in May, mentions of Amnesty's 50th included an *Evening Standard* interview with London resident Rabiha Al-Qassab, whose husband Ramze Shihab Ahmed (see page 20) was imprisoned and tortured when he visited Iraq in 2009 ('Without Amnesty I'd be totally alone'), a live interview with UK campaigns director Tim Hancock on Radio 4's *The World Tonight* alongside a package featuring Amnesty UK education adviser Dan Jones interviewed at work, a BBC World Service programme with Alan Johnston interviewing former prisoner of conscience Maria Gillespie and Amnesty early members, plus a news item on BBC Oxfordshire about Peter Benenson's widow Susan, still active in her local group.

On the anniversary weekend coverage included a lengthy ITV *London Tonight* feature, ITV National news bulletins, a live interview with AIUK head of activism Champa Patel on the BBC News channel, Bianca Jagger on BBC Breakfast, Kate Allen on BBC Radio 5 Live and Dan Jones on BBC London radio. The *Observer* coverage included an excellent editorial and an opinion piece by *War Horse* author Michael Morpurgo. The *Guardian* website launched a monthly online action. The *Independent on Sunday* ran a full-page feature and its sister daily paper a double-page spread.

Supporters' celebrations around the country generated scores of news items in local media. Local groups, in particular, made a great effort to gain press coverage, with excellent results. The *Eastern Daily Press*, for example, carried a double-page feature after talking to the Norwich group.

A BBC4 Storyville documentary, *Amnesty! When They are all Free!* impressed the critics. The *Times*' verdict, 'a fascinating and important film' was typical. Most newspapers included it in their 'Pick of the Day' columns.

**Toasts to freedom**

The centrepiece of AIUK's 50th birthday celebrations was the event at the church of St Martin-in-the-Fields on Saturday 28 May, where former prisoners of conscience joined activists and supporters to hear speeches, poetry and music beneath banners illustrated with the faces of some of the 50,000 prisoners of conscience whose cases have been highlighted by Amnesty in the past half-century.

Amnesty UK took part on 28 May in the launch of the Global Call to Action, with events held in more than 60 countries. Supporters around the world, including the UK, took part in 'Toast to Freedom' events commemorating the tale of two Portuguese students imprisoned for raising their glasses to liberty – the injustice of which inspired Peter Benenson to write the *Observer* article that launched Amnesty. London Amnesty groups gathered at the Human Rights Action Centre for an evening of tributes to Amnesty's work, led by actress and activist Vanessa Redgrave. Toasts were drunk in fair trade coffee (in Cartmel

and Grange) and lemonade (in Ruislip) as well as in Portuguese wine.

The opportunity to celebrate the extraordinary achievement of 50 years' of activism brought out all that is good about Amnesty supporters – their dedication, their compassion, their creativity, their flair, their powers of persuasion and their dogged determination. Because of their commitment thousands of people across the world are today free to share in the celebrations.

**AMNESTY AND THE MEDIA**

Media work is a key part of Amnesty's activities. The media help us reach different and wider audiences. We use momentum from media work to help bring about change.

Amnesty UK aims to get as much coverage as possible in the print, broadcast and online media. We give comment and interviews, write articles, blogs and opinion pieces, and generate debate – all at national and local levels. Local media work is especially valuable. People often care most about events close to home and will read a local paper more than the national press.

**Coverage in 2011**

Part of our work involves targeting particularly influential media – such as BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme. Between April and September, Amnesty went on *Today* 14 times. Subjects included Amnesty's report on child soldiers in Somalia, our withdrawal from the UK Detainee Inquiry and the Arab Spring.

August was a highpoint, with 60 broadcast interviews – more in a single month than at any time since the 2008 Beijing Olympics. A range of subjects were covered: the death penalty, the Detainee Inquiry, taser deaths, the Dale Farm evictions, and human rights violations in Libya and Syria.

Women's magazines offer large audiences but long lead times, making coverage difficult to secure. By building strong contacts, we get regular coverage in the weekly *Grazia*. *Marie Claire* ran a 50th anniversary feature on the world's 50 bravest women – prompting a reader to pledge her support for Amnesty on the magazine's letters page.

Hundreds of items appeared in local media as a result of the work of our local groups, who took to the high streets and other venues with all kinds of events – everything from comedy nights and concerts to tea parties and world record attempts – to raise awareness of Amnesty and our campaigns. Through these efforts Amnesty maintains an enviable profile locally, often reaching people who don't consume national media.

**Media Awards**

May 2011 marked 20 years of the Amnesty International UK Media Awards, recognising excellence in human rights journalism. This annual event benefits Amnesty by shining a light on human rights abuses, encouraging public awareness and political change, and reporting on Amnesty's work. The 2011 Media Awards recognised a variety of print, broadcast, photographic and digital media, and introduced a new Student Award to inspire the human rights reporters of tomorrow. Sophie Mei of Manchester University fought off strong competition to win the student award with her piece on sex trafficking. Now in its second year, our Young Human Rights Reporter of the Year award for aspiring school-age journalists drew more than 700 entries.

Since the award ceremony, new relationships have been fostered between Amnesty and many professional journalists. *Guardian*



Oxford University group 50th birthday party



Six members of the Church Stretton group walked 50 miles through the Shropshire Hills



Amnesty Media Awards 2011



### MEDIA AWARDS WINNERS

Among the winners was *The Independent's* Andrew Buncombe (National Newspapers category) for a piece on a 10-year hunger strike in protest against fighting in Manipur, India. Eamonn McCann's *Belfast Telegraph* article on the Bloody Sunday Inquiry scooped the Nations and Regions award. The Photojournalism award went to Robin Hammond (for *Marie Claire*) for work on women and rape in the Congo (picture).

### HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE UK

The Human Rights Act (HRA) is the cornerstone for the legal protection of human rights in the UK. It enables people to access their rights under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and to take action to remedy any violation of these in the UK courts. The HRA and ECHR are there to protect the fundamental human rights of us all, including suspected terrorists or convicted criminals. Yet sustained attacks by some politicians and parts of the media are succeeding in 'demonising' the HRA and ECHR and the courts that enforce them in the eyes of much of the public.

In December, we submitted evidence to and later met with the Commission set up by the coalition government to consider the case for a new Bill of Rights, arguing that any new law should only be considered if it is better than the existing HRA. We work closely with colleagues in Europe to resist moves by the UK during its presidency of the Council of Europe to weaken the authority of the European Court of Human Rights.

The Wirksworth and Derby local groups helped organise two seminars involving legal experts, academics and other local organisations and presented their conclusions and arguments in support of the HRA to the Bill of Rights Commission in November.

With the help of Amnesty supporters, we will continue to help counter negative coverage and turn round the public debate, so we can build a strong human rights culture in the UK.

journalist Jack Shenker, winner of the 2011 Gaby Rado Award, addressed the Amnesty Student Conference in November. New partnerships have been cemented between the *Daily Mirror*, the National Union of Students, and our Education and Student team. We received an unexpected donation of £10,000 from one individual as a consequence of their attendance at the ceremony. There was more good news when the jailed Azerbaijani journalist Eynulla Fatullayev, for whom we campaigned at the ceremony, was released just a few days later.

■ See more on the Young Human Rights Reporter, page 31.

### LOBBYING

Talking to and building relationships with parliamentarians, government and the civil service lays the groundwork for effective lobbying on human rights. It puts our campaigns on the political agenda.

In the past year, it enabled us to give Egyptian women's rights activists the opportunity to address fringe meetings at UK political party conferences (see page 10) and ensured the Foreign Secretary took account of women's rights in his statement at the international conference on Afghanistan (see page 5). As well as lobbying on our major campaigns, we drew the attention of politicians to human rights violations in North West Pakistan, Sudan and Zimbabwe, and urged the UK to support the establishment of a UN commission of inquiry into war crimes in Sri Lanka.

Shortly ahead of the state visit to the UK of Chinese premier Wen Jiabao, Amnesty and Human Rights Watch urged Prime Minister David Cameron to speak out firmly on human rights. Chinese artist Ai Weiwei was released from detention shortly after the visit.

In April 2011 we prepared a submission to the parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee inquiry into the FCO's human rights work. Kate Allen gave evidence to the inquiry in May. In its report the committee echoed our concerns over the UK government's arms exports to the Middle East and the risk that the government's pursuit of UK commercial interests could clash with its pursuit of improved human rights standards overseas.

Amnesty activists can play a key role in building relationships with their local MPs, who often taken more notice of human rights issues if they are raised by their own constituents. Many more MPs than we had expected supported our campaign to defend women's rights in Afghanistan, and this appears to be due to activists lobbying their constituency MPs.

The current UK government is often prepared to express support for human rights abroad, but it has mounted a fierce attack on international human rights standards at home. Countering the political hue and cry against the Human Rights Act is a key challenge for Amnesty UK (see left).

### Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Since the devolution of political decision-making to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, power over some important aspects of human rights has passed to devolved institutions in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast. For example, the devolved governments have responsibility for addressing domestic violence and trafficking in human beings, and for providing services to asylum seekers and refugees.

The May 2011 elections to the devolved assemblies were an opportunity for Amnesty to establish or renew contact with new MSPs, AMs and MLAs. We invited candidates to pledge support for our

key human rights demands by having themselves photographed with an Amnesty placard. The campaign was most successful in Scotland, where more than two-thirds of the MSPs elected gave their support, and also did well in Wales, where 63 per cent of winning candidates signed up. All cabinet ministers in the new Welsh Government supported the campaign. Although Northern Ireland's political complexities made our task more difficult, candidates from all political parties pledged their support.

In September 2011 the Northern Ireland executive announced a public inquiry into the abuse of children in church- and state-run institutions in Northern Ireland. It was the culmination of two years of campaigning by Amnesty working alongside abuse survivors. Although the full terms of the inquiry are yet to be made public, the announcement was a positive step and the acknowledgment forum stage of the inquiry is due to get underway by mid-2012. We will continue to work to ensure that the inquiry meets the needs of the victims.

We continue to press the UK government to introduce a strong Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, in fulfilment of commitments made 14 years ago in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. On this issue, we work as part of the Human Rights Consortium – a coalition of almost 200 civil society groups from across the community. A survey done for the coalition in summer 2011 showed that more than 80 per cent of people in Northern Ireland support a Bill of Rights.

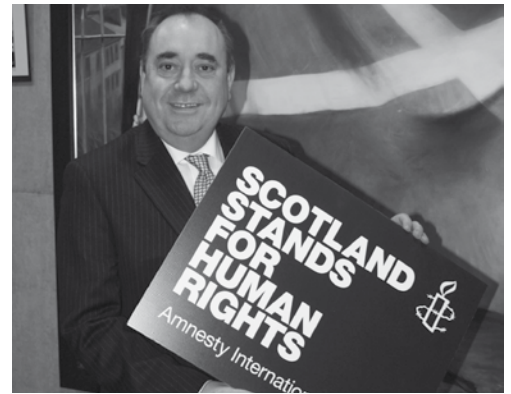
In Wales, we worked in the Wales Violence Against Women Action group, which Amnesty helped to found, to press the devolved government to step up its efforts to protect women from violence. As a result, in June 2011 First Minister Carwyn Jones announced a forthcoming Domestic Violence Bill, under which services for women in Wales suffering domestic violence are set to become the statutory responsibility of local authorities. This will end the postcode lottery of services, where levels of protection and assistance differ across Wales. The action group will now be working with the government on the draft bill. We hope to expand its remit to all forms of violence against women.

In Scotland Amnesty has been working since 2009 to tackle discrimination against Scottish Gypsy Travellers. This work was primarily driven by concern at the lack of adequate stopping sites for caravans throughout Scotland, where local authorities – like their counterparts elsewhere in the UK – have a selective approach to the matter. This discrimination is underpinned by negative attitudes towards Gypsy Travellers among a large proportion of the public.

In 2011, to help deliver a longer-term solution to the problem, we targeted the Scottish Parliament and raised the issue with the Cross-Party Group on Human Rights. We also made a submission to the Public Petitions Committee, setting out reasons why the Scottish Government needs to play a leading role in tackling prejudice and discrimination, while meeting the needs of both travelling and settled communities. Our report on service provisions by local authorities and on media coverage of Scottish Gypsy Travellers is to be launched in April.

**EVENTS**

Amnesty events are a way to connect with people, to share some terrific stories, get more people involved, and to make people feel they are part of something important. This year's events have raised thousands of pounds, and together we have marked Amnesty's 50th anniversary up and down the country from Manchester to Minehead, Norwich to Belfast.



Alex Salmond shows his support at election time





Shappi Khorsandi explains the finer points of stoning in Iran for Amnesty TV

## **THE SECRET POLICEMAN'S BALL**

The Secret Policeman's Ball has become the ultimate comedy benefit gig, with some of the best comedic talent celebrating freedom of expression and getting Amnesty's human rights message out to millions of people across the globe.

This year the Secret Policeman's Ball returns – for the first time being held outside the UK. With showtime on 4 March 2012 at New York City's famous Radio Music Hall, and a UK broadcast on Channel 4 a week later.

The gala night of comedy and music puts the spotlight on free speech and Amnesty International, with the help of some of the biggest names in comedy and a few A-list musicians. A DVD of the show will be available in autumn, for local groups and student groups to use at their own events.



Secret Policeman 2012, reinvented by artist McBess

## **STUDENT BALLS**

Several student groups organised their own Secret Policeman's Balls in 2011. The Glasgow University group's third annual event drew an audience of over 300. More than £500 was raised for Amnesty by the Royal Holloway University group's ball. The LSE group's event featured comedians Imran Yusuf and Kevin Eldon. The Manchester University, Exeter University and Dundee University groups also hosted balls.

In the build-up to human rights day hundreds of activists and staff from around the UK took part in Write for Rights events, encouraging more people to write both in protest to governments and in solidarity with prisoners of conscience and their families. This year's Secret Policeman's Ball will be bigger and better than ever, helping us to reach an even wider audience. Events provide a platform to express our message in a creative and engaging way with the ultimate aim of having an impact on people's lives.

## **Edinburgh Festival**

Amnesty put on a full and varied programme of events at the 2011 Edinburgh Festival. In addition to our comedy gig (see page 1) and campaigning for the 'UAE 5', we organised the annual Amnesty lecture, given by former Polish prisoner of conscience Adam Michnik, a critics v comics football match, and a series of readings from the works of imprisoned writers. We had a record-breaking number of entries for our Freedom of Expression Award, which recognises excellent fringe theatre productions that also raise awareness about human rights, with 92 productions nominated. The Imprisoned Writers series, where authors appearing at the festival read from the works of persecuted writers, has branched out beyond Edinburgh: in 2011 we took it to literary festivals in Glasgow, Aberdeen and Nairn.

## **Raising awareness through film**

Over the last year, local, student and school groups screened – and sometimes produced their own – films to publicise Amnesty's work and raise funds. The Bath group, for example, screened an award-winning documentary on domestic violence, *Sin by Silence*. In Hampstead and York local groups worked with cinemas to present a human rights film series. The Buxton group produced two short films about political prisoners in Laos. The Eastlea Community School group took part in an Amnesty documentary about how young people stand up for human rights (see page 8). There were also numerous screenings and talks at the Jersey group's sixth annual Human Rights Film Festival.

## **AMNESTY TV**

The online video channel, Amnesty TV ([tv.amnesty.org.uk](http://tv.amnesty.org.uk)) was launched in July 2011. A mixture of humour, satire and human rights messages, it is a bold experiment in engaging with new audiences. It aims to entertain a young, mainstream, internet-savvy generation with short accessible items and puts human rights issues in front of thousands of people who might not be reachable via, or amenable to, traditional campaigning methods.

Highlights have included: a message from Burmese dissident leader Aung San Suu Kyi, specially recorded to mark 50 years of Amnesty; an unsuccessful attempt to persuade the London ambassadors of countries including China, Iran and the USA to sign a card congratulating Amnesty on its 50th birthday; and a powerful short film in which the comedian Shappi Khorsandi explains the finer points of stoning in Iran with the aid of a pile of rocks and a crash-test dummy. In the longer term, Amnesty TV hopes to achieve 150,000 online connections over the first two years.

Amnesty TV has seen input from producers behind several popular TV shows, and has been enthusiastically welcomed by many – comments include 'brilliant', 'effective and to the point' and 'it's great to see Amnesty is an organisation confident enough to embrace a range of different voices and people' – but others have condemned it

as ‘trivialising’ Amnesty’s core messages. Amnesty TV is very much a work in progress.

## REACHING OUT TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Our young supporter base saw a big increase in this anniversary year. At least 114 new youth groups were set up in schools and we have 10 new student groups. The 2011 Amnesty student conference, held in November at the Human Rights Action Centre in London, was attended by 250 students from groups across the UK. There were 25 expert speakers, 20 workshops and entertainment from two poets and a comedian. Feedback was extremely positive, with comments such as: ‘Absolutely fantastic weekend’ and ‘Even better than last year’.

## LITERATURE

Books are a source of great creative power, helping to raise awareness and inspire long-lasting enthusiasm for human rights. We collaborate with authors and publishers on books that we believe will inspire and encourage awareness of human rights. We are developing – and are beginning to be known for – a special focus on children’s fiction.

Our literary events in 2011 included the launch of *Taking a Stand: the Evolution of Human Rights* by Juan Mendez, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and former prisoner of conscience, in conversation with Professor Philippe Sands. We launched the memoir of Malawi-born poet Jack Mapanje, another former POC, in collaboration with English PEN, whose president Gillian Slovo interviewed Jack in a packed auditorium where many of the guests had been active in his campaign. He said: ‘The event was the greatest highlight of my creative writing career.’

We also helped organise a Freedom of Expression poetry event on National Poetry Day, hosted by our poet in residence Carlos Reyes and with the collaboration of poets including Linton Kwesi Johnson, Luke Wright and Carole Satyamurti.

## AMNESTY DIGITAL

Amnesty’s websites, presence on social networking sites including Facebook and Twitter, and other forms of digital communication help us to get our message out quickly, connect with new audiences, and expand our campaigning, fundraising and outreach work.

Over the past year, there has been a huge growth in the number of people we reach through digital technology. More than 2 million people visited Amnesty’s websites in 2011. Over 58,000 people have ‘liked’ the Amnesty UK Facebook page, up by 69 per cent from 2010, while around 43,000 people follow us on Twitter.

Digital activism played a crucial role in Amnesty’s successful campaign to pressure the Royal Bank of Scotland to stop funding companies that make cluster bombs (see page 15), the successful campaign to release Eynulla Fatullayev (see page 10) and the unprecedented levels of support and action taken to try and stop the execution of Troy Davis.

Amnesty UK’s existing websites have been live since 2005. During those six years web technology has moved on and we need to make changes in order to keep up with our audience’s expectations. After consulting members, activists and other users, we decided on a phased redevelopment programme for our websites. The first phase was released in January 2011 with a new blogs and registration system and new sites for local groups. Our existing websites will be retired by the end of 2012.



© Sandy Young

Stand Up For Freedom, sold out at the Edinburgh Festival

‘Through literature we can find our place in the world, feel we belong and discover our sense of responsibility. Amnesty understands this very well, and the organisation today seeks out, encourages and endorses children’s literature that it believes can help children develop this great skill of empathy – a skill that is vital for tolerance to grow, hatred to diminish, and human rights to flourish.’

Michael Morpurgo, the *Observer*, May 2011

## SMS ACTION NETWORK

In November 2011 we launched our SMS Action Network, which enables activists to use their mobile phones to defend human rights. Network members receive regular SMS text messages asking them to take part in actions, updating them on campaigns, or letting them know about events. It makes getting involved a lot easier: for example, members will be able to sign a petition, help stop an unfair trial or make a donation by simply sending a text message containing a specified word.

This new, simple way of taking action can mobilise more people instantaneously behind our campaigns, in particular Urgent Actions and rapid response to forced evictions. We hope it will encourage more people to stand up for human rights and bring new supporters into Amnesty. More information at [www.amnesty.org.uk/sms](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/sms)

# LEARNING ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS



Eastlea School students visit the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

© Anne Montague

Amnesty International works to promote human rights education on a local, national and global level. Whether it's working with groups in the UK, or human rights defenders abroad, human rights education (HRE) helps people make sense of their world, and gives us all skills to help us make change for the future.

## WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

Our work with schools helps young people gain the understanding, knowledge, confidence and skills to defend human rights – for themselves and for others. Our presence in schools raises the visibility of Amnesty's work and can help create a culture of human rights, inspiring the next generation of human rights activists.

Our strategy for the next five years will see us continuing our work in schools. We will also look at developing opportunities for human rights education outside the formal education system.

Our work with schools aims to reach children and young people by encouraging teachers to bring human rights into the classroom and the entire school ethos. We offer educational materials, training and advice, to help them do this – all of which is tailored to the education systems in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## Speak Free

A key plank of our work is the annual schools pack, which in 2011 was entitled *Speak Free*, with the twin themes freedom of expression and Amnesty's 50th anniversary. Produced in English and Welsh, with an accompanying sticker competition, the pack was distributed to 4,484 schools across the UK. An additional 295 schools in Wales received the Welsh and English packs. Teachers, students and youth activists contributed to the pack's development.



The *Speak Free* launch took place in November at Bishopston School, Swansea. There were discussions on freedom of expression, as well as a poem written especially by the Welsh Children's Poet Laureate, Eurig Salisbury, who was among the special guests.

For the first time, we asked schools in Africa to pilot use of the pack, which has been sent to various secondary schools in Kenya, Ghana, Zimbabwe and Senegal. Other sections – Latvia, Romania and Cambodia – have also expressed interest.

In the autumn term we launched a project to expand our network of youth groups in schools across the UK. We used the *Speak Free* pack, and our short film, *I Talk Out Loud*, which followed Eastlea Amnesty youth group as they took their campaign to end stoning (see page 8) to the Iranian Embassy. The aim was to show young people and teachers how standing up for human rights can have a transformative effect, for those you campaign for and for yourself.

We encouraged schools to use the film and the *Speak Free* pack, and to follow up by holding a Write For Rights event in December. We also tested a free affiliation offer as an added incentive.

It worked. Our Write For Rights target was 100 schools, and we heard from over 118 that had taken part (with probably many more that we have not heard from.). By January 48 schools across the UK now have Amnesty youth groups as a result of the film and *Speak Free* pack.

## Young Human Rights Reporter

The competition to find the Young Human Rights Reporter (YHRR) of the year added a new age category in 2011. This was the competition's second year, run jointly with the Guardian Teacher Network and new partners, Mark Allen Publications, whose primary and secondary magazines reach schools throughout the UK. We created a new category for 15-18 year olds, alongside the existing 7-14 age group. More than 700 pupils entered, many more than the previous year's 450.

Short-listed nominees attended a much-praised awards ceremony, which one participant called 'one of the best days of my life'. The winning articles appeared in the Guardian Media group and Mark Allen Publications. Older winners enjoyed work experience at Mark Allen Publications' *Secondary Education* magazine. The winners were also recognised at the professional Amnesty UK Media Awards ceremony, confirming the place of YHRR among the 'family' of events celebrating human rights journalism (youth, student and professional). More than 3,000 young people took part in the 2012 competition, three times our target of 1,000. This year we asked teachers to send us just the top three entries in each class. We received almost 500 entries from the 150 participating schools.

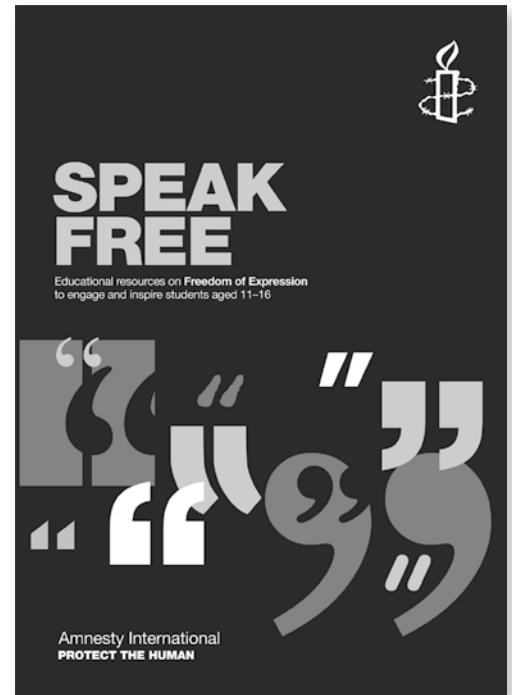
## Schools speakers

More Amnesty activists than ever trained as school speakers in 2011. By year end, the numbers of speakers had risen by 33 to a total of 160. At least 51,120 students were reached through school speaker workshops, compared to around 45,000 in 2010.

Training events were held in Edinburgh, Cardiff, London, Belfast, Durham, and Peterborough. In Birmingham we held a training and information-sharing session for experienced speakers, drawing on the ideas and experience of seasoned Amnesty speakers.

## Teacher training

Teachers continued to take advantage of our human rights education workshops. Ninety-seven teachers working in schools across the UK



Our annual schools pack 2011 – themed on freedom of expression and our 50th birthday



© Mike Tsang

Young Human Rights Reporter competition winners from left to right: Nathaniel Burnett, Jess Elliot, Angus Kirk, Isabella French

### CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Uncertainty remains over whether Citizenship will stay in the statutory national curriculum in England. Citizenship is the key subject for delivering HRE at secondary level. Amnesty is a founding member of Democratic Life, a coalition of organisations working to keep Citizenship in the national curriculum, and underline its importance. The campaign has involved contributing to the public consultation, including input from youth activists, training workshops to help teachers engage students in the campaign, parliamentary briefings and press coverage.

The government has released its initial proposals which recommend downgrading citizenship from a statutory national curriculum subject to a 'basic curriculum' subject in Key Stages 3 and 4. Basic curriculum subjects are compulsory, but schools determine appropriate specific content. The result could be that many schools cover the subject inadequately, so human rights education may well suffer as a result. A further round of consultation has now begun and we will continue to work with Democratic Life and through other means to lobby for human rights education to remain in the statutory curriculum in England.

attended nine sessions. Topics covered included using the schools pack, including HRE across the curriculum, and setting up a youth activism group. Another 330 trainee teachers attended two dedicated sessions, as part of Amnesty's ongoing work with UNICEF UK in support of 'rights respecting' initial teacher education providers.

For the first time, we ran a joint training event with two national subject associations, the Association for Citizenship Training and the PSHE Association, and the charity the Three Faiths Forum. This day-long event looked at terrorism and security 10 years after 9/11, and how to explore related issues in schools.

Teachrights, Amnesty's network for teachers and educationalists, continued to grow – 403 teachers signed up after receiving the *Speak Free* pack. Members receive a twice-termly e-newsletter highlighting HRE projects and resources. Throughout 2011, Amnesty worked with teachers and consultants to develop a range of free schools resources for 2012, including a new secondary booklet full of lesson plans and ideas for bringing human rights into a variety of subjects, and further lesson plans for Control Arms and women's rights.

### Challenges

Unfortunately, changes in funding and in teachers' contracts affected Amnesty's teacher training sessions in 2011. The previous year, half of our training sessions were organised through a partnership with a local authority. Cuts to education budgets meant that none of our 2011 sessions enjoyed this type of partnership.

From September 2010, teachers' contracts included a 'rarely cover' policy under which teachers do not routinely provide cover for absent colleagues. An unintended consequence has been that fewer teachers take up training opportunities. We have seen fewer teachers at training events, and two events were cancelled or postponed.

To address this, we are researching possibilities for a new 'ambassadors' programme which will train teachers to become Human Rights Education enthusiasts and run their own training in their own school and with neighbouring schools.

### ACTIVE LEARNING

Amnesty's Active Learning programme aims to enable activists to share and gain knowledge, skills and enthusiasm. We call it 'active' because it is a lively way of learning and uses a variety of different approaches. It is also because the purpose of the learning is to take action and bring about change.

Our team of 60 experienced trainers run Active Learning workshops for local groups and activists: these workshops – which are free and last between 60 and 90 minutes – are spaces for developing new campaigning ideas, learning about human rights issues, and getting inspired. Groups can negotiate exact content with their trainer, who will adapt and tailor the workshops accordingly. Trainers deliver workshops at group meetings, as well as at regional and national events.

Every year, Amnesty's Active Learning programme organises Skillshare weekends. Many local and student groups have extensive experience in different aspects of Amnesty's work – these events focus on the participants sharing their knowledge and skills with each other.

### The Big Amnesty Debate

On 1 October 2011, the Big Amnesty Debate was staged at the Human Rights Action Centre in London, aiming to get everyone talking about current human rights issues. It turned out to be an opportunity to think



The Big Amnesty Debate

outside normal Amnesty constraints, taking both outward- and inward-looking perspectives on topics including the challenge of global poverty, the importance of taking a human rights approach to climate change, and the impact of religious fundamentalism on human rights.

Speakers at the event, which was attended by more than 100 Amnesty members, included Cassandra Balchin, a research consultant for the Association for Women's Rights in Development; Conor Gearty, Professor of Law at the London School of Economics; James Rogan, director of the film *Amnesty! When They Are All Free*; and Nick Dearden, director of the Jubilee Debt Campaign.

The discussions helped to improve understanding of the relevance of human rights arguments in the face of massive global poverty, and participants covered a broad range of possible responses to the challenges raised.

A DVD of the Big Amnesty Debate featuring the main speakers is available now for use in group discussions.

## SHARING SKILLS WITH PARTNERS

In its 50 years of existence Amnesty has developed considerable skills and expertise in challenging abuses and campaigning for human rights change. Amnesty International UK is increasingly sharing this knowledge within the international movement, as well as helping the human rights defenders we work with to learn the skills they need.

We have arranged for Egyptian women's rights defenders to come to the UK in March 2012 to enhance their advocacy and campaigning skills. They will also have the opportunity to meet other activists from the region, so that they can share their approaches to dealing with common problems such as the criminalisation of protest and the rise of Islamist forces opposed to women's rights.

In 2011 we funded capacity-building workshops for people living in informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya, to boost their ability to counter forced evictions and campaign for better services to their communities. We funded a Burmese activist to take part in a female political leaders' course, empowering young women in ethnic minority areas to take part in political processes. We also conducted a three-day workshop on housing rights for Amnesty's partners in Haiti.

Within the Amnesty movement, one of our Activism team helped Amnesty USA to develop a more strategic and coherent way of communicating with the public, and to improve their support materials for activists.

Working with the French, Australian and Spanish sections as well as the International Secretariat, we took a lead in developing training modules and a strategy for helping to build capacity for media work by Amnesty all over the world. In December one of AIUK's media team spent a week in Nairobi, helping to develop Amnesty Kenya's media skills.

## ACTIVE LEARNING WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

The 2012 Active Learning programme offers workshops on the following issues:

- Arms Trade Treaty campaign
- Poverty and Human Rights campaign
- Don't trade away women's rights in Afghanistan
- Creative campaigning for individuals
- Communities at risk
- Death penalty
- Lobby your MP
- Create a scene
- Communicate your message
- Hitting the headlines
- Writing for rights
- Answering tricky questions
- Fundraising made easy
- Marvellous meetings

## WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT THE WORKSHOPS

'The workshop was very interesting, fruitful and useful.'

The Leicester group

'Very good and easy going. We asked questions as we went along and took away lots of ideas.'

The Portchester group

The death penalty workshop worked well because it was interactive. The trainer presented it well and managed to both give us information and elicit ideas and arguments from us.'

The Bradford on Avon group

'I really liked the workshop because it allowed everyone to discuss and share views, something we don't always get time for in a busy group meeting.'

The Maidstone group

# FUNDRAISING



Raising funds is an essential part of Amnesty's work. Everything that we do as a global movement – whether it's alerting the Urgent Action network, researching human rights violations, or bringing human rights into classrooms – depends on the hard work of our fundraisers and the commitment and generosity of our supporters.

Thank you to everyone who gave money to Amnesty over the past year. Without your donations, our work would not be possible.

It is thanks to Amnesty supporters and their steadfast commitment that our income remained relatively stable in these challenging economic times when people are having to look closely at all their expenditure, including their donations to charity.

Many of us were shocked to learn of the payments made by Amnesty's International Executive Committee to our former secretary general Irene Khan and her deputy Kate Gilmore. This inevitably had an impact on our income: about 1,000 people cancelled their support because of this in 2011, and it gave activists understandable concerns about fundraising. Despite this, once it was clear that the international movement was taking steps to address the issue (see page 39), our local groups rallied round and raised £234,000 – an amazing achievement in the current economic climate and an increase of just over £40,000 on the previous year.

Overall our income was £23.8 million (pre-audit) against a budget of £24.2 million. Our net income of £14.3 million was significantly more than the budget of £13.1 million. This was mainly because we spent less on supporter recruitment during the year. The overwhelming majority of our supporters are maintaining their loyalty to Amnesty, and some have even increased their financial support.

We have an ambitious strategy to increase our income over the next five years. This is because the financial contribution that we make to the international movement is due to grow (see page 39) and at the same

time we want to maintain our campaigning effectiveness in the UK. To do both, we need to raise more money. We have a plan in place to try to do this, and despite the challenges we faced in 2011, there is much that we can draw upon to help us reach our targets.

Amnesty's 50th anniversary (see pages 1-3 and 23) gave us the opportunity to get some positive media coverage and put on events which served to inspire new and existing supporters about our work. Amnesty groups and other supporters organised many such events throughout the UK to mark our 50th year, raising money along the way.

We had two notable appeal successes in 2011. In August we asked supporters to help us fund press adverts to draw attention to RBS investments in companies manufacturing cluster bombs, and also sent a cash appeal which raised £110,198, beating our target by just under £20,000. Two months later we sent an appeal asking supporters to help fund our work to prevent stoning in Iran. This appeal also significantly beat target and raised an impressive £127,042.

We sent four other cash appeals during the year and our total income from appeals was £556,181.

We continue to try to speak to all of our supporters each year to update them about Amnesty's work and to find out if they are able to increase their gift. This important part of our fundraising raises £309,836 a year. Amnesty supporters now give an average of £78.08 per year, an increase of £4.56 on 2010.

Major donors have been particularly generous this year. We have established a strong staff team who work closely with potential individual major donors and charitable trusts. Giving from individual major donors rose by 15 per cent from 2010 to 2011 and we received six gifts of over £50,000 each.

Our chain of six bookshops (see panel), contribute a profit of £100,000 to Amnesty, as well as giving us a valuable presence on the high street. Also, our first in-house street fundraising team is now out and about in London. We hope it will help build our expertise and capacity so that we can reduce our reliance on agencies to do this work on our behalf.

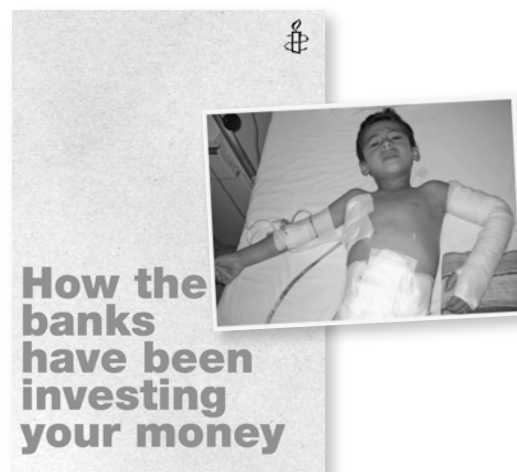
## Challenges

Our key challenge is the difficulty we are having in recruiting new supporters. Although we recruited 31,596 new supporters in 2011, this was fewer than the 42,000 we had hoped for. For all charities it is increasingly difficult to recruit new supporters, in no small part due to the difficult economic environment, but also because street fundraising is becoming progressively less effective and this has been our main way of reaching large numbers of people each year.

We also know from research that Amnesty can be seen to be cold and off-putting and that people do not realise that we need donations from the public to do our work. We continue to make efforts to humanise our work and find new and different ways to bring it to life for the public. We increasingly use film and digital communications to do this, and the media work and local awareness-raising that Amnesty groups undertake remain essential for keeping us in the public eye.

Our raffles have not worked as well as we hoped in 2011 and we are looking into the reasons why. We hope to launch some new raffle and lottery initiatives in 2012.

We continue to try to improve our digital fundraising as we can see some real opportunity to raise more money in this way. The new website (see page 29) will enable supporters to more easily renew and increase their support, and we are also looking closely at our e-communications and social networks programmes to make sure we make the most of



Cluster bomb appeal



Amnesty @ Boxpark

## AMNESTY SHOPS

Books for Amnesty had a strong year in 2011 with an incredibly generous volume of donations from individuals and publishers. In the Bristol shop we were given an amazing array of photographs and posters by the photographer David Redfern many of which went to auction in early 2012. Of the £454,000 we took last year £40,000 was raised selling online and we sent books all over the world. Newcastle launched online in the autumn and has already listed over 1500 titles. We aim to expand our bookshop chain in 2012 and hope to open in York in the Spring.

In December we launched our amnesty @ Boxpark shop which sells a range of Amnesty goods and ethical products from its east London home. We partnered with the Culture Label and London College of Fashion to create some fantastic new Amnesty products with Freedom of Expression and the Death penalty as the main inspirations. The Authors Club award winning writer Jonathan Kemp curated a mini Books for Amnesty, selecting stock from the Hammersmith shop and held a series of readings.

## FUNDRAISING

### PERSONAL REWARDS

Fundraising for Amnesty is not just about the money: 'Three reasons – one, being hunted, "disappeared", held in isolation and vulnerable to every kind of abuse by your own government is the closest to my idea of hell. Two, I have, I think, a very strong sympathy for those suffering injustices. Such wrongs seem to affect me deeply and make me angry. Three, I don't appear to be as hung up on locality as others. To me, a greater wrong is still greater irrespective of where it may be – Sierra Leone or Leith police station.'

Marathon runner Graeme Rae

'The events we organised were a wonderful success and we loved all of it, from the baking for our cake sale to getting covered in stickers at the disco. Raising money for Amnesty International has been a really rewarding experience for all of us and we hope to continue it in the coming year, raising the profile of Amnesty International as we do so, through more events and assemblies.'

Tonbridge Grammar School pupil Fritha Turner

### RAISE-OFF 2012

This year's Raise-Off competitions are well under way with dozens of youth and student groups registered to take part. Fundraising events are already taking place across the UK. St. Albans High School for Girls got the 2012 competition off to a great start and climbed to the top of the fundraising league table with a Raise Your Voice concert. This included choir and solo performances, and a raffle, raising £2,017.

### COMPETITION WINNER



Emily from Wrexham won the 2011 Tea for Two photo competition for holding an AmnesTea at her local craft market where she invited guests to have their portraits drawn by puppets.

fundraising opportunities. We hope our newly-launched SMS network (see page 29) will be an appealing way for supporters to take action and get more involved in our work.

The organisational structure of AIUK continues to prevent us from making the most of gift aid. Plans are in place to seek to review this to make sure we can make the most of tax advantages for Amnesty. This could significantly increase our income.

Finally, legacy income continues to be very important to us. Last year we received £2.2m in legacies. We encourage supporters to make a will and to consider making a donation to Amnesty. Thank you to all those who left a legacy to Amnesty International in 2011.

### FUNDRAISING BY AMNESTY ACTIVISTS

Hundreds of local, student and youth groups, not to mention thousands of individual supporters, devoted time, energy and enthusiasm to fundraising for Amnesty in 2011.

#### Local groups

Amnesty's 50th anniversary provided groups with an excellent fundraising theme. Many embraced it with great flair and organised a huge range of events, in addition to their regular fundraising efforts. The Norwich group, for example, put on a concert, a quiz-and-chips event, a garden party, street collections, AmnesTeas, as well as receiving donations from giving talks for other organisations.

#### Student and youth groups

More Student and Youth groups than ever took part in our 2011 Raise-Off competitions, displaying great creativity with a range of lively events.

Forty-two student groups (up from 27 in 2010) sent in funds totalling more than £22,000, while 83 youth groups (up from 57) raised £28,509. Comedy was a favourite theme among student groups. Glasgow, Exeter and Royal Holloway all hosted Secret Policeman's Balls. Others took a more quirky approach – such as the London School of Economics' silent art auction.

Youth groups enjoyed discos, pantomimes, non-uniform days, talent contests and fashion shows while raising funds and awareness for Amnesty. One of the most successful was Stranraer Academy's Rock for Rights gig, attended by 150 people.

#### Individuals' contributions

Much of our fundraising comes from individuals and their friends who roll up their sleeves to raise money for Amnesty. Damien Walker gathered a team of volunteers to work the bar at numerous festivals including Latitude and Hop Farm. The bar crew donated their wages from this work, raising £4,400 for Amnesty. Hayley, Ade and Michael, from the Oxford City group, cycled 170 miles from Oxford to the Belfast AGM, raising £1,800. Two men staged a record-breaking climbing challenge: to climb the height of Mount Everest (8,848m) in one stretch, on an indoor climbing wall. They raised £1,185. The Sands Centre in Carlisle held a comedy night – *Live & Ungagged Again!* – where Tim Minchin and other stars performed, raising £16,915.60. Leigh Gibson used Amnesty Hours to raise £260 through a variety of activities including gardening, painting, odd jobs. Mr Bennett raised £115 fixing computers, and A. Puhalo raised £100 with 13.5 hours' babysitting. Tony from Brighton raised £305 at his 50th birthday tea party by raffling off his bird skull sculptures. David Howell held an AmnesTea at the peak of Pen Y Fan in the Brecon Beacons in Wales.

## AmnesTea

For groups and individuals, AmnesTea parties were firm favourites for fundraising in 2011. AmnesTeas raised £40,000 in 2011, buoyed by the numbers of people raising their cups in a toast to freedom in our 50th year. Some groups blended AmnesTeas with the Write for Rights campaign, showing how this type of event can combine fundraising with activism.

Vivien Caldwell and Lesley Allan raised the most money (£1,590) for their 30th birthday AmnesTea. A special Amnesty goody bag went to Lily Limmer aged 12, for hosting an excellent Mad Hatter tea party, where guests ate Unbirthday Cake, played Pass the Teapot, and raised £92 – all of which was covered by the local newspaper.

## Sponsored events

Marathons, bike rides, triathlons, cage sit-ins, and climbing were all ways to raise money for Amnesty in 2011, as members continued to set and achieve personal challenges for sponsorship.

Amnesty provided the stimulus for some of these – we bought charity places in four new events which raised more than £40,000. Our team of 20 runners at the Brighton Marathon raised more than £13,000. The 35 Royal Parks Half-Marathon runners raised more than £17,000. Fourteen cyclists on the London to Brighton bike ride completed more than 50 miles and raised £4,400.



Stranraer Academy's Rock for Rights gig

## TOP FUNDRAISERS

### LOCAL GROUPS

Blackheath and Greenwich AI Group	£17,500
Bromley and Orpington AI Group	£7,202
Jersey AI Group	£7,042
Norwich AI Group	£6,750
Malvern Hills AI Group	£6,072
Bristol AI Group	£5,572
Islington and Hackney AI Group	£5,204
Chipping Norton AI Group	£4,750
Pitlochry AI Group	£4,050
Wirksworth and District AI Group	£3,592

### STUDENT GROUPS RAISE-OFF WINNERS

- Best fundraisers – Exeter University Amnesty group raised £5,040.30 from several events: Secret Policeman's Ball, live music night, choral concert.
- Best fundraising event – Cambridge University Amnesty group raised £2,000 with a two-stage festival.
- Most regular fundraisers – Glasgow University Amnesty group held more than a dozen events in 2011, including a sponsored climb of Goat Fell, a Protect the Human gig, and a ceilidh.
- Individual membership promotion – Manchester University group attracted 36 new members during 2011.

### YOUTH GROUPS RAISE-OFF WINNERS

- Best fundraising group of 10 or more – Freman College raised £3,153.45 from several events, including an Amnesty week and a quiz.
- Best fundraising group of nine or fewer – Tonbridge Grammar School raised £2,115.10 from a pantomime and disco.
- Best fundraising event – Stranraer Academy's Rock for Rights gig raised £850. More than 150 people listened to bands and speeches on human rights.
- Most regular fundraisers – Ashford School organised 11 events during 2011: a collection of 50p pieces for Amnesty's 50th birthday, talent show and raffle, raising a total of £1,060.
- Special mention – Langley Park School for Girls raised £2,600 on their first non-uniform day in 15 years.

# THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT



Art for Amnesty: Anjelica Huston shows her support

© Thomas Birkett

Amnesty International UK is part of a global movement of more than 3 million supporters, members and activists in more than 150 countries and territories. This hugely diverse movement is striving to work together more closely, in order to maximise its impact on the lives of millions of people whose rights are abused or ignored. At the same time, it is seeking to decentralise its International Secretariat, currently based in London, so that it can work more closely with global partners and respond to human rights violations with greater speed and relevance.

## CONTRIBUTING TO THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT

In addition to a financial contribution of £7.34 million, the UK Section's support for the international movement in 2011 included participation in a range of initiatives designed to boost Amnesty's collective capacity to act for human rights.

Kate Allen is a member of the Global Management Team, which will play an increasingly important role as the International Secretariat begins to decentralise its operations. We also participate in:

- the global campaigns management team, which seeks to address challenges to our work and developing new, more effective approaches
- the global fundraising team, which brings together the movement's largest fundraising sections to develop policy and share their expertise
- the international human rights education coordinating committee, through which we contribute to reports and requests for information, and share resources and training materials with other sections
- the International Youth Advisory Board.

In 2011 the UK Section hosted the first International Media Meeting since 2003, with about 70 media workers from nearly 50 sections. In October, we hosted a two-day Global Communications Workshop for a smaller group representing sections and the International Secretariat



and other parts of the movement. And throughout the year we jointly ran a project to develop crisis communications protocols to boost Amnesty's ability to deal with threats to its reputation – which will protect the continued success of its campaigning.

Our section also provided resources for an Education for Human Dignity project and through our support of Villiers High School in Ealing, we continued our involvement in the international Human Rights Friendly Schools project.

In the past year we also:

- helped raise money from major donors for international projects
- shared our knowledge and skills with the international movement and Amnesty partners (see page 33)
- helped develop the global identity of Amnesty – considering how best to project what Amnesty stands for and what we believe in through visual expression and editorial practice
- took part in an assessment of Amnesty's activism across the globe, which concluded in June 2011 and generated a wealth of analysis about the effectiveness of our activism
- contributed to a strategic review of global trade union work, conducted in consultation with trade union partners in the UK and around the world, with a view to drawing up strategy for the next four years.
- played a leading part in developing the movement's first ever Individuals at Risk Global Strategy which runs until 2016 and sets out the human rights change for individuals we seek, and improvements in the way we do this work.

## The International Council Meeting

The International Council Meeting is the global movement's highest decision-making body. It meets every two years.

The 2011 ICM was the first to invite international members (from countries where no national Amnesty structure exists) as voting delegates, and perhaps the first where representatives of Amnesty entities in the global South and East outnumbered those from North America, Western Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

The meeting was dominated by an agenda of organisational reform, designed to equip the movement to achieve its strategic goal of expanding in the South and East. One of its most important decisions centred on the concept of One Financial Amnesty (see panel).

The ICM also addressed the issue of payments made to the former secretary general and her deputy. The IEC had commissioned an independent review of the payments by Dame Anne Owers, who provided an interim report in time for the ICM and presented her findings at the meeting in person. Before she did so, the IEC Chair, Peter Pack, announced that he would seek re-election despite being only two years in to a four-year mandate. He was not re-elected.

The ICM welcomed the report (which was finalised in autumn – see right) and resolved to appoint an independent group to commission an evaluation of the IEC's operations, effectiveness and expertise. It also instructed the IEC to set in motion some of the measures recommended in Dame Anne's interim report.

ICM decisions on Amnesty's human rights agenda were few in number and relatively uncontroversial. Decision 3, supported by AIUK, called for further integration of work on children's rights to raise the profile of the movement's work in this area.

The ICM reached 22 decisions. They are published in Circular 33, available to Amnesty members from the Supporter Care Team on 020 7033 1777 or sct@amnesty.org.uk.

## ART FOR AMNESTY

Our London office, the Human Rights Action Centre (HRAC), hosts Art for Amnesty, which aims to raise funds and profile for the movement by working globally to leverage the support of artists. In 2011 it worked with artists to support global campaigns on women's rights in Nicaragua, on the death penalty, and on migrant workers' rights.

Its biggest project to date was a world tour with the rock band U2 in 2010-11, promoting our Poverty and Human Rights campaign at 66 concerts in 22 countries. An estimated 5 million people at the shows saw the Amnesty logo and heard the message of support and endorsement from the band – including a shout-out from Bono on stage to 'Join Amnesty International!'

## ICM DECISION ON ONE FINANCIAL AMNESTY

Decision 18 of the 2011 ICM was designed to improve the use of Amnesty's global financial resources. It centred on two main elements: contributions from individual sections to the global budget and the allocation of resources.

Contributions to the global budget: the system of calculating each section's share was radically simplified. The decision also aimed to implement the 2009 ICM resolution to increase the overall proportion of Amnesty's resources going to the international budget from 30 per cent to 40. However, given the current economic environment, the timeframe for achieving this goal was extended by five years, to 2021.

For Amnesty UK this means that over the next 10 years the proportion of funds that we contribute to the international budget will increase each year, requiring tough decisions on priorities. The International Executive Committee (IEC) recognises that this is a challenge for sections and does not want to damage sections' ability to maintain their strong activist base. The AIUK Board is in discussion with the IEC over the speed of this transition.

The ICM also looked at how resources are allocated within the international budget, seeking to ensure that they are used in a strategic way with the right level of accountability for their use. This will become more important as the plans to decentralise the International Secretariat's activities from London take shape.

## PAYMENTS TO THE FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL AND HER DEPUTY

The independent review of payments concluded that the IEC paid more than was necessary to the former secretary general and her deputy to secure their departure. Dame Anne Owers made a series of recommendations to address failures in management and governance. In her final report, issued after the ICM, Dame Anne noted that many reforms she proposed were already under way. Steps taken so far include the creation of a new Remuneration Committee to ensure that decisions about senior and executive pay are free from bias or conflict of interest.

The report is confidential to Amnesty members. It is available from the Supporter Care Team (contact details left).

# LOOKING AHEAD

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Ciarnan Helferty

If Amnesty International is to have more human rights impact, it is essential that we grow our movement in the global South and East. The Secretary General, Salil Shetty, wants to help achieve this by moving some staff from the International Secretariat in London to places like Senegal and Thailand, where they can be nearer to local partners and the human rights campaigns they are working on. In this way we can work more effectively to achieve the changes we want to see.

Salil has also recently appointed two new leaders to develop Amnesty International's presence in India and Brazil. Through these new appointments we aim to build up our influence not only over domestic human rights issues but also the foreign policy of these emergent powers. We also hope to grow a supporter base that will eventually contribute funds to our work in other parts of the globe.

More human rights work in the global South will require more funding from the global North. At Amnesty International UK we need to increase our contribution to the international budget. In a climate of acute economic difficulty, this means all of us need to focus on the importance of raising funds.

Fundraising is a vital element of our human rights work. Money raised in the UK provides resources for our campaigning work in this country. It also enables the international movement to undertake research, invest in technology and pay for the work of the smaller national sections in Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

Of course, campaigns remain vital to Amnesty International in the UK, never more so than as we approach 'crunch time' in one of our long-term campaigns. As I write, a serious question remains about our government's approach to the looming negotiations for an international Arms Trade Treaty. They are broadly supportive of our recommendations. However, lukewarm support will not be enough. If the world is to obtain the treaty it deserves, the UK will need to act as a champion. I know that the international movement can count on AIUK's supporters and, by the end of July hopefully, nearly two decades of work will have reached fruition.

**Ciarnan Helferty, Chair**

## PEOPLE

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227,459  
Supporters

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111  
Student groups

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31,596  
New supporters this year

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904  
Youth groups

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Over  
200  
Trade union affiliates

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9,813  
People in our Women's Action  
Network

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241  
Local groups

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8,527  
People in our Children's Rights  
Network

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3,206  
People in our LGBT Network

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# VITAL STATISTICS

# JANUARY- DECEMBER 2011

## AMNESTY ONLINE

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225,000  
People in our online human rights  
community [protectthehuman.com](http://protectthehuman.com)  
have taken

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170,000  
Actions

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10,080  
Twitter followers @  
NewsFromAmnesty

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Over  
11,000  
Subscribers to online  
Trade Union Network

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58,258  
Facebook fans

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42,648  
Twitter followers on @amnestyuk

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## MONEY

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£23.8 million  
Income (pre-audit)

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## URGENT ACTION

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369  
New Urgent Action cases

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269  
Urgent Action updates

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9,734  
People in our Urgent Action  
Network

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## EDUCATION

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160  
Schools speakers

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56  
New speakers trained

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4,779  
Schools received a copy of our  
*Speak Free* pack

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51,120  
Young people heard an Amnesty  
school speaker in 2011

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alternative format please contact:  
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