

ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS NETWORK

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**
Aotearoa New Zealand



EDITORIAL

As global attention turns to the upcoming round of climate change negotiations in Copenhagen in December, it is more essential than ever to bring human rights to the table. Unless countries take decisive action to address its effects, climate change could threaten some of the most basic human rights, with those already living in poverty feeling the effects sooner and more severely. Acute water shortages and decreased crop yields in poorer regions of the world, for example, would undermine the rights and threaten the lives of millions of people. It would also increase pressure on at-risk habitats.



Amnesty International has added its voice to the global *Tck Tck Tck* campaign alongside faith groups, unions, environmental and humanitarian organizations, civic leaders, and individuals. Other *Tck Tck Tck* partners include Greenpeace, Oxfam, Avaaz, Red Cross, World Council of Churches and WWF.

In the lead up to the Copenhagen conference in December give your support some of the many actions and initiatives which are happening around New Zealand and the world. Don't let our leaders let us down!

A THIRST FOR JUSTICE

In a significant new report Amnesty International has strongly criticised discriminatory Israeli policies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) which are the root cause of the striking disparity in access to water between Palestinians and Israelis. Palestinians in the OPT do not have access to adequate, safe water supplies. This long-standing problem has significantly hindered development in the OPT and denied many communities their rights to an adequate standard of living and to food, health and work.



Palestinian per capita water consumption remains below acceptable international standards for the protection of public health. Chronic water shortages affect crucial aspects of life including hygiene, agriculture and industry.

The report was released on 27 October and is available [here](#).

HAVEN'T FOUND YOUR FAVOURITE PEN YET?

Never mind, we can lend you one if you come along to our next EDeN letter writing meeting. They are held at the Amnesty office every six weeks or so. If your letter writing skills are a bit wobbly, we will have postcards for you to sign and send too. If you have aerogramme forms gathering dust in your desk draw, bring them along - they're cheaper to send than envelopes. Everyone is welcome at our next meeting on

18 November at 6 pm.

If you live outside Auckland and would like to take part in EDeN letter writing meetings in your region please contact us. Check our webpage eden.amnesty.org.nz for contact details.

WANT TO DO MORE?

We are very interested to hear from you if you would like to take a more active role in EDeN. We would like to expand the co-group to include two or three more people who bring new skills, energy and enthusiasm to our team. This would help us build on the foundations of the network laid down this year. We meet every six weeks at the Amnesty office to plan actions, discuss strategy and coordinate the network. Some areas we are interested in developing are: membership support, utilising social networking sites, event coordination, newsletter editing, policy and strategy. If you would like to know more please email eden@amnesty.org.nz.

AIANZ HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER AWARD

We will be presenting our first ever Human Rights Defender Award to celebrate International Human Rights Day on December 10th. Inspired by Rebiya Kadeer, Aung San Suu Kyi and others like them who bravely speak out for what they believe, this award will be presented to someone from New Zealand or the Pacific Region who has made an outstanding contribution to the defence, promotion and/or advancement of human rights. So get your nominations in *NOW*. Nominations close on Wednesday 18th November. You can find more information [here](#).

NIGERIA CAMPAIGN UPDATE

We continue to work on this action which focuses on the oil industry in the Niger Delta and the chronic effects that oil-related pollution has on the human rights of people living in the region. It is a part of the Demand Dignity campaign. Rob Jager, Country Chair of Shell New Zealand Ltd, responded to Amnesty saying that they "...welcome an on-going dialogue with Amnesty International to promote a better understanding of the complex realities of doing business in Nigeria. Our wish is for coherent action that addresses the root causes of the issues that affect the people of the Niger Delta and brings positive change." Despite this promising response, Mr Jager has not replied to Amnesty's latest letter welcoming the on-going dialogue and a request for Mr Jager to raise awareness of this issue within Shell.



[Amnesty's report](#) on the Niger Delta was also passed on to former Prime Minister Helen Clark, who is currently Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme.

There is a set of three postcards available [online](#) for sending to Nigerian authorities and Shell. If you need larger quantities for events please contact [Chris Kerr](#), they will be available mid November. Amnesty will have a stall at the Grey Lynn Park Festival in Auckland on 28 November, where this campaign will also be featured. Please keep sending the postcards to help maintain the pressure.

TAKE ACTION

Environmentalist rearrested

Andrei Zatoka, a 53-year-old environmentalist, was rearrested by police in his home town of Dashoguz, northern Turkmenistan, on 20 October. He is believed to be held in a pre-trial detention centre in the town, where he is at risk of torture or other ill-treatment. He may have been arrested to punish him for his peaceful work as an



environmental activist.

The continuing clampdown on dissent in Turkmenistan, has led to many civil society activists, political dissidents, members of religious minority groups and their families being arbitrarily detained, tortured or ill-treated and imprisoned after unfair trials. To take action or for more information, click [here](#). (UA: 286/09 Index: EUR 61/006/2009)



Tck Tck Tck

Over 2.6 million people have already called on governments to take action to combat climate change. You can too. Add your name to the global petition [here](#).

Write for rights

Come together to demand that the rights of individuals are respected, protected and fulfilled, and to show solidarity with people who suffer human right abuses on 5 - 13 December in our global annual Write for Rights letter writing marathon. This event generates thousands upon thousands of letters providing comfort and demanding action.

This year's case concerns Palestinian families living in Humsa and Hadidiya hamlets in the Jordan Valley region of the West Bank. They face a daily threat of forcible eviction from their homes by the Israeli army. Their movement is restricted and they are denied access to the water and land they need for survival.

Take action:

- Request for information about this case and supporting resources from Campaigns Intern, [Alex Bayfield](#).
- Participate in AIANZ events nationwide (Click [here](#) for details).
- Host your own Write for Rights event at work, school or home. Advise events details (public or private) to [Alex](#).

APPEAL CASE UPDATES

We have heard from AI Canada that they are supporting a bill before the Canadian parliament which seeks to hold Canadian mining and oil companies responsible for the impact of their overseas operations on human rights and the environment. This could be significant to some of the cases EDeN has worked on like the burning down of homes around the Barrick Gold mine in Papua New Guinea. We will monitor the progress of the bill with interest. Click [here](#) for more information.

India

[A new country profile](#) on India is now available outlining our concerns that a major mining project will negatively impact the human rights of the communities who are dependent on the Niyamgiri hills as a source of water and for their livelihoods and culture.

El Salvador

Thank you to everyone who wrote on behalf of those seeking justice for a murdered environmental activist Gustavo Marcelo Rivera in El Salvador. We continue to seek justice and protection for the threatened activists.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Also, our thanks to everyone who acted on behalf of Golden Misabiko who was arrested on 24 July by the intelligence services in the provincial capital, Lubumbashi. His organization had published a report alleging state complicity in illegal mining at a uranium mine, and he was been detained as prisoner of conscience facing politically motivated charges.

Unfortunately, Golden Misabiko was convicted on 21 September by the Lubumbashi Magistrate's Court (Tribunal de Paix) of "spreading false information of a nature to alarm the local population". He was sentenced to one year's imprisonment with eight months' suspended. His lawyers have lodged an appeal against his conviction.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Links to interesting news articles and websites.

- [Photos from 350.org - from the global day of action on 24 October \(19,000 photos and rising...\)](#)
- [Recent articles on climate change from The Guardian Newspaper](#). Fascinating reading although the pop-up ads for Shell give pause for thought...
- [NZ Herald/The Independent article](#) on AI OPT Water report.
- [Ecologist Magazine article](#), 'Do you want to die?': environmental activists at risk.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Keep writing letters and sending postcards (if you receive replies to your appeal letters, please forward copies to the AI office).
- Volunteer to attend events as an EDeN member.
- Share with us your specialised skills or knowledge in human rights and the environment.
- More resources are available on the new look [AIANZ website](#). Keep checking the site eden.amnesty.org.nz regularly for more information.

That's all for this edition.

Regards,

Nick Keenleyside.

The Environmental Defenders Network (EDeN) is co-ordinated by Kit Howden and Nick Keenleyside in conjunction with Research and Advocacy Coordinator Chris Kerr.

You can contact us by email at info@fragileworld.org.nz or eden@amnesty.org.nz