

LEGAL NETWORK
AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL
Aotearoa New Zealand



LEGAL NETWORK E- NEWSLETTER- OCTOBER 2009

LATEST NEWS

China: Harassment, detention of and violence against lawyers

There has been an escalation and systematisation of the crackdown on lawyers and legal activists in China who defend the human rights of others. The unprecedented reprisal these lawyers and legal activists face not only threatens the legal profession but the very future of the justice system in China.

In the first half of 2009 alone, Amnesty International has learned of at least four human rights lawyers who have been threatened with violence; at least 10 who were prevented from meeting with or representing their clients in court, and at least five who were briefly detained, one for one month, because of their human rights work.

To read the report *Breaking the Law: Crackdown of Human Rights Lawyers and legal Activists in China*, click [here](#)

China's 60th Anniversary - Human Rights Activists not welcome

In the past few weeks, Chinese authorities have increased their surveillance of petitioners, human rights activists, religious practitioners and ethnic minorities to ensure that they do not raise human rights issues and complaints during the National Day celebrations.

To read more, click [here](#)

OTHER NEWS

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on New Zealand

The 12th session of the UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of New Zealand on 28 September 2009. Prior to the adoption of the outcome, Amnesty International delivered an oral statement welcoming New Zealand's willingness to "move to support" the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and New Zealand's acceptance of recommendations to continue the dialogue with Maori regarding the Foreshore and Seabed Act of 2004.

To read more, click [here](#)

Submissions

To read AIANZ's oral statement on NZ's UPR outcome, click [here](#)

To read AIANZ's written statement on NZ's UPR outcome, click [here](#)

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Vanuatu

Amnesty International welcomes the progress made towards ensuring that human rights are promoted and protected in Vanuatu, including through the enactment of the Family Protection Act in June 2008, which is the first dedicated domestic violence legislation in the Pacific Islands. Amnesty International now urges the Government to proceed with the implementation of the Act, including through training programmes for stakeholders and the allocation of adequate resources.

To read more click [here](#)

Amnesty disappointed by Shell's response to Niger Delta Report

Following Amnesty's recently released report, *Nigeria: Petroleum, Pollution and Poverty in the*

Niger Delta, Amnesty New Zealand has been in correspondence with Rob Jager, Country Chair of Shell New Zealand Limited, regarding Shell's failure to effectively prevent and address environmental damage and pollution caused by its operations.

Mr. Jager has responded by welcoming an on-going dialogue with Amnesty, and stating his wish for "coherent action that addresses the root causes of the issues that affect the people of the Niger Delta." Amnesty have responded with enthusiasm, seeking clarification as to how he intends to follow through on these expressed desires, alongside welcoming his ideas or questions on how we can both work together towards achieving positive and effective change for the people of the Niger Delta.

To read the report *Nigeria: Petroleum, Pollution and Poverty in the Niger Delta*, click [here](#)

Fiji: Paradise Lost

International action must be taken on the deteriorating human rights situation in Fiji, especially by China who is one of Fiji's biggest foreign donors.

To read the Amnesty's report *Fiji: Paradise Lost*, click [here](#)

Click [here](#) to take action

NEWS FROM THE AMNESTY OFFICE

Staff changes

Rebecca Emery, Deputy Director, gave birth to a healthy baby girl called Rose on Wednesday 30 September. She has taken early maternity leave and plans to rejoin us early in the New Year on a part time basis and then full time again from 5 April 2010.

We have had to say farewell Fritz Quero, former advocacy intern. Taking over from Fritz is new Advocacy intern Selina Clare who will be providing much needed support to our Advocacy team. She will be working on Amnesty's environmental network (EDeN) as well as day to day monitoring and lobbying the government.

Volunteering

AI often needs assistance with submissions, research and writing articles.

If you are available to assist in anyway please email Chris Kerr at chris.kerr@amnesty.org.nz

TAKE ACTION

This section allows you to take action on behalf of lawyers, law students and other human right defenders who are at risk. Letter writing is one of our strongest forms of activism... putting the spot light on human right abuses forcing change.

Zhuang Lu, a woman who works for the legal aid and research organisation, the Open Constitution Initiative (OCI, known as Gongmeng in Chinese), in the Chinese capital, Beijing, has been missing since 22 August. She may be in police custody and is at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

To take action, click [here](#)

Human rights lawyer Wang Yonghang, who has been detained incommunicado since 5 July, was formally arrested on 10 August. His lawyers said torture in custody had caused multiple fractures in his right ankle. Police have refused to let him meet his lawyers or family, on the grounds that the "case involves state secrets."

To take action, click [here](#)

Human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng, who has been missing since February 2009, was seen in his home town in Shaanxi province, central China, in late June or early July. He was seen by local residents, accompanied by a dozen local and Beijing Municipality Public Security Bureau officers. The witnesses reported he looked thin and weak. His current whereabouts remain unknown, and he is at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

To take action, click [here](#)

For more information about all our campaigns please visit [our website](#)

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