



Since May's e-newsletter, Amnesty International has celebrated its 48th anniversary and launched a new global campaign "Demand Dignity." Here in New Zealand Amnesty has had a busy month filled with submissions, human rights crises on our backdoor in Fiji and Sri Lanka, as well as adding a voice to the Foreshore & Seabed Act Review.

This e-newsletter features news from here in New Zealand and around the world, as well as actions to take, a review of our network's event in Auckland at De Brett's Hotel and provides ways to use your legal interest to get involved with Amnesty.



Amnesty has launched a new campaign

This campaign aims to end human rights abuses that drive and deepen poverty... See more at our website, www.demanddignity.org.nz



OUR LATEST WORK

Amnesty International Annual Report 2009– www.thereport.amnesty.org

"It's not just the economy, it's a human rights crisis – the world is sitting on a social, political and economic time bomb," Irene Khan, Secretary General of Amnesty International.



AI's annual report, released on Amnesty's birthday 28 May, is Amnesty's global assessment of human rights covering human rights developments in 157 countries from January to December 2008. New Zealand's entry includes the introduction of Taser stun guns, the Immigration Bill and the police 'terror' raids of October 2008. Human rights abuses in the Pacific documented include increasing reports violence against women and girls, attacks on media freedom and intimidation of journalists, a growing

number of people assaulted or killed after being accused of sorcery in Papua New Guinea, and Solomon Islands' failure to provide basic services to thousands of people living in informal settlements, reflecting growing urban poverty.

Read more:

- **New Zealand's entry in AI's annual report:** <http://thereport.amnesty.org/en/regions/asia-pacific/new-zealand>
- Asia-Pacific regional overview in AI's annual report: <http://thereport.amnesty.org/en/regions/asia-pacific>
- Amnesty NZ's media release, highlighting the need for a greater Pacific focus on human rights: <http://tinyurl.com/mh9th4>

Image: Irene Khan launches Amnesty International's Report 2009

Latest conflict in Sri Lanka

Nearly 300,000 people displaced by the conflict are now held in camps without access to basic needs or protection from human rights violations. The Sri Lankan government and the United Nations have failed to act yet. The situation is worsening.



This week, Amnesty released the report, *Twenty Years of Make-Believe: Sri Lanka's Commissions of Inquiry*, documenting the failure of successive Sri Lankan governments to provide accountability for serious human rights violations, including enforced disappearances, killings, and torture.

Read more at: http://www.amnesty.org.nz/archived_news/sri-lanka-end-twenty-years-of-impunity

More Amnesty coverage on Sri Lanka can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/nnuezm>

TAKE ACTION: On World Refugee Day (20 June) take action on behalf of the Tamil and Sri Lankan internally displaced and refugees who desperately need the world to speak out – they have no access to basic needs. See our website, <http://www.amnesty.org.nz> on 20 June for details.

Image: Child injured by shelling, Kilinochchi, Sri Lanka, 10 May 2009. © Private

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Following Australia's support of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), New Zealand is now only one of three countries to have voted against the Declaration. We are lagging behind in indigenous rights.

Amnesty New Zealand has reiterated its call on the New Zealand government to adopt the Declaration in a letter to the Foreign Affairs Select Committee who are considering a petition on it.

The UN Declaration provides a much needed elaboration of human rights standards necessary to ensure the "survival, dignity and well-being" of peoples, who too often are forced to live in poverty, discrimination, marginalisation and oppression. Critically, the Declaration improves the understanding and realisation of existing inherent human rights. It does not create new rights but generates renewed hope for a promising and secure future. Read more at: <http://tinyurl.com/lgh6gm>

CONTROL ARMS

Week of Action for the Cluster Munitions Convention



Amnesty has urged the NZ government to ratify this Convention - to continue NZ's leadership on this Convention, and to be one of the visionary group of 30 countries bringing this historic treaty into force.

The international ban on cluster munitions is the most important humanitarian and disarmament treaty of the last decade. With full implementation, it will save countless lives with its prohibition on future use, and through its clearance and victim assistance obligations it will make a real difference to the lives of those already affected by these weapons. Read more at: http://www.amnesty.org.nz/media_release/nz-urged-to-ratify-cluster-bomb-ban

An Effective Arms Trade Treaty: The World Can't Wait

While most states are now discussing in more detail the content and key elements for an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and most governments do want some sort of treaty, too few are yet committed to achieving an effective ATT.

An effective ATT is one requiring governments to prevent arms transfers where there is a substantial risk that they:

- are likely to be used for serious violations of international human rights law or International

Humanitarian Law,

- contribute to a pattern of unlawful gun violence, or seriously aggravate poverty.
- Without this Golden Rule, a treaty would be virtually worthless.

This is why Amnesty International and its Control Arms partners are holding a Week of Action June 15 - 21 to lobby governments to commit to an effective ATT – TAKE ACTION at www.controlarms.org

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's Case

Amnesty is calling for a unified international voice to condemn Ms Suu Kyi's detention and intervention by ASEAN and the UN. This must happen to prevent the regime in Naypyidaw continuing to act in utter disregard for human rights. Read more at: <http://tinyurl.com/kpbbp6>



Take Action and add your voice to the international call to free Ms Suu Kyi at: <http://tinyurl.com/nvw6sa>

Image: Global Demonstration calling for Aung San Suu Kyi's release in Trafalgar Square, London, October 2007.

NEWS

Pacific Island Palau's offer to accept Guantanamo detainees would not excuse USA

Reports that the government of Palau has offered to temporarily accept up to 17 Guantánamo detainees leave many questions unanswered and even if the offer is taken up it would not relieve the US authorities of their responsibility to the men.



Read Amnesty International's statement on this at: <http://tinyurl.com/ldo2fn>

Read Amnesty's statement on the agreement reached by European Union member states on practical steps that could facilitate the safe release of Guantánamo detainees at: <http://tinyurl.com/nugxul>

Image: Watchtower at Guantanamo Bay © US DoD

President Obama defends Guantanamo closure

In a major speech on national security on 21 May 2009, US President Barack Obama restated his commitment to closing the Guantánamo detention facility and to ending the use of the so-called "enhanced interrogation techniques" approved under the previous US administration.

Read more: <http://tinyurl.com/nngwoc>

North Korea: US journalists' conviction highlights unfair system

The North Korean government should immediately release two US journalists, Laura Ling and Euna Lee, who were sentenced to 12 years imprisonment with hard labour. The two were convicted of an unspecified "grave crime" against the nation by the Central Court in Pyongyang, seemingly ruling out the possibility of any further judicial appeals.



Read more: <http://tinyurl.com/n5v2gl>

Image: Euna Lee and Laura Ling (l-r), US journalists sentenced to 12 years hard labour in North Korea on 8 June 2009. © APGraphicsBank

EVENTS

Auckland Legal Network Event

The Auckland Legal Network event at De Bretts hotel on Wednesday 10 June was a huge success. Around 30 Legal Network members and friends came to hear Jonathan Moses, Senior Trial Attorney at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Mr Moses gave an insightful and fascinating talk about the trials he is involved with in Rwanda. He stressed the importance of holding war criminals accountable for their actions to rid of impunity. Trialling those involved with the genocide in turn sends a strong message to the international community and strengthens international law. Thank you to De Bretts Hotel for sponsoring the event and to co-group member Lisa Young for her help in organising the event.



Visit www.amnesty.org.nz/contribute/ainzevents to find out about other Amnesty events.

If you are interested in organising a legal network event in your area or have some ideas for a great speaker – please contact Mela Masser at advocacy.intern1@amnesty.org.nz.

Internal Speakers Programme

Control Arms- the story so far

When: Tuesday the 16 June 1.30pm

Where: AI offices, 68 Grafton Road, Auckland

To mark the Arms Trade Treaty Action Week, this short film (17min) shows the progress of the Control Arms campaign... We have many other great films in our library if you are interested in viewing another one after the short film. RSVP to advocacy.intern1@amnesty.org.nz

Amnesty International Submissions

Recent submissions include:

- Submission on the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004 to the Ministerial Foreshore and Seabed Review Panel: <http://tinyurl.com/lasyhl>
- Submission on the Corrections (Contract Management of Prisons) Amendment Bill 2009 (Privatisation of Prisons): <http://tinyurl.com/lh8jdk>
- Submission to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on New Zealand's Implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: <http://tinyurl.com/lo7c2w>

Many thanks to legal network member, Pippa Allen for her assistance in our submission on the Privatisation of Prisons.

OTHER NEWS FROM THE AMNESTY OFFICE

Legal Network Survey prize winner is...

Alysha Hinton from Wellington! An Amnesty T-shirt and 'Dear To Me' poetry book are in the post and will be with you shortly. A big thank you to those of you who completed our Legal network survey, it has really helped us figure out where a lot of our Legal Network members are based and how they would like to be involved in the Legal network.

Volunteering

AI often needs assistance with submissions, research, admin support and general volunteering in the office. Currently, we are looking for a volunteer on the Advocacy team to help us with some of our day to day work. We are also looking for a volunteer regarding some of our refugee work - so if you have an interest or expertise in refugee law and some time it would be great to have you onboard.

If you are available to volunteer please email Mela Masser at advocacy.intern1@amnesty.org.nz

Staff changes

Campaigns & Advocacy Assistant, Olivia Rope will be leaving Amnesty New Zealand to move abroad to the UK. Olivia's last day is 24 June and Chris Kerr, an ex-intern will be her replacement. Chris is an Otago law graduate and will be introducing himself in the next ACTivist and Legal Network newsletter.

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 rights abuses to force change.

The case of eight reformists

Arrested in February 2007... still no lawyer, no charge, no trial...



Eight reformists are detained without charge in the western city of Jeddah of Saudi Arabia. They are prisoners of conscience, detained solely for their advocacy of peaceful political change and human rights.

Arrested in February 2007, they have been held in the offices of the General Intelligence Service and were only allowed visit's from the men's relatives 6 months later. Their lawyers have not been allowed to see them, and so are unable to challenge the legality of their detention. Holding them without trial for over six months is contrary to international human rights standards and Article 114 of Saudi Arabia's Law on Criminal Procedure (LCP), under which detainees must be tried or released after six months.

They were reportedly arrested because they had been discussing ways to establish a human rights defenders association and begin legal proceedings against the Ministry of Interior on behalf of people detained without charge or trial beyond the six-month limit set by Article 114 of the LCP. The Minister released a statement claiming the men had been arrested because they were collecting money to "help terrorism".

Update: Dr Saud al-Hashimi has been on hunger strike since the 8th June

Please send appeals immediately by post or fax. A sample letter and address details are available at: http://www.amnesty.org.nz/files/Eight_Reformists_Case_Appeal_Letter.pdf

Image: Dr Abdel Rahman al-Shumayri. © Private

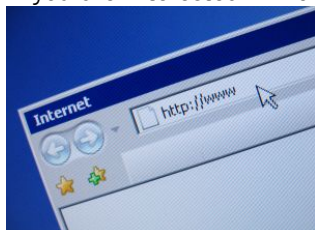
Law student at risk

Khalil Abdul Rahman Abdul Karim al-Janahi, a UAE national aged 38 was a student of Shari'a (Islamic) law in Saudi Arabia. On 26 April 2007 he went to the Saudi Arabian capital Riyadh to catch a plane to Bahrain where his wife and other relatives live. He was arrested at passport control in the airport, and taken to 'Ulaysha Prison in Saudi Arabia where he was held incommunicado for four months. However, his family were eventually able to visit him on several occasions, but neither they nor he were ever given the reasons for his detention. He was not charged or tried and was not given access to legal assistance. Amnesty International fears that he may be at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Please send appeal letters immediately, our urgent action file is downloadable from: <http://www.amnestyusa.org/actioncenter/actions/uaa14209.pdf?rss=actions%20>

CAREERS

If you are interested in working in the human rights / NGO area have a look at these websites:



www.goodworks.co.nz/
www.dev-zone.org/
www.skillsforcauses.com/
www.eurobrussels.com/NGOs.php
www.thirdsector.co.uk/
www.humanrightsjobs.com/

For information on Amnesty's internship programme click [here](#)