

Amnesty International Annual Review 2004-05 Local action Global impact

Foreword

In a year when governments betrayed the promise of human rights and armed groups sank to new levels of brutality, this review highlights human rights successes. They range in scale from the release of a prisoner of conscience by the Chinese authorities, to the ending of executions of children in the USA. All were achieved with the help of public pressure on governments – pressure from individuals whose sense of outrage drove them not to despair, but to action. That was the potential that the British lawyer Peter Benenson saw when he founded Amnesty International in 1961. And harnessing that potential remains our core task today.

So what have we, as human rights activists, achieved this year? In Sudan, Amnesty International's research and media work brought the campaign of killing, rape and destruction in Darfur to the world's attention. I saw for myself the abandoned villages and heard the survivors recount their horrific experiences. So I know just how important it was that our lobbying led to the referral of the atrocities to the International Criminal Court.

In Nepal, too, I heard first-hand accounts of repression after the declaration of a state of emergency. A series of visits from Amnesty International gave much-appreciated moral support to human rights defenders.

We also helped to achieve an embargo on arms sales to the country, and the deployment of UN human rights observers.

The year also brought significant progress towards abolition of the death penalty. In 2004, five more countries abolished the death penalty for all crimes, bringing the total number of states that have completely abolished the death penalty to 84 by March 2005. Until this year, the USA had the highest rate of child executions in the world. In March 2005, the US Supreme Court declared the execution of child offenders to be unconstitutional. As a result, more than 70 child offenders were removed from death row.

Amnesty International's global campaign to Stop Violence Against Women became established, exposing horrific abuse of women's human rights. And we sought to hold governments to their responsibility for ending this violence, in countries as diverse as Sweden, the Solomon Islands, Canada, Colombia, Morocco and Turkey. In cooperation with local partner organizations, we have raised public awareness on a global scale, and we have secured legislative reform on women's rights in Turkey and the Gulf states.

By March 2005, over 300,000 people in more than 90 countries had joined our call for a legally binding international treaty to prevent weapons falling into the hands of human

rights abusers. This campaign has won the support of more than 30 governments, including two of the world's largest arms exporters: France and the UK. Our collaboration with Oxfam and the International Action Network on Small Arms has shown the impact that can be achieved when civil society organizations join forces.

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing human rights activists is the onslaught on human rights in the name of the "war on terror". The USA is leading the attack, supported by its allies. The principles of human rights, they argue, must be rewritten in the face of terrorism. Even the absolute ban on torture and other ill-treatment, they claim, must be set aside.

We all saw the results in the photographs of abused prisoners in Abu Ghraib, the revelations of a network of prisons housing "ghost detainees", and the attempts of the USA and European countries to transfer prisoners to states that are known to use torture and other ill-treatment.

Even here, we have had some success. Decisions of the US Supreme Court and the UK House of Lords recognized the need to restrain executive power.

I am only too well aware of how much remains to be done in defence of human rights and the values they embody: those of human decency and dignity, equality and justice. The killings continue in Darfur. Violence against women persists the world over. Gross economic inequality and discrimination restrict access to justice, or deny it altogether. The politics of fear stimulates racism, xenophobia and intolerance, while the assault on fundamental human rights standards meets with widespread public acceptance.

But it is important to acknowledge our successes – not as a cause for complacency, but as a spur to action. They show that we can make an impact, that governments do change their policy and practice if we can push them hard enough.

Peter Benenson, who died in February 2005, founded Amnesty International believing in this power of ordinary people to bring about extraordinary change. Today's world differs dramatically from that of 1961. But it still needs Peter's vision of solidarity and hope. I ask you to join me, and the 1.8 million other members of Amnesty International, in making that vision a reality.

Irene Khan, Secretary General, Amnesty International

[photo caption]

Irene Khan with children at the Sahara children's rehabilitation home, Nepal. Amnesty International delegates visited the country in February 2005.

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Protecting human rights worldwide

Amnesty International is a worldwide movement of individuals who campaign for human

rights to be respected and protected. Through their commitment to human rights, they have achieved real impact. Prisoners of conscience have been released. Death sentences have been commuted. Torturers have been brought to justice. Governments have been persuaded to change their laws and practices.

With more than 1.8 million members, donors and other supporters, Amnesty International spans over 140 countries and territories around the world, and has national sections and structures in 76 of those countries. Together, these people believe in, and work for, a world in which every person enjoys the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights standards.

Amnesty International supporters are making a real difference in the lives of people striving to protect human rights and of those subjected to human rights violations around the globe. They continue to spread hope to the bleakest corners of the world.

Accounts 2004-05

A message from our treasurer

On behalf of the International Executive Committee I would like to thank our donors for their ongoing support and trust. Our work defending human rights is primarily supported by donations from individuals, and we also receive vital funds and in-kind support from trusts, foundations and corporations. While we do not accept donations from governmental bodies for our campaigning work, we do accept restricted funds for human rights education projects.

I would like to thank the institutions that supported the International Secretariat directly during 2004-05, including the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation, the Dutch Post Code Lottery, the Dutch World Wide Fund, the Oak Foundation, the Open Society, The Sigrid Rausing Trust and the European Commission.

The income and expenditure of the International Secretariat is reviewed regularly by the International Executive Committee, a volunteer body elected democratically by representatives of Amnesty International's national sections and structures every two years. The financial statements are independently audited. The accounts listed in this document are a simplified version of the full financial statements which can be obtained by contacting the International Secretariat.

The International Secretariat maintains a level of reserves to meet unexpected shortfalls in income and changes in exchange rates. Currently reserves equal approximately five months' expenditure, which the organization considers to be a low but reasonable level. The policies for investing these reserves are currently under review to ensure they are invested in a prudent and ethical manner.

In the movement's strategic plan to 2010 we have set ourselves ambitious growth targets to double our global income and significantly grow our supporter base. This will ensure that

we continue to be effective as we face new and emerging challenges in defending and promoting human rights. To help achieve these targets the International Secretariat and our partner sections are working on a number of targeted growth strategies. These include investing in regions with growth potential, exploring new global funding ventures and assisting sections and structures in building sustainable fundraising programmes.

Claire Paponneau, Treasurer, International Executive Committee

The accounts shown are for the operations of the International Secretariat. The operations of the International Secretariat are based in 10 offices across five continents (Beirut, Dakar, Geneva, Hong Kong, Kampala, London, Moscow, New York, Paris and San José) with a staff and management team of 442. Individual national sections can be contacted to obtain a copy of their accounts – for contact details visit www.amnesty.org or consult local directories.

Income		
Income	2004-05 (£'000)	2003-04 (£'000)
Contributions from sections	24,773	23,692
Grants	3,145	2,563
Interest	179	181
Other	145	159
Total income	28,242	26,595

Expenditure		
Expenditure	2004-05 (£'000)	2003-04 (£'000)
Research and action (total)	11,756	11,672
Africa	3,434	3,151
Americas	2,158	2,143
Asia	2,338	2,338
Europe	1,989	2,200
Middle East	1,837	1,840
International campaigns	1,531	1,334
Media & communications	3,895	3,514
Membership support	1,402	1,302
Democratic leadership	607	877
Administration	6,346	5,910
Finance and accountability	1,417	1,117
International fundraising	569	444
Total expenditure	27,523	26,170

Surplus / (Deficit)		
surplus	2004-05 (£'000)	2003-04 (£'000)
	719	425

Making an impact

Women speak out for reform in Zimbabwe

[pullquote]

‘Strike a woman and you strike a rock.’ We are not going to be deterred.

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“Just people cannot follow unjust laws,” says Jenni Williams. As one of the leaders of the human rights activist group, Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), she has been arrested or detained by police in Zimbabwe numerous times in the past two years. To her, and other WOZA activists, the arrests are a symbol – a potent reminder that exercising one’s fundamental rights in Zimbabwe can carry serious risk.

Since its founding in 2003, WOZA activists have struggled against the Public Order and Security Act – the repressive law used to deny people’s right to assemble in public – by taking to the streets and demonstrating through dance, prayer or song. “WOZA was started to give Zimbabwean women a voice and platform with which to exercise their rights,” explains Jenni. “At this time in Zimbabwe, where things are very tough economically, socially, politically... we felt that women were bearing the brunt of that crisis and should have the loudest voice in shouting out ... and holding the political leaders accountable for what they’ve unleashed.”

But none of this would be possible, she says, without international support: “I am alive today because the international community – through Amnesty International, through the media – have heard about our work. Amnesty... helped us to amplify our voice and they gave us incredible protection.” Amnesty International members have supported WOZA’s work through the Stop Violence Against Women campaign, the Urgent Action network, and the campaigning initiatives of various sections. It is but one example of how Amnesty International successfully supports human rights defenders throughout the world.

The individual support lent by Amnesty International members has also proved an emotional bedrock. “One thing that has been a major source of inspiration for us all,” Jenni says, “has been the deluge of Christmas cards and letters... Really, we must thank all the members of Amnesty International for that wonderful moral support.

”WOZA’s strength is revealed by the brutality with which the police have tried to stifle it. But those attempts are destined to fail in the face of WOZA’s determination. “We have a slogan,” says Jenni, “‘Strike a woman and you strike a rock.’ We are not going to be deterred.”

[photo caption]

WOZA women show ‘love’ sign. Jenni Williams, leader of Women of Zimbabwe Arise on the far left

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© WOZA

Released Guantánamo Bay detainee thanks Amnesty International

Moazzam Begg, a dual citizen of the UK and Pakistan, addressed an Amnesty International conference in London after his release from Guantánamo Bay in January 2005. Lighting a candle to open the event, he told delegates at the meeting that, when it comes to campaigning, “I think you’re the best people to do it.”

He added that it was important to keep Guantánamo Bay on the campaigning agenda and to push for a change in the UK government’s acceptance of people being held without trial, contact with their families or recourse to law.

Born in England, Moazzam moved to Afghanistan with his wife and children in June 2001. He said he was planning to set up a school in a remote area and work on projects to install water pumps. In December of that year, following the US attacks on Afghanistan, Moazzam and his family travelled to Pakistan. There, in early 2002, he was seized from his flat and transferred out of the country into US custody.

He was detained for a year at Bagram Air Base, where he witnessed two detainees being beaten to death, before being moved to Guantánamo Bay.

Held without charge or trial for three years, much of that time in solitary confinement, Moazzam thanked Amnesty International members for all the cards and letters of support his family had received.

[pullquote]
When it comes to campaigning, you’re the best people to do it.
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[photo caption]
Moazzam Begg at AI UK's Annual General Meeting
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Prisoner of conscience finds freedom after more than five years

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We are beyond happy. We have waited for this moment for five and a half years and want to thank everyone who worked toward this joyful day.
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“We are beyond happy. We have waited for this moment for five and a half years and want

to thank everyone who worked toward this joyful day.”
– Rebiya Kadeer’s daughter, Akida Rouzi, on her mother’s release.

In March 2005 human rights activists around the world celebrated the news that Rebiya Kadeer had been released from jail in China and reunited with her family in the USA. A champion of the rights of the Uighur ethnic group, Rebiya Kadeer had spent more than five and a half years in jail in China’s Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR).

A mother of 11 and a successful business person, Rebiya Kadeer provided fellow Uighurs, in the predominantly Muslim XUAR, with training and employment. She also founded the Thousand Mothers Movement to promote women’s rights and economic security. The Chinese government appointed her to its delegation at the 1995 UN World Conference on Women. However, she fell from favour in the late 1990s because of her activism in the oil-rich XUAR and her husband’s outspoken criticism of the government.

In 1999 she was arrested after sending publicly available newspapers to her husband in the USA and charged with “providing secret information to foreigners”. She was tried in secret and sentenced to eight years’ imprisonment.

Thousands of Amnesty International members campaigned for Rebiya Kadeer’s release, including via web actions from Amnesty International sections worldwide. Her release is an example of how effective consistent international exposure and pressure can be.

Amnesty International will continue to campaign on behalf of other Uighurs still detained in XUAR for the peaceful expression of their opinion or ethnic identity.

[photo caption]

Rebiya Kadeer is greeted with flowers as she is reunited with her family in the USA after her release from prison in China

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A campaigning success – USA stops executing child offenders

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Until this year, the USA had the highest rate of child executions in the world.

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Executions of child offenders in the USA were consigned to history in March 2005, when the US Supreme Court declared the practice unconstitutional. The landmark ruling, decided by five votes to four, came in the wake of Amnesty International’s year-long campaign to stop child executions worldwide.

For decades, Amnesty International has been advocating for an end to the use of the death penalty against child offenders. In January 2004, the organization intensified these efforts by launching the Stop Child Executions! campaign around the world.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) forbid using the death penalty for crimes committed by people younger than 18. Most countries have signed up to the ICCPR, the CRC or both. Despite these sanctions, executions of child offenders continue. The USA, Iran, China, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Pakistan have all executed child offenders since 2000. Until this year, the USA had the highest rate of child executions in the world.

As the campaign gained momentum, thousands of appeals were sent to authorities in the USA and other countries. The March ruling was a testament to the commitment of the campaign's supporters. Their concerted action meant that more than 70 child offenders were removed from death row in the USA.

[photo caption]

Nanon Williams, death row 2002. His sentence was commuted to life imprisonment as a result of the US Supreme Court's 2005 decision.

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Control Arms campaign gathers momentum

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Since the campaign's launch, over 300,000 people in more than 90 countries have joined the call for tough arms controls.

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“Having seen the cost in human suffering of innocent men, women and children, in conflict in Africa and around the world, I believe that it is time the global community establish an international framework on arms control ... We all need to support Amnesty International, IANSA and Oxfam in their Control Arms campaign and help make the world safe from conflicts and armed violence.”

– Archbishop Desmond Tutu

The Control Arms campaign has continued to gather momentum. The campaign calls for a legally binding international Arms Trade Treaty to prevent weapons being sent to destinations where they undermine human rights, fuel crime, or exacerbate poverty.

By March 2005, over 300,000 people in more than 90 countries had joined the call for tough arms controls and governments around the world, including Finland, Mali and Cambodia, had indicated their support for an Arms Trade Treaty to control international arms transfers.

In March 2005, UK Foreign Secretary Jack Straw confirmed the UK's commitment to working towards an Arms Trade Treaty, saying, “Just because agreeing a new treaty will be difficult does not mean that we should be discouraged from starting work”. The UK is the second largest exporter of weapons in the world.

Other successes have included police firearms control being put on the agenda of the UN's human rights sub-commission, and several regional bodies, such as the EU and the Organization of American States, considering ways to control arms supplies.

[photo caption]

People from over 140 countries have added their face to the 'Million Faces' petition. The 'Million Faces' is a visual petition – a way for you to show your concern about the global spread of weapons. All faces will be taken to the UN in 2006 as a confirmation that people around the world are concerned about the arms trade. Add yours now. Go to

www.controlarms.org

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How you can help

Amnesty International's unique strength is in its supporters, who make up a global movement of over 1.8 million people united by a desire to protect and promote human rights. There are many ways that you can support Amnesty International's work – step by step, day by day, action by action, together we can make a difference in people's lives.

Give

Amnesty International does not accept money from governments for its work campaigning against human rights violations, so every individual donation – no matter how small – is vital to our work. A regular gift is the best way to ensure that we can continue our current work and commit to doing even more.

Make a donation online at www.amnesty.org/donate

Act

Amnesty International is a movement of people working to protect human rights. By writing a letter to a prisoner of conscience or a government, sending a postcard, signing an online petition, making a donation or attending an organized demonstration, you can defend human rights.

To take active part in our global campaigns visit www.amnesty.org

Join

As a member, you will join a worldwide community who are already a powerful force for change. You will be able to actively take part in helping to prepare, organize and promote our global campaigns to stop human rights abuses. As a member of a democratic human rights movement, you will also have the opportunity to have a say in the way we work.

Join online at www.amnesty.org