

WIRE

FOR PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS
FEBRUARY / MARCH 2011 VOLUME 41 ISSUE 001

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



ACT NOW
WOMEN DEFY
DRESS CODES
ACT NOW
STRUGGLING FOR WORDS IN IRAN
ACT NOW
NEW CAMPAIGN:
SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS



WHY CAN'T HE
GET WATER LIKE
EVERYONE ELSE?

WELCOME TO WIRE

As we put the final touches to this issue of WIRE, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak announced his resignation after weeks of peaceful but relentless mass protests in Egypt. In Tunisia too, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali was forced out of power by the people's demand for dignity and social justice. In Africa, the people of southern Sudan have also had their say, and voted for their region to become an independent state.

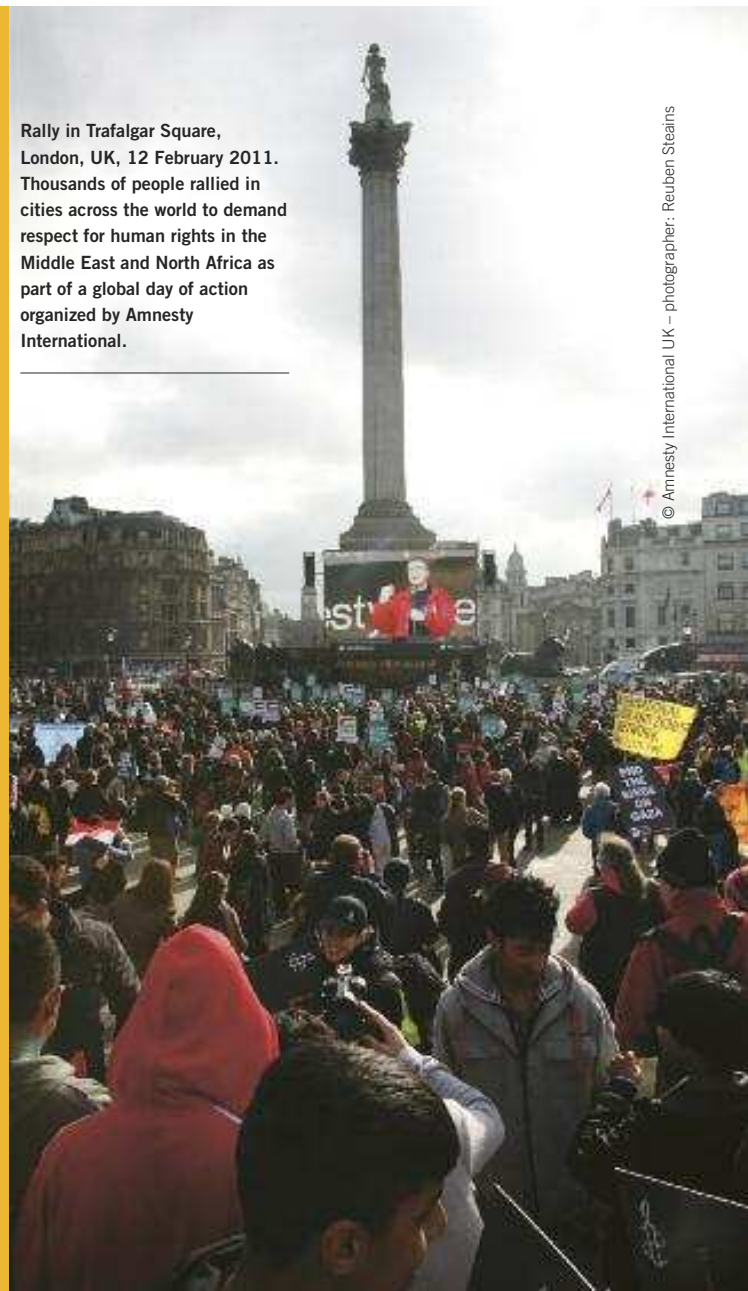
All over the world, individuals and communities are fighting for dignity, freedom and justice.

In this issue, we are looking at how Roma communities in Slovenia are demanding an end to the deep-rooted discrimination that sees their families marginalized and forced deeper into poverty. In Iran, the Azerbaijani minority are protesting for their right to educate their children in their own mother tongue. In Sri Lanka, Sandya Eknaligoda is leading the struggle against enforced disappearances.

From Egypt to Slovenia, people are trying to end human rights violations. You are one of them. Please share WIRE with others and encourage them to take action, too.

Yours,
WIRE team

Rally in Trafalgar Square, London, UK, 12 February 2011. Thousands of people rallied in cities across the world to demand respect for human rights in the Middle East and North Africa as part of a global day of action organized by Amnesty International.



© Amnesty International UK – photographer: Reuben Steans

Send your comments and suggestions to:

WIRE
Editorial and Publishing Programme
Amnesty International
International Secretariat
Peter Benenson House
1 Easton Street
London WC1X 0DW
United Kingdom

or email us on
yourwire@amnesty.org

First published in 2011 by
Amnesty International Publications
www.amnesty.org
© Amnesty International Ltd
Index: NWS 21/001/2011
ISSN: 1472-443X
Printed by Banbury Litho, Banbury, United Kingdom
on Revive 50:50 FSC/post-consumer waste paper.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the publishers.

Cover photo: Milan Novak collects water for his family who live a few kilometres away in the Roma settlement of Dobruška vas, Slovenia. The family have no clean water supply at home. October 2010.
© Arne Hodalič

GETTING WIRE

Would you like know more about Amnesty International's campaigns or use the WIRE for your own activism?

WIRE is available to download online at www.amnesty.org. To receive your free print copy, all you need to do is join our international membership – go to the final page of this issue for more details.

Institutions are welcome to purchase copies. The price for six copies a year for institutions is **£35/US\$54/€41**. Amnesty International sections can purchase copies for their own members. Email us on wire.subscribe@amnesty.org or call **+44 (0)20 7413 5814/5507**.

INSIDE THIS WIRE

PLENTY OF WATER, BUT NOT FOR ROMA

What is life like when you don't have a regular supply of clean water? Many Roma living in Slovenia have no access to water even though the authorities have the means and the obligation to provide it. Act against this injustice. **PAGE 2**



SECURITY WITH HUMAN RIGHTS

Governments use the threat of terrorism as an excuse to continue to commit human rights violations. Join our new Security with Justice campaign and say no to unlawful detention, torture and ill-treatment. **PAGE 8**

STRUGGLING FOR WORDS

Iranian Azerbaijanis want their children to study in their own mother tongue – the Iranian authorities respond by detaining, torturing and killing Azerbaijani activists. Take action now. **PAGE 12**



"WHAT TO WEAR?"

Many women around the world have to live with strictly enforced dress codes. WIRE looks at how governments and armed groups control what women wear and the stories of the brave individuals who dare to defy them. **PAGE 14**

Q&A

Sandya Eknaligoda, talks to WIRE about the ongoing struggle against enforced disappearances in Sri Lanka and her search for her husband, journalist Prageeth Eknaligoda, who disappeared a year ago. **PAGE 18**



WHAT ELSE?

Sign and send a postcard to the Zimbabwean authorities calling for maternal and newborn health care at a Hopley settlement in Harari (**INSERT**); Find out what Amnesty International has to say about the referendum in Sudan (**PAGE 7**) and read the good news on **PAGE 21**.

**ACT NOW
WORLDWIDE
APPEALS
READ,
DISTRIBUTE,
ACT
SEE OUR INSERT**

Drink clean water. Have a shower. Go to the toilet. Clean your home. Wash your children's hair. Simple?

Not if you are one of many Roma families living in informal settlements in Slovenia. They have little or no access to clean water, even though they live in a country that has the means and the resources to provide it. It is an outrage. It needs a solution now.

PLENTY OF WATER, BUT NOT FOR ROMA



“We have to use the water from the stream which is very dirty. The children vomit and get diarrhoea very often. They don’t allow us to take water from the pipe at the cemetery and at the petrol station they say ‘Gypsies go away’.

“If the men are not home we women wash ourselves in the stream. We cannot be naked in front of our children. We go to the toilet behind the house – far away from the house, to the trench. Children go nearer, especially in the dark, because I’m afraid they would fall into one of the trenches. When we had floods we couldn’t go anywhere. There was water all over. In the dark, I take the torchlight to go to the toilet, in the daylight we have to be very cautious.”

Silvana Hudorovac, resident of Onova, a Roma-only informal settlement in Grosuplje municipality, Slovenia (not pictured).

Marjan Hudorovič lives in Goriča vas, a Roma settlement near Ribnica in Slovenia. He and many of his neighbours have no water supply, no electricity, no toilets, no sewerage and no drainage.

“Every day we have to go fetch water from the nearest gas station, from the cemetery or from the water spring which is three and a half kilometres away”, Marjan says. “By the time we get home the water is already too warm to drink. In the summer we go to wash ourselves in the local stream but the police chase us away.”

The residents of Goriča vas have repeatedly asked the authorities to provide a water connection close to their settlement. They went on demonstrations and met with the Mayor of Ribnica municipality. One resident, Danilo Hudorovič, wrote letters to government ministers and to the President himself. In 2008, the Mayor promised a water pipe within two months. That never happened.

“We are not asking that they bring us water in the settlement”, says Marjan. “They can set the pipe a few metres away on municipal land if they can’t do it elsewhere. We just ask for one pipe, nothing more. I can see that the cattle on the meadows here have water. And what are we? Are we worse than cattle? For my whole life I

have had to steal water. I would really like to start paying for it.”

Goriča vas is home to 70 people. Some families have been living there for around 30 years. It is an informal settlement – its houses, built without permits, sit on agricultural land that belongs to the Ministry of Defence and private owners. Without building permits and without ownership of the land, the people of Goriča vas are not legally entitled to have a water pipe.

What is life like when you don’t have regular supply of water? Lili Grm, from the Roma settlement Dobruška vas, knows all about it. Her life revolves around fetching and collecting water for her family. “Water means more than anything to me. I spend most of the day fetching water, keeping our shack clean, washing clothes for my children. When we go to visit my mother in Kočevje, I put my two sons in her bathroom and I just can’t get them away from the water. My heart breaks when I see that. We are lucky to have a car so we can drive to get water. But when

A Romani girl collects water for her family every day from a dirty stream, Dobruška vas, Slovenia, September 2010. Her family use the water for washing, cooking and drinking.

[husband] Milan gets his severe migraine attack, I have to walk a few kilometres to get a few litres of water. On those days I don't cook, I don't wash. Sometimes we are without water for the whole day." Lily does not have a driving licence. When her husband, Milan Novak, goes to the hospital for an operation, she will either have to walk every day to fetch water or do without.

Because of the difficulties of getting water, many families do not have enough water for drinking, cooking, cleaning and personal hygiene. Lily's family of four uses on average 20 litres of water a day. The national average for water use in Slovenia is 150 litres per person per day. In the cities, it rises to 300 litres a day.

Life is particularly hard in winter; getting water becomes even more of a challenge. Marjan says: "In the winter we don't wash ourselves, except the face. The stream is frozen and the water brought from the cemetery or spring has to be saved for drinking and cooking. How do you think our children feel when they make fun of them in school because they smell?"

It is hard to keep clean without running water at home. Amnesty International researchers have met Romani children who are too ashamed to go to school and adults who struggle to find work because of the difficulties in maintaining personal hygiene.

Without access to clean running water and without toilets, showers and sewage systems, children and adults fall ill. Following her visit to Slovenia in May 2010, the UN Independent Expert on human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation said: "The consequences of this lack of access to water and sanitation are devastating for these communities. The individuals I met explained that they are systematically ill with diarrhoea among other diseases. In one community with no access to water, the people drink from a polluted stream, or have to walk for 2 hours to obtain safe water... with no other option, they are forced to defecate in the open. [It is] reminiscent of situations I have witnessed in much poorer countries and astonishing to observe in a country where so much has been achieved for the vast majority of the population."

The vast majority of Romani people in Slovenia live in poverty and face prejudice, racial

discrimination and human rights violations that have shocking effects on their communities. For decades, Romani children have faced exclusion and segregation in schools. When Romani people try to buy or rent homes outside Roma settlements, they are discriminated against by land and property owners. When they apply for social housing, they face discrimination again, this time from public authorities. This is why many Roma are forced to live in informal Roma-only settlements, where they have no security of tenure and in some cases, no access to basic services. For many Roma in Slovenia, discrimination breeds poverty; poverty breeds more discrimination. It is a cycle that must be broken.

TIME FOR SOLUTIONS

Access to a regular and adequate supply of safe water is a human right. Governments have to provide, at the very least, minimum amounts of clean water which are sufficient for people to drink, cook and keep themselves clean. The Slovenian authorities cannot hide behind questions of building permissions and land ownership to evade their obligation to ensure the human right to water.

In fact, most municipal authorities have been providing piped water to informal Romani settlements even when they do not have the necessary permits and tenure. Solutions can and must be found for all the remaining settlements. "The situation of the Roma minority in Slovenia is a difficult and complex issue, and I note with appreciation that some municipalities have found positive solutions", says the UN Independent Expert on human rights obligations related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation. "I

Top to bottom:

Children wash with water from a stream near their home in the informal settlement Dobruška vas.

A house in the Roma settlement of Mestni log in Kočevje.

A family of 11 living in a very poorly built shack in Dobruška vas.





visited a settlement in Trebnje where important efforts have been made to ensure that the community is connected to water and sanitation. Furthermore, the community is working with the municipality to legalize the land and buildings where they live, which will represent a longer term solution to their situation. However, less than 30 minutes away, other municipalities fail to find similar solutions. I find these discrepancies unacceptable.”

Slovenia has the expertise, the experience, the resources and the obligation to ensure that its population enjoy the right to water and sanitation – without discrimination. The authorities need to act now and do everything they can to provide water to all Roma settlements.

ACT NOW

Sign and send the postcard in the insert: call on the Prime Minister of Slovenia, Borut Pahor, to ensure that all informal Roma settlements are supplied with safe water and basic sanitation and ensure that the housing rights of Romani residents are respected. Urge him to take immediate steps to end discrimination against Roma in Slovenia.

Amnesty International will be publishing a report on housing rights for Roma in Slovenia on 16 March 2011. It will be available on www.amnesty.org.

World Water day is on 22 March.

SLOVENIA'S OBLIGATIONS

Under international law, the rights to water and sanitation require Slovenia, like all countries, to ensure that each person has:

- Sufficient clean water for personal and domestic uses, such as cleaning and cooking.
- Hygienic and safe water and sanitation facilities (toilets and drainage).
- Access to water and sanitation within or next to their home (even if they do not live in formal housing) which they can use without any risk to their safety.
- Access to water and sanitation that they can afford without having to sacrifice other rights such as food and education.
- Access to water and sanitation without discrimination. Water and sanitation services must meet the requirements of disadvantaged groups, such as people with disabilities.
- The right to participate in decision making that may affect their rights, including full and equal access to information on water and sanitation issues.
- The right to an effective remedy for any violations of their rights to water and sanitation.



GO TO WWW.AMNESTY.ORG/LIVEWIRE
TO CATCH UP WITH AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S BLOG

Egypt: The helplessness of the unknown

By the Amnesty International team in Cairo

"We were interviewing a father who lost his 16-year-old son in the recent unrest when news of the arrest of our colleagues reached us.

"They were visiting a national human rights organization, the Hisham Mubarak Law Centre (HMLC), when their offices were raided by the military police. The HMLC and the Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights, based in the same building, have been leading efforts to provide legal and medical help to protesters camped out in Central Cairo's Tahrir Square in the last 10 days. It is hard to describe the feeling of utter helplessness of being so geographically close but not knowing where they are or who is holding them. All we could do was make frantic phone calls, including to human rights defenders in Egypt also trying to locate their friends and colleagues."



© Omar Robert Hamilton

Anti-government protests in Tahrir Square, Cairo, Egypt, 8 February 2011.

Read more on <http://sn.im/20wi5b>

Twelve hours that shook Tunisia

By Diana Eltahawy, Amnesty International researcher on North Africa

"While I was making hectic last-minute preparations to travel to Tunisia as part of an Amnesty International delegation looking into human rights violations, in the context of the social unrest that has

shaken the country since late last year, a colleague joked that I would be sitting in a hotel room in Tunis watching developments on Al Jazeera. While we laughed it off at the time, the prophesy proved to be somewhat true. From the moment of my arrival on Friday 14 January, I could feel that Tunisia was a different country. Unlike the norm during

previous Amnesty International fact-finding visits, we were not followed by security forces from the airport. It was clear that their concerns were far beyond obstructing an Amnesty International report criticizing the country's appalling human rights record."

Read more on <http://sn.im/20wie7>

The fate of Dr Binayak Sen will help to show the real India

By Ramesh Gopalakrishnan, Amnesty International's researcher on India

"Ilina Sen says she has no plans to go to Bilaspur this Wednesday. That's the day the high court in the central Indian state of Chhattisgarh will resume hearing on the appeal filed by her husband, the acclaimed Indian human rights activist, Dr Binayak Sen.

Dr Sen is appealing against the life-term sentence handed over to him last month by a district court here which convicted him of sedition and conspiracy against the State. Unsure when he would be released following the hearing, or whether he would be released at all, Ilina says she plans to meet him two days later in the relative quiet of the prison here."

Read more on <http://sn.im/20wimh>



© Satya Sivaraman

Dr Binayak Sen is appealing against his life sentence for sedition and conspiracy against the State.

SUDAN MAKING HISTORY

This January, the people of south Sudan chose to separate from the rest of the country and become an independent state.

The right of southern Sudanese to vote and decide on their future was secured in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, ending decades of civil war in Sudan. January's voting process was deemed "broadly free and fair" by international observers.

What will happen next in Sudan? High levels of uncertainty about the citizenship status of minorities in both north and south Sudan could lead to human rights violations. An estimated 1.5 million southerners live in north Sudan. A growing number of them have already chosen to return south.

Amnesty International is monitoring developments in Sudan.
<http://snipr.com/20w413>



UNHCR/A. Coseac



UN Photo/Paul Banks



Scenes from southern Sudan's landmark referendum on independence, January 2011. Tens of thousands of southern Sudanese in the north packed their belongings and made the long trek south.

© UN Photo/Paul Banks

© UN Photo/Tim McKulka
(CC BY-NC-ND)



SOME GOVERNMENTS THINK THAT
**VIOLATING
HUMAN RIGHTS**
IS AN ACCEPTABLE WAY TO
COUNTER TERRORISM

TELL THEM THEY ARE WRONG

**SAY NO TO UNLAWFUL DETENTION
SAY NO TO TORTURE
HOLD GOVERNMENTS TO ACCOUNT
FOR THEIR ACTIONS**

JOIN OUR NEW
**SECURITY WITH
HUMAN RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN.**

Terrorism costs lives all over the world, almost every day. Governments can and should lawfully protect their citizens against such threats of violence. But many governments use the threat of terrorism as an excuse to continue to violate human rights, or create a climate of fear in which they can repress legitimate dissent and opposition.

Since the September 2001 attacks on the USA, leaders around the world have given the impression that the so-called "war on terror" means that rules can be bent or even that they no longer apply. Many governments have passed anti-terrorism legislation with broad definitions of terrorism, leaving the door open to arbitrary detentions and, in some cases, prosecution of people simply for exercising their rights.

The result? Thousands of people have been held for months and years without access to a fair trial or legal representation. Some have been secretly moved to other countries. Many have been tortured and ill-treated. In the majority of these cases, no one has been held accountable for violating these people's rights.

NEW CAMPAIGN

Amnesty International's new Security with Human Rights campaign calls for an end to human rights violations perpetrated by governments in the name of national security and countering terrorism, and insists that those responsible must be held accountable.

The campaign will build on the successes of the Counter Terror with Justice campaign, which focused on protecting human rights in what the USA called at the time its "war on terror". The 2006 campaign mobilized activists from various parts of the world to call for the closure of the detention facility at



© Dicle Haber Ajansı / (DHA)

Main: Prisoners sit in a crowded cell in the Iraqi National Police Detention Center in al-Kadhimiya neighbourhood, North Baghdad, Iraq, August 2007.

Left: A plain-clothes' police officer twists a child's arm after demonstrations during the mainly Kurdish traditional festival of Newroz (New Year) on 22 March 2008, Hakkari, Turkey.

Prison conditions are sometimes so dire that many detainees suffer health problems as a result. Amnesty International has collected numerous testimonies about torture and other abuses from detainees, former detainees and their relatives. "We [father and son] were tortured", one detainee explained. "Suspension from a bed upside down, suffocation by putting plastic bags on our heads, beatings, use of electric shocks on various parts of the body... I was beaten several times. After that I confessed. I confessed to things I never knew what they were."

In Jammu and Kashmir in India, the authorities regularly use administrative or "preventive" detention under the Public Safety Act (PSA). Political activists and suspected members or supporters of armed groups are detained on vague allegations of threatening "the security of the state" or "the maintenance of public order". The PSA does not define the phrase "security of the state". "Maintenance of public order" is given a very broad definition that could be interpreted in multiple ways.

According to the PSA, the authorities in Jammu and Kashmir can keep people in detention without trial or charge for up to two years at a time. In practice, detention orders are often repeated and detainees' right to challenge their detention is ignored. In effect, state authorities hold people for much longer periods than the two-year maximum.

In Turkey, thousands of children, some as young as 12, have been prosecuted under anti-terrorism legislation for their alleged participation in demonstrations relating to the Kurdish community.

Following their arrest, many children were detained in adult detention facilities, where the periods of their detention are often not officially recorded, allowing for pre-charge detention to be longer than that stipulated by law. Children often could not access their lawyers or families. Many children reported ill-treatment and torture during their arrest and subsequent detention.

Guantánamo Bay and protest against renditions, secret detentions and torture. The new Security with Human Rights campaign will continue this work, as well as put pressure on other countries where the threat of terror has become an excuse for injustice, brutality and a complete disregard for human rights.

In its first year, our new campaign will put pressure on governments who unlawfully detain people accused of involvement in terrorism or other national security threats. Such detainees are often held for long periods without knowing why they have been detained and without access to a lawyer. In many cases, they are unable to challenge their detention. Sometimes, after weeks or months, their families still have not been told where they are; they become "the disappeared". Safeguards such as the rights to know why you have been detained, to legal counsel and to a fair trial, are not privileges that can be taken away – they are the rights of anyone who has been deprived of their liberty.

CONFESSIONS UNDER TORTURE

In Iraq, which continues to experience a high degree of violence such as bomb attacks by armed groups, thousands of detainees are currently held without charge or trial. Some have been detained for up to seven years. Many have not seen a lawyer and have had no opportunity to challenge the legality of their detention. Some detainees have been held in secret detention facilities controlled by the Ministries of Defence and the Interior, where they were routinely tortured, apparently to coerce them into "confessing" to violent crimes. The overwhelming majority of the detainees are held on accusations of anti-government activities and supporting armed groups. Anti-terrorism legislation has been in place since 2004 and has increased the use of the death penalty.

NEXT STEPS

The truth about some of the human rights violations that took place during the US-led "war on terror" is now out in the open. Former President George W. Bush has openly acknowledged that he authorized the use of harsh interrogation techniques that clearly amount to torture. Evidence of secret detention sites in countries such as Lithuania and Iraq continues to surface.

Some countries have held or are currently initiating inquiries into the use of torture, and participation in renditions and secret detention.

Yet almost none of the states and individuals responsible have been formally or effectively held to account.

The Security with Human Rights campaign will continue to expose how governments violate human rights in the name of countering terrorism and national security. We will pressure for full accountability for these violations. We will demand that those being detained unlawfully are given fair criminal trials or else released. We will campaign for the rights of the victims of terrorism, and document attacks directed at civilians by armed groups. And finally, we will continue to remind governments that under no circumstances – war or threat of war, attacks by armed groups or emergencies – can torture and other ill-treatment ever be justified.

This is our commitment. What is yours? Join the Security with Human Rights campaign. For more info on Iraq, go to <http://snipr.com/1zvvhc> to read more on Turkey, see <http://snipr.com/1zvvi>

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



A NEW BEGINNING

© AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti

Mass peaceful protests in Tunisia and Egypt defied decades of repression to demand freedom, dignity and social justice. The uprisings toppled two Presidents and inspired protests across the Middle East and North Africa, offering hope of a brighter human rights landscape in the region.

G

Anti-government protesters celebrate in Tahrir Square in downtown Cairo, Egypt, 11 February 2011, after 18 days of mass pro-democracy demonstrations brought down President Hosni Mubarak.

For years, some of Iran's ethnic minorities – Arabs, Azerbaijanis, Baluch, Kurds and Turkmen – have not been permitted to study in their own languages in public schools and universities, where only Persian is allowed, or to establish their own schools.

Iranian Azerbaijanis, Iran's largest minority, are leading the struggle for the right to educate children in their mother tongue. Many activists have been detained, imprisoned, tortured and harassed by the Iranian government. Here are the stories of Iranian Azerbaijanis, in their own words.

ABBAS DJAVADI, writer and broadcaster

"In Iran, nobody forbids us from speaking [Azerbaijani Turkic] at home or on the street. Even in the mosques of Azeri-populated Iranian provinces (Eastern and Western Azerbaijan, Ardabil, Zanjan), mullahs pray in [Azerbaijani Turkic].

"But Iran's ethnic [Azerbaijanis] can barely read or write in [Azerbaijani Turkic] because there's no education in their own mother tongue.

"There is not one [Azerbaijani Turkic] school in the whole country, university institute, or a course teaching the language. An [Azerbaijani Turkic]-speaking citizen talks in his native tongue to his family and friends, but writes letters to the same people in Persian because he or she doesn't know how to write in standard [Azerbaijani Turkic].

"[Azerbaijani Turkic] is gradually becoming socially irrelevant... it has been infiltrated by local and societal dialects and slang and Persian's overwhelming vocabulary and sentence structure."

Taken from www.rferl.org/content/Restricting_Irans_Second_Mother_Tongue/1497983.html

YASHAR EYNALI, an Iranian Azerbaijani living abroad

"I feel my school education has scarred me for life. I feel spiritually orphaned. This orphanage has everything to do with the loss of my mother tongue.

My teacher spoke in Persian during teaching times. [I was unable] to communicate with the teacher and [cried] whenever the teacher talked to me."

Taken from a communication to Amnesty International, 2011

HABIB AZARSINA, journalist

"For Persian-speaking children, learning was much easier than for Azerbaijani children, who back then heard Persian for the first time in the classroom.

"Ditching school was routine [for Azerbaijani children]. Parents would bring their kids back in tears. Failing school was the norm. Many kids, and their parents for that matter, would give up at the end of the sixth year. Graduating from elementary school was considered an accomplishment."

Taken from www.gozaar.org/english/articles-en/Education-in-Mother-Tongue-for-Children-of-Iranian-Azerbaijan.html

STRUGGLING FOR WORDS

FAKHTEH ZAMANI,
founder Association for the
Defence of Azerbaijani
Political Prisoners in Iran

"This kid of a friend of ours – he saved up his allowance, gave it to the teacher and said: 'This is like 20 words of Azerbaijani ... and I'm paying you [the fines] in advance so I can speak it.'"

See <http://adapp.info/en/>

MOSTAFA EVEZPOOR, human rights defender, was arrested with his brothers in 2006 after calling for a boycott of the first day the new academic year and advocating the right of Iranian Azerbaijani children to be educated in their own language. He was released in October 2006.

"Most of the ordeal took place in the detention facilities of the Ministry of Information, including tormenting us both physically and mentally, as well as beating us up, [and] where I also resorted to hunger strike.

"Both me and my youngest brother were detained for 22 days and [our] middle [brother] for six days, but there was no permission for meeting with our parents. We were beaten for four days."

"They have not proven any charge against us. They were just telling us that 'you wanted to take part in the protest for your mother tongue'."

Taken from an interview with Voice of America Azerbaijani Service, 18 October 2006

SALEH KAMRANI, lawyer and former prisoner of conscience. He was detained in 2006 and 2007 for his human rights work. A refugee, he now lives in exile.

"My family are summoned to the Intelligence Department every year before the Babak Castle gathering [A day at the beginning of July when Azerbaijanis gather at the castle of Babak Khorramdin, an Azerbaijani hero]. They arrest either me or one of my brothers. Recently when my brothers were arrested, the Ahar prosecutor threatened me with decades of imprisonment and then they kidnapped me. Our telephone conversations, correspondence and contacts are under surveillance."

From a letter to Amnesty International, 2006

اۆز ديلينده مدرسه اومالي

دير هر كسه

*"Schooling in one's own tongue is a must for everyone" in Azerbaijani Turkic

NASRIN BABAEI, wife of activist Oxtay (Mehdi) Babaei Ajabshir. In 2006, Oxtay was sentenced to six months in prison for his activism. He was released in March 2007.

"The accusations against my husband are: publicity against the regime, being an element of the unrest, undermining the peace and security in the country, and communicating with foreign separatists outside the country. My question is this: is it a crime to campaign to educate our children in our mother tongue, Azerbaijani Turkic? If it is, why do the authorities avoid trying my husband? And to whom should I refer regarding my sufferings? I keep receiving threatening calls from security agents... ordering me not to talk to anyone. Else, I would be arrested."

Nasrin Babaei's letter was published online in 2006. The Iranian authorities have since blocked access to the websites it appeared on.

ALIZERA ASGHARZADEH,
academic

"When I see that millions of children belonging to Azerbaijani, Kurdish, Baluchi, Turkmen, Arab, Lur, Bakhtyari, Gilani and other communities have schools in their own languages, that will be a good sign towards the creation of an Iran without racism."

Taken from
<http://southaz.blogspot.com/2009/08/profile-dr-alireza-asgharzadeh.html>

ACT NOW

Sign and send the postcard in our insert calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Sa'ïd Metinpour, who is serving an eight-year prison sentence for peacefully campaigning for the rights of the Azerbaijani community in Iran.

WHAT DOES INTERNATIONAL LAW SAY?

People belonging to minorities have the right to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without discrimination. They have the right to establish and run schools that provide education in their own language, as long as these schools comply with the minimum educational standards decided on by the state.

The state has to act to ensure that people belonging to minorities have adequate opportunities to study in their mother tongue. Schools should allow students the opportunity to learn their language and provide necessary materials and teachers.

Iranian Azerbaijanis make up 25-30 per cent of the total population of about 70 million; they live mainly in the north and northwest of the country and in Tehran.

'WHAT TO WEAR?'

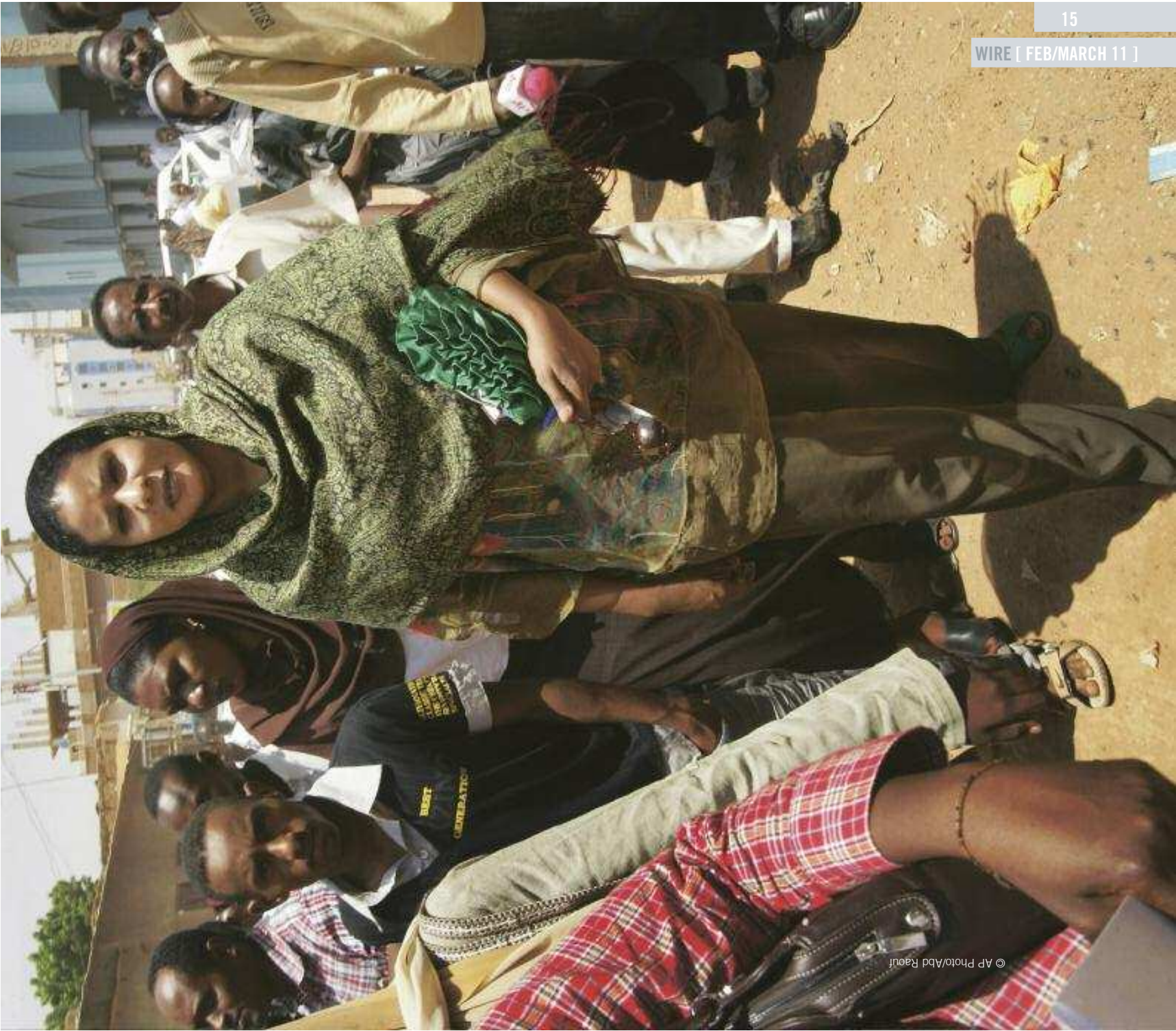
The wrong choice of clothes, for many women, can end in arrest, imprisonment and flogging. The way they dress is controlled and policed by governments and armed groups – sometimes in the name of religion or culture, sometimes as a way of asserting power and terrorizing communities. For these women, the struggle to wear what they want is a struggle for personal liberty and human rights.

In 2009, Sudanese journalist Lubna Hussein was arrested in a restaurant in Khartoum. She and the other women arrested with her were accused of “indecent or immoral dress”. In other words, Lubna was wearing trousers. Most of the women arrested that day, like many other women who are arrested in Khartoum every day on similar charges, pleaded guilty before a special court and were sentenced and flogged within hours.

But Lubna insisted on taking her case before a regular court. In September 2009, she was sentenced to one month in prison or a fine of 500 Sudanese pounds (about US\$200). She refused to pay the fine and was taken to prison. The fine was then paid by the Journalists' Association. Lubna appealed the court decision but, more than one year later, the Constitutional Court has yet to decide on her case.

“The law is discriminatory because it restricts personal freedom of choice”, Lubna told Amnesty International. “[For me,] the feeling of humiliation and violation of dignity was greater than the fear [of punishment]. This [feeling] gave me the strength. Mine was the first voice that went loud and said ‘no, this has to stop.’ Women in Sudan stood by me because they needed a way to break the silence and fears around these laws. Before, women used to be flogged by the police in court and the women would be stigmatized by society and their families. Now families see women as the victims of the system.”

Sudanese journalist Lubna Hussein, wearing the same trousers that sparked her arrest, arrives at court, Khartoum, Sudan, September 2009.





© Payvand.com

The freedom to wear what we want; the freedom to not wear what we do not want: these freedoms matter because they are part of our right to express ourselves, our beliefs, our cultural and personal identities – without discrimination, coercion or violence. Our liberty to choose how we dress is a human rights issue. People in many parts of the world are forced to dress in a certain way, either by law or because of social norms which are imposed through coercion or violence by those who hold (and abuse) power. When, like Lubna Hussein, they defy these restrictions, they pay a high price. They are excluded from their communities, discriminated against, harassed, imprisoned or flogged.

Women in particular suffer under such strictures. In many cases, governments, or those who hold power in the family or the community, require that women dress and behave in a way that matches prevailing ideas about social norms and values. Women are perceived not as individuals, but as an embodiment of these values. In such circumstances, those in power determine and control what women can and cannot wear, what they can and cannot do. By doing this, they are disregarding these women's human rights, including the right to challenge dominant interpretations of culture, tradition or religion or attitudes that discriminate against women.

WOMEN AFFECTED WORLDWIDE

In November 2007, Chechnya's President Ramzan Kadyrov called for women to dress modestly, in line with tradition, and to wear a headscarf. Girls and women at all levels of education, including university, face expulsion if they do not comply. In Grozny, women are not allowed into official buildings unless they wear a headscarf. In September 2010, human rights defenders spotted uniformed men stopping women on the street. Any woman whose dress was deemed immodest was lectured on traditional Chechen values. Some faced violence. These reported attacks are currently under investigation by the Prosecutor's Office in Chechnya.

In Saudi Arabia, women are expected to cover the entire body. They cannot wear anything that is thought to be see-through or tight-fitting. The



© AP photo

religious police (the Committee for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice) verbally reprimand women or their guardians for not covering their faces or showing legs, arms, ankles and hair. The religious police sometimes whip women on the street or arrest them. The woman's guardian (*mahram*) is also brought in and told to ensure that she follows this unwritten dress code. The religious police also reprimand young men for having long hair and have at times cut their hair on the spot.

Since July 1982, Iranian women and men have had to adhere to a mandatory dress code when in public, which is enforced in law. Women must wear clothes that are loose-fitting and cover their heads, necks, arms and legs. Many women continue to wear the traditional *chador* (a black sheet held under the chin, draping over the head and body). Others wear a long-sleeved, loose-fitting coat (*rupush*) and either a headscarf known as a *rusari* that covers the hair, ears and neck and is large enough to tie under the chin or a fitted head cover reaching to the chest called a *maghna'eh*. Particularly during the summer months, women who do not comply with a strict interpretation of these rules risk harassment from police, members of the volunteer paramilitary Basij militia, and other security forces. Crackdowns have become more and more frequent since President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad came to power in 2005.

Women who violate the dress code can be sentenced to anything from 10 days to two months in prison, or face warnings or fines. Clothing shops

in Iran must ensure that the way they dress mannequins does not "offend public decency." Shopkeepers who fail to do that can receive guidance notes, warnings, threats and even risk fines, flogging and loss of their business licence.

Nasrin Sotoudeh, a prominent Iranian human rights lawyer, is due to be tried on 16 February 2011 for not adhering to the dress code after appearing without a headscarf in a video she made to accept a human rights award in Italy in 2008. The Iranian authorities banned her from travelling to accept the award in person. The video was made in private and was not aired by Nasrin in Iran. Nasrin has been detained since September 2010 and sentenced to 11 years in prison in January 2011 for her peaceful activities as a defence lawyer.

Some European countries have also introduced legislation that restricts what women can wear in public. Last year, Belgium, France and a number of municipalities in Spain have moved to ban the wearing of full-face veils in public. Advocates for the ban claim that this will help protect women from pressure at home or within their communities to wear full-face veils. Others support the bans as public safety measures. Amnesty International found that comprehensive bans on full-face veils in these countries do not conform to states' human rights obligations, and that other measures should be taken to ensure women's human rights (see WIRE Vol 40/Issue 004, available on <http://sn.im/1zm9f6>).

Far left: Imprisoned Iranian human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh faces a further trial after appearing without a headscarf in a video to accept an award for her work.

Left: Covering up on the football pitch. The Iranian and German women's football teams during a match at the Ararat stadium in Tehran, Iran, April 2006.

Below: A Sudanese activist marches in support of Lubna Hussein. Her banner read as "Lubna's case is every women case". Khartoum, Sudan, August 2009.



© AP/PA Photo/Abd Raouf

CAUGHT IN THE FIGHT FOR POWER

In many armed conflicts, women are treated as pawns in struggles over political power or territory. Armed groups assert their power over communities by forcing women to dress and behave "as proper women", often under the guise of cultural values or religious beliefs.



© Abdulkadir Abdulkadir/Demotix

In war-torn Somalia, armed Islamist groups such as al-Shabab instil fear in the civilian population with cruelty and violence, and punish people that they accuse of spying or not conforming to the group's interpretation of Islamic law. They stone their victims, flog them, shoot them or amputate limbs. "I was beaten up by al-Shabab because of how I dressed", said a 14-year-old girl who fled the city of Baidoa in March 2010. "They wanted me to wear heavy clothing and so they beat me with a cane. Two men beat me as I was coming from the market. They beat me four times and then I was able to run away. We had to leave because of so many problems and hardship as a result of the war in Somalia."

In Mogadishu, on 13 and 14 October 2009, al-Shabab arrested and flogged more than 200 women in the Suqa Holaha, Daynile and Bakara market areas of Mogadishu, for failing to wear veils. On 16 October 2009, al-Shabab forces in northern Mogadishu flogged women for wearing bras, which the group claimed violated Islamic law. In other cases, armed groups have been forcing men to wear trousers that end just above the ankle, deeming this way of dressing more Islamic.

Al-Shabaab fighters display weapons as they conduct military exercises in northern Mogadishu, Somalia, October 2010. Al-Shabab and other armed Islamist groups have been forcing men to wear trousers that end just above the ankle.

Lubna Hussein and Nasrin Sotoudeh are not alone in their defiance and their bravery. Women and men all over the world are fighting for their right to express themselves freely, to challenge gender stereotypes and dominant interpretations of culture or religion, to wear what they want according to their own cultural and religious beliefs and to regain control over their bodies and identities.

International Women's Day is on 8 March.

SANDYA EKNALIGODA



Sandya Eknaligoda is a leader of women's struggle against enforced disappearances in Sri Lanka. Her husband, journalist and cartoonist Prageeth Eknaligoda, disappeared on 24 January 2010. The solidarity of other women has given her the strength to keep going. "I will never give up", she says, "I am determined to find Prageeth. I still believe that he is alive."

What sparked your interest in human rights?

We are the generation that grew up and lived through two southern insurgencies, in 1971 and in the late 1980s, as well as a 30-year civil war in the north and the south. We have seen with our own eyes the killings, deaths, disappearances, missing people, abductions. Finally, it happened to me too: my husband, Prageeth Eknaligoda, has also disappeared.

Prageeth was deeply concerned about what was going on in the country and we always used to discuss these things at home. He was very active about human rights violations in the north and south; he believed in democratic politics and the right to dissent. My own interest in human rights started with these conversations at home. We have been part of the activist [movement] since the 1980s, trying to do something about what is going on here.

What do you think are the main challenges in the struggle against human rights abuses in Sri Lanka?

I think they are the unquestionable executive power, the total impunity and the militarization of politics from the temple to the home. You can see this in our Parliament: some of the members run their own private military groups.

Even now, after the 30-year civil war is over, there are hundreds of abductions, disappearances – my husband is one of them – and killings. The government has defeated the LTTE [the opposition armed group Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] but this killing machine continues. Why are people still being abducted?

If you could change one thing about the situation in Sri Lanka, what would it be?

What comes to my mind is not just one thing; there are several things that are interconnected. One is that my husband and I and many other people believe that executive power should be with the Parliament, not with one person. We believe that law and order should not be interfered with by politics. For nearly 30 years

this country has been run [on the basis of] Emergency Regulations and the Prevention of Terrorism Act. It should go back to civil law, with respect for dissent and freedom of expression.

What impact does your human rights work have on your life and your family?

You can see – Prageeth and my two sons and everyone has paid the price; many thousands have been killed and disappeared in this country. I don't have words to express my feelings. My two sons are still traumatized but I keep encouraging them to keep going. Even with these difficulties, our eldest son managed to sit his O-Level exams last December.

Despite all this, I feel energized and able to keep going to find the truth of what has happened to Prageeth. And yes, I will also continue the struggle – nationally and internationally – with the many other women and families seeking those they love who have disappeared. I'm trying to make Prageeth's life and work open up a platform for these people.

All © Sandya Eknaligoda



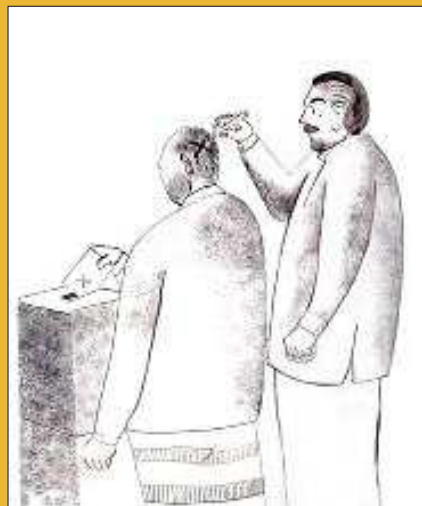
Other page: Sandya Eknaligoda, wife of disappeared journalist Prageeth Eknaligoda, with their two sons Sathyajith Sanjaya and Harith Danajaya, Sri Lanka, January 2011.

This page: A selection of political cartoons by journalist Prageeth Eknaligoda. He was known to be a government critic, and was also involved in the election campaign of the opposition candidate.



What does Amnesty International mean to you?

I've been hearing about Amnesty International's involvement in Sri Lanka since the 1971 insurgency; and since then in the late 1980s and during the civil war. When Prageeth disappeared, Amnesty International contacted me. Since then, they've given me advice and moral support and they have taken the campaign for Prageeth to the international level. Also, they've kept in frequent contact with me and the kids so I feel that we are not alone. It gives my heart energy and I have a sense of being protected.



What keeps you motivated when times are hard?

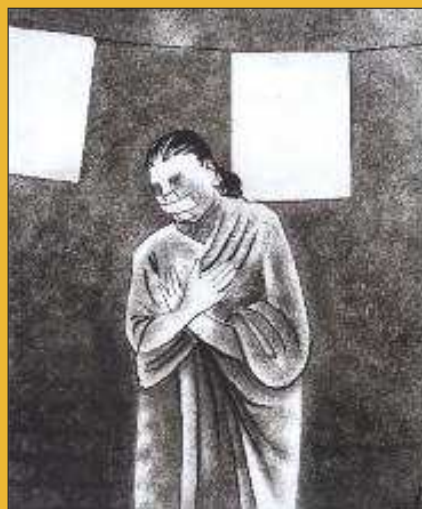
I don't know where the energy comes from but I have a gut feeling that I must keep going. When I meet with some of the thousands of families of the disappeared, I feel that I have a duty and a responsibility – not only to find my children's father but to help in the search for other disappeared people. My effort is geared to try to stop these disappearances and killings from happening.

Do you have a message for our readers?

If a person is an Amnesty International member or reading Amnesty International material, I know that they have an interest in what's going on in the world. You are people who can act. I'm grateful to you.

What is the single most important lesson that your activism has taught you?

As human [beings] we always have our individual struggle to cope with. But we should also have the capacity to develop our concern and to act on behalf of our humanity. In spite of all the economic and political events around the world, you can still see the power of collective action.



DID YOU KNOW?

"BEST CHRISTMAS PRESENT EVER"

"I wanted a laptop for Christmas, and I got my father", said Femi Peters Junior, son of former Gambian opposition leader, Femi Peters, who was freed from prison on 10 December 2010. He was serving a one-year prison sentence for charges relating to a peaceful demonstration organized by his party, the United Democratic Party, in October 2009. His release comes nearly four months ahead of his expected release in March 2011.

Femi Peters was one of 10 people who featured in Amnesty International's annual letter writing marathon, Write for Rights. The marathon began on 4 December, and Amnesty International members in over 50 countries wrote letters and signed petitions calling for Femi Peters to be released. Six days later, he was free.

"I feel like a kid again. I am very happy", his son said. "I don't know how to put it into words. I want to thank Amnesty International for writing letters and putting pressure on the government. It is the greatest Christmas present ever..."

Right: Amnesty International sections and activists around the world join forces on International Human Rights Day, on 10 December, by taking part in Amnesty International's letter-writing marathon.

Below: Femi Peters.



© Private



© Katja Tahja



All other © Amnesty International



© Laurent HINI

© AI Togo





© Susanne Keller



WHETHER IN A HIGH-PROFILE CONFLICT OR A FORGOTTEN CORNER OF THE GLOBE, **AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL** CAMPAIGNS FOR JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND DIGNITY FOR ALL AND SEEKS TO GALVANIZE PUBLIC SUPPORT TO BUILD A BETTER WORLD

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Activists around the world have shown that it is possible to resist the dangerous forces that are undermining human rights. Be part of this movement. Combat those who peddle fear and hate.

■ Join Amnesty International and become part of a worldwide movement campaigning for an end to human rights violations. Help us make a difference.

■ Make a donation to support Amnesty International's work.

Together we can make our voices heard.

I am interested in receiving further information on becoming a member of Amnesty

☐ International

name

address

country

email

I wish to make a donation to Amnesty International (donations will be taken in

UK£, US\$ or €)

amount

please debit my

Visa

Mastercard

number

☐

☐

expiry date

signature

Please return this form to the Amnesty International office in your country.

For Amnesty International offices worldwide:

www.amnesty.org/en/worldwide-sites

If there is not an Amnesty International office in your country, please return this form to:

Amnesty International, International Secretariat, Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, United Kingdom

amnesty.org



'I WILL CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE'

SANDYA EKNALIGODA
PAGE 18

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



NIGERIA

EMMANUEL EGBO

CHILD SHOT BY POLICE WHILE PLAYING



Fifteen-year-old Emmanuel Egbo was playing in the street when he was shot dead by police in Enugu, Nigeria. Police claim that Emmanuel, who was killed on 25 September 2008, was an armed robber. However, eyewitnesses reported that he was unarmed and playing with other children. Emmanuel's family have been unable to bury him because his body disappeared from the hospital mortuary.

No investigation into the killing was conducted initially. Emmanuel's relatives visited the police station in Enugu numerous times to demand that his death be investigated. The family had several meetings with police authorities in Enugu between October 2008 and May 2009. After several visits, the family discovered that the police officer responsible for the investigation had moved to a new post. "The

police officer told us that the boy was an armed robber and the case had been closed. It was a nightmare to us to learn of this development", a relative said.

In September 2009, Emmanuel's family was informed that the police officer suspected of killing Emmanuel had been arrested. However, Emmanuel's body is still missing and no one has yet been prosecuted over his death.

Please write to the Inspector General of Police, calling for an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the shooting of Emmanuel Egbo on 25 September 2008. Urge him to reopen the case, interview all eyewitnesses and to bring those responsible to justice. Call for Emmanuel Egbo's body to be released to his family, or for his family to be told where he is buried. Send appeals to:

Hafiz Ringim
Inspector General of Police
Nigeria Police Force Headquarters
Louis Edet House
Shehu Shagari Way
Area 11 Garki, Abuja
Nigeria

MEXICO

INÉS FERNÁNDEZ ORTEGA AND VALENTINA ROSENDO CANTÚ

RAPE SURVIVORS SEEK JUSTICE



Inés Fernández Ortega and Valentina Rosendo Cantú were raped by Mexican soldiers in 2002. Although they reported the attacks to the authorities and followed up their cases, no substantive investigation has taken place and no one has been brought to justice.

Inés Fernández was raped on 22 March 2002, when three soldiers entered her house while she was cooking with her children. She was pushed to the floor and raped by one soldier while the others watched. Valentina Rosendo, then aged 17, was washing clothes by a river when soldiers approached her. She was threatened, and raped by two of them.

Inés Fernández and Valentina Rosendo are Indigenous Me'phaa (Tlapaneca) women. Indigenous women in Mexico who are raped rarely file a complaint due to cultural, economic and social barriers. Inés Fernández and Valentina

Rosendo have shown courage in reporting their ordeals and have followed up their cases in national and international courts.

Military investigators have tried to disprove the allegations, placing the burden of proof on the victims. Meanwhile, the women's cases have been inadequately dealt with by civilian institutions. The women and their families have since suffered intimidation. On 28 August 2010, Inés Fernández' daughter was accosted by two men who threatened the family with death if they remained in the area.

In August 2010, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued two judgements against Mexico and ordered a full investigation by civilian authorities, reparations and reforms to the military justice system.

Please write, calling on the authorities to implement in full the binding judgement of the Inter-American Court. This includes carrying out a prompt, full and impartial investigation, under ordinary jurisdiction, into the rape and torture of Inés Fernández Ortega and Valentina Rosendo Cantú in 2002, and guaranteeing adequate reparations and effective protection.

Send appeals to:

Lic. Felipe de Jesús Calderón Hinojosa
President of the Republic
Residencia Oficial de "Los Pinos"
Col. San Miguel Chapultepec
Mexico D.F., C.P. 11850, Mexico
Fax: +52 5550 935321

Email: felipe.calderon@presidencia.gob.mx
Salutation: Dear President

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

NATALIA ESTEMIROVA

NO JUSTICE FOR MURDERED ACTIVIST



On the morning of 15 July 2009, human rights activist Natalia Estemirova was abducted outside her home in Grozny, Chechnya. Hours later her body was found in woodland in the neighbouring Republic of Ingushetia. She had been shot at close range in the head and chest.

Natalia Estemirova worked for the Russian human rights organization Memorial. Since 2000, she had gathered evidence, including eyewitness accounts, of human rights violations committed throughout the last decade. She also worked alongside journalist Anna Politkovskaya, whom she helped to make contact with victims of human rights violations.

The investigation into Natalia Estemirova's death rejected the possible involvement of government officials in her killing. This is despite

the fact that, not long before her murder, Natalia Estemirova worked on cases including an alleged extrajudicial execution and an enforced disappearance. She alleged that officials from police stations in Kurchaloi and Shali in Chechnya may have been involved in these violations.

In letters to Amnesty International, the Russian authorities have named the suspected murderer of Natalia Estemirova and have claimed that there is an international warrant for his arrest. However, Amnesty International is concerned that the investigation to date has been inadequate and in particular has failed to look into credible allegations that law enforcement officials were involved in Natalia Estemirova's killing.

Despite statements, including by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, that this crime

would be solved and the perpetrators brought to justice, there is no indication that the investigation is being conducted thoroughly and independently.

Please write, calling on the Russian authorities to conduct an independent, impartial and thorough investigation into Natalia Estemirova's killing, including the possible involvement of government officials and members of security forces. Urge that those responsible are brought to justice. Send appeals to:

Dmitry Anatolievich Medvedev
President of the Russian Federation
ul. Ilyinka, 23
103132 Moscow
Russian Federation
Fax +7 495 9102134

ISRAEL/OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

HADIDIYA AND HUMSA HAMLETS

FAMILIES FACE FORCED EVICTION

The residents of Hadidiya and Humsa hamlets in the Jordan Valley region of the West Bank face the constant threat of forced eviction and destruction of their homes and livelihoods by the Israeli army. Their access to water is severely restricted because local water supplies are reserved for the exclusive use of nearby Israeli settlements, which are illegal under international law.

Since 2007, homes and other structures in Hadidiya and Humsa have been destroyed several times. In August 2007, 40 family homes were demolished. In June 2009, homes and other structures belonging to 18 families were destroyed and their water storage tank, a tractor and a trailer used for fetching water were confiscated. The Israeli authorities also demolished structures in nearby Palestinian villages several times during 2010.

Living conditions in Hadidiya and Humsa are extremely difficult. Forbidden from building permanent structures, villagers live in tents and shacks, which are also deemed "illegal" by the Israeli army and subject to demolition. The Jordan Valley's Palestinian communities, who formerly subsisted mainly from herding and farming, are under threat owing to insufficient water or land to graze their flocks.

The Israeli authorities say the residents of Hadidiya and Humsa have no right to live in the area because it is a "closed military zone". Their plight is just one example of the government's apparent strategy to remove Palestinians from this area of the West Bank. Residents have welcomed international solidarity and pressure, but international attention has diminished in recent years. Further and sustained action is crucial.

Please write to the authorities, urging them to place a moratorium on demolitions and forced evictions in Hadidiya and Humsa, and to ensure that confiscated property is returned. Call for discriminatory obstructions to access to water, electricity and other basic goods to be removed. Send appeals to:

Ehud Barak
Minister of Defence
Ministry of Defence
37 Kaplan Street, Hakirya
Tel Aviv 61909
Israel

Fax: +972 3 691 6940/696 2757
Email: minister@mod.gov.il
Salutation: Dear Minister

© Amnesty International



ALGERIA

MALIK MEDJNOUN

DETAINED WITHOUT TRIAL SINCE 1999

Malik Medjnoun has been in detention awaiting trial since 1999. He was arrested on 28 September 1999 following the murder of Matoub Lounes, a singer and critic of the government in Algeria. Although legal proceedings against him formally began in May 2001, his trial has been adjourned repeatedly ever since.

For more than seven months after his arrest, Malik Medjnoun was held in incommunicado detention at an army barracks in Algiers where he said he was beaten with a pickaxe handle, given electric shocks and forced to swallow dirty water and other liquids. After this, he said that prison guards beat him daily for several months and did not give him enough food. He grew so weak that he could not stand up, and was moved to the military hospital in Blida, south of Algiers.

Malik Medjnoun was brought before the Public Prosecutor on 4 and 6 March 2000, and an investigative judge in Tizi Ouzou on 2 May 2000. On each occasion he had no legal representation. He was told on 2 May 2000 that he had been charged with "belonging to an armed terrorist group" and with the murder of Matoub Lounes, following a statement by another man who later retracted his "confession", claiming that it was made under torture. Malik Medjnoun is currently held at Tizi Ouzou Civil Prison.

Matoub Lounes was shot dead by unidentified gunmen on 25 June 1998. The circumstances of his killing are disputed and his death has never been properly investigated.

Please write, calling for Malik Medjnoun to be released, as the authorities have failed to try him for over 10 years. Urge that the alleged torture of Malik Medjnoun in detention is subject to a full, impartial investigation, and that the murder of Matoub Lounes is also investigated fully. Send appeals to:

His Excellency Abdelaziz Bouteflika
President of Algeria
Présidence de la République
El Mouradia
16000 Algiers
Algeria

Email: President@el-mouradia.dz
Salutation: Your Excellency

© Private



PHILIPPINES

JAMES BALAO

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS ACTIVIST DISAPPEARED

Indigenous rights activist James Balao was abducted on 17 September 2008 in Baguio City, Philippines. He was seen near his home being roughly pushed into a white van by armed men in uniform, who said they were arresting him for drug dealing.

James Balao co-founded the Indigenous Peoples' organization Cordillera Peoples Alliance in 1984. He has since worked as a researcher on Indigenous Peoples' rights, particularly land rights, and helped draft related provisions for the Philippines 1986 Constitution.

Before his abduction, James sent his family an email detailing the surveillance that he said he had been under since June 2008. He described being followed by a blue-and-white van. In recent years, people under similar surveillance have later

been extrajudicially executed. There are currently over 200 unresolved cases of enforced disappearance in the Philippines from the last decade alone. Enforced disappearance reached its highest level under martial law rule in the 1970s when 1,600 cases were reported. Most of these cases remain unresolved.

The Philippine Congress has taken no action on enforced disappearances apart from a short general enquiry on cases reported in 2008. In 2010, the government established a taskforce to investigate allegations of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances, but there has been no update on James Balao's case.

Please write, expressing concern that James Balao has been subjected to enforced

disappearance. Call on the President of the Philippines to prioritize the resolution of enforced disappearance cases, including that of James Balao, by ordering timely, thorough and impartial investigations. Urge that James Balao be released immediately and unconditionally unless he is promptly charged with a recognizably criminal offence. He must not be tortured or otherwise ill-treated while in detention. Send appeals via the President's official contact form at <http://www.president.gov.ph/government/default.aspx>

Please say which country you reside in cable and which Amnesty International section you are a member of.

© CPA





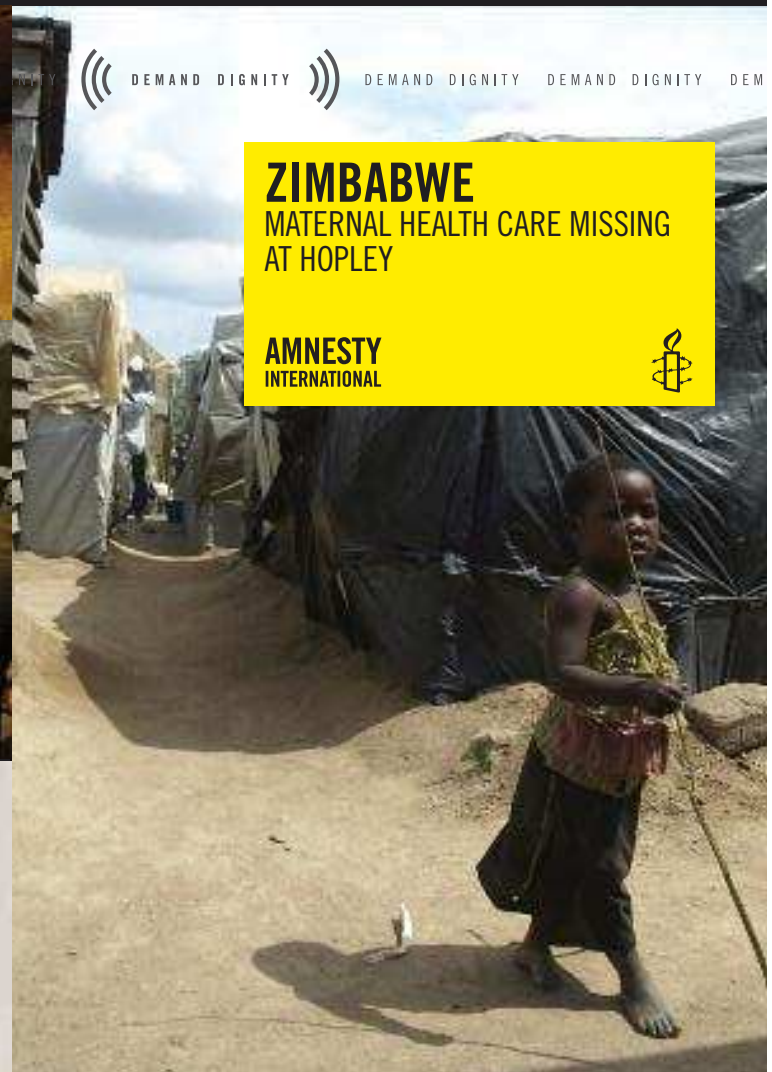
**PRIME MINISTER, STOP IGNORING
ROMA'S HUMAN RIGHTS**

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**

RELEASE SA'ID METINPOUR NOW



DEMAND DIGNITY

DEMAND DIGNITY

DEMAND DIGNITY

DEM

ZIMBABWE

**MATERNAL HEALTH CARE MISSING
AT HOPLEY**

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



PASS IT ON, AND ON, AND ON...

Whether in a high-profile conflict or a forgotten corner of the globe, Amnesty International campaigns for justice, freedom and dignity for all and seeks to galvanize public support to build a better world.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Be part of this movement. Combat those who peddle fear and hate.
- Join Amnesty International and become part of a worldwide movement campaigning for an end to human rights abuses.

HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Dear Hon. Khupe,

I appeal to you to ensure that pregnant women at Hopley settlement, Harare, have access to maternal and newborn health care services. The lives of these women and their newborn babies have been placed at grave risk by the government's failure to provide effective remedies for those who lost their homes in the 2005 mass forced evictions and to ensure maternal and newborn health care. The government should:

- investigate newborn deaths at Hopley and other Operation Garikai settlements;
- ensure immediate access to maternal and newborn care;
- eliminate costs as a barrier to essential health services, including emergency obstetric care.

Yours sincerely,

Name: _____

Country: _____

Index: AFR 46/001/2011 English

Image: Hopley, Zimbabwe, 2010. A settlement created under Operation Garikai for people who lost their homes in Operation Murambatsvina in 2005. © Amnesty International
Amnesty International, International Secretariat, Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, UK. www.amnesty.org

Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Thokozani Khupe
Chairperson of the Social Cluster
Council of Ministers
Munhumutapa Building
Private Bag 7700, Causeway
Harare
Zimbabwe

PASS IT ON, AND ON, AND ON....

For a full list of the offices worldwide, please go to www.amnesty.org/en/worldwide-sites

If there is no office in your country, you can become an International Member and join our International Members' online community.

Visit www.amnesty.org/en/join for info in Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

You can also write to:

Online Communities Team, Amnesty International, International Secretariat, Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, United Kingdom

www.amnesty.org

**TOGETHER
WE CAN MAKE
OUR VOICES
HEARD**

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



Your Excellency,

Nearly 100 per cent of the Slovenian population have access to sufficient, safe drinking water but many Roma communities struggle to collect even small amounts of water for drinking, washing and cooking. Many Roma live in overcrowded, isolated informal settlements where they are denied access to public services such as water, sanitation and electricity because they lack security of tenure. They have no option but to live in such grossly inadequate conditions, because they face widespread discrimination when trying to access alternative housing options.

I urge you to:

- Ensure immediate provision of a sufficient amount of safe water for personal and domestic use, and a basic level of sanitation in all informal settlements.
- Ensure security of tenure to all residents of informal settlements, including through the regularization of settlements wherever possible, and offer alternative housing options, in consultation with the affected Roma communities, which do not lead to further segregation.
- Address the discrimination that the Roma face in access to housing and provide effective remedies for all victims of human rights violations.

Name: _____

Country: _____

Index: EUR 68/006/2011

Image: A family of 11 living in a very poorly built shack in informal settlement Dobruška vas, Slovenia. © Arne Hodalič
Amnesty International, International Secretariat, Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, UK. www.amnesty.org

Borut Pahor
Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia
Office of the Prime Minister
Gregorčičeva 20, 25
1000 Ljubljana
Slovenia

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



Your Excellency,

Sa'id Metinpour, a member of the Iranian Azerbaijani minority, is serving an eight-year prison sentence for peacefully campaigning for greater cultural and language rights for his community. He is a prisoner of conscience and should be released immediately and unconditionally.

Sa'id Metinpour was arrested on 25 May 2007 in Zanjan, around the anniversary of mass demonstrations by Iranian Azerbaijanis against a cartoon in a state-run newspaper, which they considered offensive. Hundreds were arrested and almost 20 killed during the 2006 demonstration. Sa'id Metinpour was reportedly tortured during interrogation. He was also detained for 10 days in February 2007 for peacefully demonstrating on International Mother Tongue Day.

I also urge you to ensure that the Iranian public education system makes adequate provision for children of minority communities to learn their own language in school, and that minority communities are permitted to establish private schools to educate their children in their own language.

Yours sincerely,

Name: _____

Address: _____

Index: MDE 13/011/2011

Image: Sa'id Metinpour
© Amnesty International

Leader of the Islamic Republic
Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street – end of Shahid Keshvar
Doust Street
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran