

Amnesty International

Amnesty International is a worldwide campaigning movement that works to promote all the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international standards. In particular, Amnesty International campaigns to free all prisoners of conscience; ensure fair and prompt trials for political prisoners; abolish the death penalty, torture and other cruel treatment of prisoners; end political killings and "disappearances"; and oppose human rights abuses by opposition groups.

Amnesty International has around a million members and supporters in 162 countries and territories. Activities range from public demonstrations to letter-writing, from human rights education to fundraising concerts, from individual appeals on a particular case to global campaigns on a particular issue.

There are around 8,000 Amnesty International groups, including local groups, youth or student groups, and professional groups in 80 countries. Many of these work on long-term assignments concerning more than 7,000 prisoners of conscience and other victims of human rights violations. Around 80,000 people are linked to Amnesty International's Urgent Action network, which mobilizes appeals on behalf of individuals whose lives or well being are feared to be in immediate danger.

Amnesty International is impartial and independent of any government, political persuasion or religious creed. Amnesty International is financed largely by subscriptions and donations from its worldwide membership.

First published 1997
by Amnesty International Publications
1 Easton Street, London WC1X 8DJ, United Kingdom

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ISBN: 0 86210 271 5
AI Index: ACT 10/02/97
Original language: English

Printed by: Blackmore Ltd, Dorset, United Kingdom

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PREFACE

About this manual

For more than 35 years Amnesty International (AI) members have been campaigning to protect and promote human rights. This manual aims to pass on the experience of these campaigners in an accessible format. We hope it will become a well-thumbed reference book for all those campaigning for human rights.

Although the manual stresses that all parts of AI's work, such as fundraising, campaigning and organization, should be integrated, the book has been divided up into self-contained sections. This will, we hope, make it easier to use and enable activists to photocopy or refer to particular sections as the need arises.

This manual has been written primarily for AI campaigners. However, it should prove useful for all those involved in the movement and perhaps for some people in other campaigning organizations. It is an external document which can be given to people outside AI.

The book has been designed to be relevant for those in small as well as large AI Sections, and for newcomers to campaigning as well as veterans. Crucially, it is not a blueprint for action. Rather, it is a guide. Some techniques may apply to particular campaigns or Sections, some may not.

However, many of the guiding principles – such as the need to prepare a strategy in advance and evaluate any action -- are universally applicable.

The Amnesty International Campaigning Manual is the product of a special project at the International Secretariat (IS) carried out by Patrick Earle. Special thanks go to him for preparing, organizing and writing the manual. Thanks also go to the authors of the US Section's Campaigning Manual for Groups, to the Dutch and UK Sections for providing materials, and to the Australian, Polish, South Korean and many other AI structures that offered advice or examples of their work. The Campaign and Crisis Response Program at the IS had overall responsibility for the project.

For more information

AI's campaigning is constantly developing and evolving. Its diversity and flexibility help make it effective. Therefore this manual can never be definitive. To find out about any current policy or to obtain advice about campaigning methods or particular actions, consult the appropriate body of AI.

If there is an AI Section or coordinating structure in your country, contact the Section office or the appropriate coordinator. If they cannot answer your question, they will forward it to the IS in London.

If there is no one to contact in your country, contact the IS directly at:

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GLOSSARY

g	A question (to answer to help devise strategy or to pose to others)
N	A point being highlighted
M	A sub-point being highlighted
f	A warning, or a particularly important point
j	Item on a checklist of things you can do
c	A tip

AGM	Annual General Meeting
AI	Amnesty International
AICS (ES)	Amnesty International Canadian Section (English-speaking)
AINZ	Amnesty International New Zealand
AIUK	Amnesty International United Kingdom
AIUSA	Amnesty International of the USA
ANAT	Audio News Access Tape
ANR	Audio News Release
APC	Association for Progressive Communications
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation
ARABAI	Amnesty International Arabic Publishing
co-group	An AI Section's coordination group
CCR	Campaigns and Crisis Response program
CRC	Committee on the Rights of the Child
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EDAI	Editorial Amnistía Internacional
EFAI	Editions francophones d'Amnesty International
EJE	Extrajudicial execution
EU	European Union
FGM	Female genital mutilation
FWG	Fundraising Working Group
HRA	Human rights awareness
HRE	Human rights education
IBA	International Bar Association
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICJ	International Commission of Jurists
ICM	International Council Meeting
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IEC	International Executive Committee
IFRG	International Fund-Raising Group
IGO	Intergovernmental organization
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMET	International Military Education and Training
IS	International Secretariat
IWGC	International Working Group for Children
LIOP	Legal and International Organizations Program
MEC	Military, economic and cultural (relations)

MSP	Military, security and police (transfers)
NAT	News Access Tape
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGE	Non-governmental entity
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OAS	Organization of American States
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Q&A	Questions and answers
RAN	Regional Action Network
RMP	Research and Mandate Program
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
SYSTEC	Systematic Evaluation of Techniques
UA	Urgent Action
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
USA	United States of America
VNR	Video News Release

INTRODUCTION

"What you do may seem terribly insignificant, but it is terribly important that you do it anyway."
Mahatma Gandhi

Amnesty International (AI) began as a campaign in 1961. The newspaper article in the British *Observer* newspaper that started what has become a worldwide movement was never intended as simply a piece of journalism or research. It was meant to move people to action -- to achieve change. Since then, achieving change through campaigning action has been AI's mission. To build on AI's success, the movement must adapt to the changing environment in which it operates. The apparent certainties of the Cold War world have gone. The framework of international relations continues to change. The processes of protest and social development within societies have also been changing.

Underground protest movements have emerged to engage openly with new forms of government. Journalists used to testing the boundaries of official tolerance are experimenting with exploiting the power of public opinion to push for change. Mass protests and industrial action have been supplemented by lobbying, legal action and marketing. Public actions have ceased to be a useful technique in some societies, but are becoming central in others. New technology is opening up new possibilities to those who can access it and realize its potential. Clearly, AI must understand and develop the new ways we can mobilize our communities, other organizations and governments.

An integrated approach

Over the years, as AI has grown, it has been possible to lose sight of its mission to campaign to stop and prevent specific violations of human rights, and promote observance of all human rights. Board members can become absorbed by the details and difficulties of ensuring smooth administration.

Researchers may see results simply in terms of the quality of information gathered.

Fundraisers can see the figures next to the dollar sign as the sole mark of success.

Media officers can measure results in column inches, and lobbyists can judge their effectiveness in the wording of government statements.

All these activities are important, but they are parts of the greater whole of AI's campaigning mission. Campaigners have an important role to play in keeping in focus this simple goal, of making a difference to human rights.

Research allows AI to be clear about what needs to be changed and the best ways of achieving that change. Reliable research is one of the pillars of the credibility underpinning AI's effectiveness.

Fundraising provides us with the resources to campaign. It offers many people the chance to make a positive and concrete contribution to our work. It allows campaigners to reach a broader audience. Independent funding also underlines AI's independence, another source of its credibility.

Administration enables us to organize and develop our campaigning resources most efficiently.

Building organizational structures can help to increase our campaigning capacity and effectiveness.

Lobbying can persuade governments to agree to human rights standards and to abide by them.

Media work is one way of shaming the guilty and alerting and mobilizing the concerned.

A long-term campaign

AI's mission is long term. We have already been campaigning for more than 35 years. It is likely that we will still be campaigning in 35 years' time. Campaigning is more than a series of campaigns or actions. It is also a process of building a movement capable of responding to the challenges ahead.

As campaigners we need to look at how we can contribute to building and sustaining the fundraising, campaigning and organizational structures in the long term -- while not losing the sense of urgency about stopping the violations in the here and now. That is why all these areas are covered to some extent in this campaigning manual. AI's campaigning mission to achieve real change in people's lives is what gives all these activities their sense and purpose. One of the challenges for campaigners is to remind others in AI of these objectives, and to help build a campaigning culture in every part of the movement.

Responding to change

AI needs a campaigning culture to help it respond effectively to changing circumstances. A changing world demands that we be creative.

AI was born in a world dominated and divided by superpower rivalry, and by many national struggles for independence. Memories of world war and genocide were fresh. A newly established United Nations (UN) carried the hopes of many for a new world based on justice, peace and respect for human rights.

All of the human rights violations that AI has been combating for decades continue to blight people's lives around the planet. In some societies the prison gates have been opened and the prisoners of conscience freed. At least 11 former prisoners of conscience have gone on to become heads of state or government. In other societies, however, new forms of repression have emerged, including extrajudicial executions and "disappearances".

AI must respond to this changing world by developing new ways of inspiring people to act in defence of human rights and thinking of new ways to approach governments, our communities and other organizations.

International solidarity

The principle of international solidarity at the heart of AI makes it different from locally-focused campaigning organizations. The focus on effecting human rights change in other countries means our starting point must be developing an understanding of how international action -- from AI's membership and our society -- is best able to contribute to ending specific human rights violations in those countries.

Today there are more links between more countries than ever before. Some of these result directly from the enormous growth and changes in world trade, others from the breaking down of Cold War barriers. Some are attributable to the rapid development of communications technology and the establishment of global media empires, others to shifting military alliances and relationships. Seeking to take advantage of these growing connections and inter-relationships is one of the challenges increasingly at the heart of AI's work.

Responding to human rights crises

A major new challenge has been the breakdown in some countries of the established power structures to which AI has traditionally appealed. This breakdown has often been accompanied by a sharp rise in killings and "disappearances". New technology and global media networks can quickly make these crises dominate public and political consciousness the world over. But this attention can be selective. Other crises, with all their human tragedies, can remain forgotten or be ignored.

AI has developed and is still developing new techniques for responding quickly and effectively to these crises and the selectivity of the international response.

The international human rights framework

Part of this response involves a re-examination of the international frameworks and mechanisms for dealing with mass violations of human rights. Much of AI's campaigning focuses on holding

governments accountable to the standards they have themselves agreed to through the UN and regional intergovernmental bodies. This framework of international law and human rights standards is of fundamental importance to AI's campaigning. AI, along with other organizations and individuals, has also made important contributions to constructing this framework. Human rights reporting mechanisms have opened up valuable new avenues for holding governments to account and for mobilizing action. A major challenge for AI is to protect and build on these gains, to make human rights protection and promotion more central to the programs of the UN, regional bodies and individual governments.

A broader movement

One of the significant changes that AI has contributed to and benefited from over the past 35 years is the growth in the human rights movement. There are more non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working to stop the violations that form AI's mandate than ever before. There are also more organizations working on associated civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Increasingly, campaigning strategies need to look at how AI can best contribute to and engage with domestic human rights movements.

As AI faces the challenges of the 21st century, it does so as one part of a large and dynamic movement that has succeeded in placing and keeping the struggle for human rights at centre stage. It has done so not in an abstract sense but by campaigning directly and often successfully on behalf of countless thousands of individuals subjected to repression around the world.

Tools of campaigning

More than any other campaigning technique, letter-writing has come to be identified with AI. Yet it is not, nor has it ever been, the only campaigning method that AI has organized. AI has built up a tool-box of techniques to combat human rights abuses -- and has happily borrowed "tools" from others when necessary. Learning to use the right tools for the job at hand is part of learning the trade of campaigning -- as is developing new tools for new problems.

Campaigning principles

Several general principles of campaigning have been identified as a result of the work of AI and others over the years. One of these is the need to focus energies and resources for maximum effect. Another is the need to clearly identify what changes we want, and to be clear on how we can help make these changes. This means trying to understand why and how we can be effective in changing circumstances.

Part of this demands reflection on what has worked and why -- and what has not worked and why. Such an assessment is partly a process of formal evaluation and partly a process of ongoing reflection, individually and collectively as campaigners and as an organization. A 1989 study of AI's campaigning provided strong evidence that developing a clear strategy increased the chances of success.

There are without doubt tensions inherent to AI's campaigning. We consciously seek to mobilize anger and outrage at terrible violations of human rights and to transform that anger into effective pressure -- also known as "polite and courteous" appeals! We want to demonstrate the depth of anger and strength of our commitment to protest until the violations cease. Sometimes, this demands angry words, public demonstrations and direct confrontation. Sometimes, it means pursuit of dialogue and quiet words behind closed doors. Often, both approaches are needed. As campaigners in AI our commitment must be to all these things but to none of them exclusively. Everything we do must be governed by what we believe will most benefit the victims and potential victims of human rights abuses, rather than by a blinkered commitment to a particular technique. We will get the best sense of this from reflecting on the successes and failures of our campaigning and the campaigning of others.

We hope that this manual will help human rights campaigners in their work, so that all our efforts to end human rights abuses the world over will have an even greater impact.

Cardinal Beran, one of the first prisoners of conscience adopted by AI, expresses his appreciation for AI's work by lighting the AI candle at a ceremony in Rome in 1967

CHAPTER 1 STRATEGIC CAMPAIGNING

As one of the largest and most ambitious human rights organizations in the world, AI faces difficult decisions every day. Making the right choices at the right time in order to be effective is the skill of strategic campaigning. This chapter looks at some of the key principles that guide our decisions.

“Narrowing down a broad humanitarian mandate into a limited set of issues and priorities is highly challenging. Relief and development non-governmental organizations operate in complex local, national and international arenas, and juggle with many competing priorities. The strategic planning process can help to eliminate unnecessary conflict and to unify stakeholders around a shared vision and a common purpose.”

The Oxfam Handbook, 1995

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What is strategic campaigning?

Strategic campaigning is choosing a specific course of action, on the basis of available information and resources, which will be most effective in achieving identified objectives.

Campaigning is an organized course of action to achieve change. Letter-writing, lobbying, demonstrations, vigils and publicity are just some of the methods of campaigning we frequently use. But it is not possible for any campaigner, or AI as an organization, to do everything well and at once. We are therefore constantly faced with choices – about what we will do, how we will do it and when.

Making the right choices at the right time is the heart and art of strategic campaigning. None of us makes the right choices all the time, but there are some core principles of effective campaigning that can help to guide our decisions.

Strategic planning is the process of agreeing where you are now (A), deciding where you would like to get to (B), and how you can best get there (see diagram below).

Many strategic planning processes, forms and tools have been developed to facilitate and encourage strategic thinking and planning. One of the best known and most commonly used is SWOT. This is a process for looking at the existing and potential Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in an organization or of an issue. It can help to define the existing situation and the problems that need to be addressed so that objectives and strategy can be agreed (see box opposite).

Strategic plans should be helpful tools rather than set formulas to be rigidly followed. Perfectly constructed strategic plans can be prepared and implemented – but they can still be the wrong plans!

Thinking strategically is not a specialized or difficult process. Each of us can imagine a range of everyday situations where we have to make choices about what we will do – from how we travel to work to how we approach competitive sports.

The objective of all AI's campaigning is to protect people's human rights. Simply asking yourself or others a few questions before taking a particular course of action can help ensure your plans are taking you in the right direction.

g **QUESTIONS**

g Can you explain how your campaign will contribute to changing a human rights situation?

g Can you say why you are taking this course of action rather than another?

g If it is successful, can you say what will be different at the end of your campaign from the beginning?

Members and board members should be asking these questions, as might journalists. You need to have the answers.

Explicit strategies and plans are particularly important for AI, as it is a membership organization. Accountability is essential. The membership must also be kept informed as this enables them to choose how their skills, creativity and knowledge can best be used to make the strategy succeed.

Evaluation

There is no guaranteed way of ensuring that every "strategic plan" is indeed strategic, or is the right plan. However, there are ways to help make sure we learn from our experiences and those of others and use these lessons to improve our future work.

Foremost of these is formal monitoring and evaluation, which is dealt with separately in Chapter 13. Evaluation can simply involve reflecting on past campaigns. Alternatively, you can look at the campaigning of others and discuss with them the causes of their successes and failures.

Making choices

Having chosen to campaign, and to coordinate campaigning, campaigners are immediately faced with choices. Which members of the target government should we be appealing to and about what? Should we post 50 letters or complete five petitions for the same effort? Who should we approach in our government? Should we focus our campaign on the death penalty or on torture? AI is perhaps luckier than many organizations in that its overall objectives (its mandate) are clear and specific. Nevertheless, campaign coordinators in every Section are continuously faced with strategic choices about direction and priority.

Choices are always made within certain parameters, as they are in everyday life. Some of these are clear for AI's campaigners:

N AI's mandate and policies, including working on all the mandate issues and balance;

N international campaigning priorities established by the movement and specific requests from the IS and reflected in the international campaigning calendar.

The other parameters are largely set by your particular campaigning environment and resources, which can be determined by answering the following questions:

g QUESTIONS

g Do you have a membership to mobilize?

g How much money can you budget for a campaign?

g How is AI seen in your society?

g Is your government hostile or open to AI?

g Is your government open to taking up human rights concerns with other governments?

g Does your media influence government policy?

g Who in your society may be able to influence the human rights situation in another country?

g Which sections of your society should you prioritize for developing support for AI?

g What materials are most effective for mobilizing AI members or the public?

Campaigners are never in a position to control all the factors that will decide success or failure in any campaign. If they could, success could be guaranteed every time!

There are always other actors and circumstances beyond our control. Some of these, such as a change of government or peace negotiations, may present opportunities. Others, such as business, military or political leaders voicing opposition to human rights, may represent threats that have to be taken into consideration in any strategy.

Campaigning is also about changing parameters. Increasing AI's membership or support in the community, for instance, can open up new campaigning possibilities.

The campaigning principles outlined below can help when making choices, deciding strategies and putting your plans together.

Principles of good campaigning

Campaigning and strategy were originally military terms. However, good campaigning and good strategy are as important to those who seek to prevent war as to those who wage it.

Understanding why some campaigns worked and others did not can help you make choices about how to campaign in the future. The following is a list of some of these key principles.

- N Focus
 - M objectives must be specific
 - M resources and energy must be concentrated
 - M research and analysis are needed to decide focus

 - N Clarity
 - M objectives and strategy need to be communicated clearly
 - M all action needs to be clearly related to the objectives
 - M communications must be clear, internally and externally

 - N Credibility
 - M in communications, the messenger can be as important as the message
 - M AI's motivation and information must be trusted and reliable

 - N Relevance
 - M AI's campaigning has to connect with the people whom it wants to involve
 - M AI's campaigning has to offer a solution relevant to the problem

 - N Timing
 - M the same action will have different effects at different times

 - N Commitment
 - M the campaigning will not stop until the violations end
 - M different strategies and techniques will be tried to discover the most effective
- These principles of good campaigning are interrelated and need to be integrated. Why they are important, and some examples of how they have been applied in practice, are detailed below.

Principles in practice

Focus

Specific objectives:

You should be able to state any objective in a simple sentence. If you cannot, then you may be trying to achieve a number of different objectives. These need to be stated separately in order to:

- N see whether the objectives are conflicting or complementary;
- N allow decisions to be made about priorities;
- N measure whether you have achieved your objective.

Usually there are many problems that need to be solved, so you need to work out which is the most urgent, and whether there is a natural or logical sequence to solving them.

While the objective of AI's campaigning is always to protect people's human rights, we need to be specific about what changes are necessary for this to happen.

Fulfilling AI's mandate is a long-term objective. Over the period of a particular campaign, say six or 12 months, or during a strategy period of two to five years, it might be unrealistic to expect that

AI will stop torture in a particular country. So the objective of ending torture may not be specific enough to know what action will be most effective for AI and others to take.

In such a case AI's researchers and campaigners need to identify (at least internally) the specific steps or changes most likely to contribute to ending torture. The same applies to the other violations in AI's mandate. The changes, for example, could be:

- N legislation to prohibit torture;
- N training of prison and police officials;
- N immediate suspension and prosecution of officials believed responsible for torture;
- N independent and immediate access to detainees;
- N an independent inquiry into allegations of torture.

The steps to be taken could, for example, be:

- N building public awareness;
- N letter-writing to the government or prison officials;
- N lobbying the home government to make representations.

Then check that the relationship between these are clear.

These shorter-term objectives become the focus of campaigning and allow progress to be measured on the road to abolition of torture or the ending of other violations.

Focus energy and resources:

Being focused when deciding campaigning objectives and strategies is important because it:

- N helps to make sure that resources of time and money are directed to where they are most likely to have an impact;
- N keeps people motivated by increasing the chances of success and therefore builds capacity to take on more work in the longer term.

Why allocate resources of time or money to campaigns that have unrealistic objectives when they could be allocated to something that could have an impact? Campaigns appearing to have unrealistic or unachievable objectives find it more difficult to attract support. There is a credibility gap.

Trying to do too much at one time can spread and exhaust the resources which need to be focused for maximum effect.

Research and analysis:

The issues AI confronts may be simple but the context in which they take place is always a complex mix of economic, social, political and cultural factors. The more knowledge AI has on these factors the more likely it will be able to make its impact on them positive and effective.

AI campaigning is about changing behaviour. It is about persuading police to respect the rights of detainees or encouraging members of the public to sign a petition.

To change behaviour it is useful to find out why people or organizations are behaving as they are, or what may motivate them to act. Sometimes it is possible only to make an informed guess, but even this can help to show how our actions can affect behaviour.

Information and analysis are the starting point of all campaigns. They allow us to define the problem we are trying to solve or the opportunities we are trying to take advantage of. The analysis of available information will affect every part of a campaign, from deciding objectives to determining and implementing strategy. While much of this research, particularly on the target country, is primarily the responsibility of the IS, research and analysis by Sections involved in the campaign are just as important, particularly in informing national strategies.

There is a standard type of information and analysis that are important to AI's campaigning, which the following questions might help ascertain.

- g Who is responsible for the human rights violations?
- g Why are the violations happening and which factors could AI influence?
- g Are there particular moments or times when we may have more influence?
- g How could our membership, society and government influence those responsible for the violations?
- g How can we persuade them to exert this influence?

Clarity

Objectives and strategy need to be clear. This is particularly important in a membership organization, where individual initiative is necessary and encouraged.

Clarity enables all involved to bring their skills, knowledge and creativity to bear. Once they know what is to be achieved and how, they can make rational decisions about how they and those they can mobilize can contribute most effectively. It also minimizes the possibility that members will take action that is counter-productive to the strategy.

All action needs to be clearly related to these objectives. This enables all suggestions for actions to be measured against strategy and objective, and allows resources to be used most effectively.

Communications must be clear, internally and externally. People have to know what you are saying and what you are asking for. This may mean messages need to be expressed in different ways to different audiences.

Governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may know what the indivisibility and universality of human rights mean. Upwards of 98 per cent of a broader public – radio and television audiences – will not. If you say people should never have to choose between freedom from fear of hunger and freedom from fear of torture, you express the same concept in a way more people can relate to.

Communications must be clearly related to purpose. A detailed report may be the best way to influence government, but not the best way of persuading members of the public to take action.

Credibility

The messenger can be as important as the message. The words of Carole Richardson (see margin) describe how the campaign to release her gained momentum after leading members of British society expressed doubts about the safety of her conviction.

Campaigning organizations need to be listened to if they are to stand any chance of success. They need to be listened to by those from whom they are asking for help and by those they need to convince to take some action to stop a human rights violation. In many societies, to be listened to takes more than being right or just.

AI's credibility means that its information is generally believed. It is widely referred to – by journalists, academics, policy advisers, other campaigning organizations, diplomats and government departments. Other individuals or organizations could be making the same claims and calling for the same action, but they will often find it harder to be believed or to have an impact. Since organizational credibility is important to the success of AI's campaigning goals, it follows that campaigners should both use this credibility and be careful to protect it. It is much easier for an organization to lose credibility than to gain it!

AI's motivation and information must be trusted and reliable. Its organizational credibility rests on the following:

- N the commitment of its membership to campaign;
- N the issues it campaigns on are enshrined in internationally agreed standards;

- N its information is trusted,
- its recommendations are reasonable and clearly related to the problems identified;
- N the consistency of its campaigning record – that it campaigns on countries and individuals whatever their political ideologies and allegiances;
- N perceptions of relevance and effectiveness;
- N attention to “forgotten”, hidden and often unpopular situations;
- N its focus on the need to stop violations rather than winning agreement on their causes, which could easily become an attack on ideologies or systems of government;
- N it can point to evidence that AI works, such as individuals released or treated better;
- N people relate to the issue of unfair treatment.

Relevance

AI’s campaigning has to connect with the people it wants to involve. Some of AI’s campaigning is directly or indirectly related to our own societies such as:

- N campaigning on refugee issues, arms transfers, the death penalty, own government foreign policy;

- N campaigning on themes or issues, including women’s rights.

The main focus of AI’s campaigning is international solidarity. People take action about human rights violations in a country they may never have heard of for many reasons. Sometimes they feel it is their responsibility or duty. More often they respond because you made them interested.

Interest might not be enough on its own, but it is generally an important starting point.

Perceiving something as relevant is a major motivating factor in personal and organizational behaviour. AI seeks to take advantage of it routinely in outreach work (see Chapter 10). We seek to involve trade unionists in AI campaigns by demonstrating that some of the individuals we are working for are trade unionists.

“The price of liberty is eternal vigilance” is an often used quote. It suggests that we all share an interest in protecting our rights – even when ours are not being violated or threatened. The argument that we are all diminished by allowing acts of injustice to go on around us is another way of appealing for people to see the relevance of taking action. Whatever its truth, it will appeal to some but not to others.

Many other campaigning organizations can rely on a clear sense of relevance and sometimes self-interest when asking people to take action. This applies to environmental campaigners, for example, who are trying to stop a toxic dump in their community. AI campaigners often have to work harder and more creatively to make issues seem relevant to the people from whom support is wanted.

People define relevance in many different ways. However, most campaigners asking others to take action are likely at some time to be asked “Why should I?” The answer needs to satisfy their needs – which might be quite different from the campaigner’s motivation.

In short, interest, concern, anger and shock can all make people feel emotionally and intellectually involved in an issue.

Campaigning also has to offer a solution relevant to the problem. Some people will take action no matter how hopeless the cause seems. Many others, however, will want to know that:

- M the solutions AI are suggesting are practical and realistic;
- M their support or action will be effective.

AI communications need to stress both. If members and supporters do not see AI offering relevant solutions to problems, they may well take their support to other organizations or simply stop believing they can do anything. Let the membership know of every success to which they have contributed.

Timing

The same action will have different effects at different times. As acrobats, actors and comedians say, timing is everything!

AI's campaigning, whatever its extent, is only one factor in the dynamics of change. The success or failure of campaigning is shaped by its context and the interplay of a wide range of factors. Timing is one of the most important factors.

N Urgent Actions (UAs) were developed by AI in response to changing patterns of human rights violations and the increasingly apparent need for action to be taken very quickly if it was to be effective.

N Issuing a major human rights report on a country prior to a meeting of an aid consortium on that country is more likely to build pressure than releasing the report after the meeting.

N A media conference or media release issued on a quiet news day is more likely to get coverage than one that competes with other major news stories.

N Action in the lead-up to discussion of legislation is more likely to have an impact than after the law has been passed.

N It is usually best not to organize major membership activity during a holiday season.

N Many UN discussions of human rights happen on a fixed timetable. Individual Sections need to lobby governments months before such meetings occur.

N A news release issued immediately after an event has the greatest chance of winning and influencing coverage. A news release a few days or a week later is more likely to be ignored.

Commitment

AI's campaign will not stop until the violations end. This commitment is important because:

N people suffering and at risk of human rights violations have placed trust and hope in AI and AI has a responsibility towards them;

N governments must be denied the hope that they can simply ignore the campaign until AI gives up and goes away.

Try different strategies and techniques to discover the most effective. A commitment to creativity is important for several reasons:

N it helps to make campaigning interesting, to yourself and others – and helps to motivate people to become involved;

N it can get your campaigning noticed;

N it makes it more difficult for governments to come up with effective counter-strategies and tactics.

Think of who you are trying to influence.

N Have they become familiar with and adept at handling the letters generated by AI members?

N Will a different approach, or perhaps an approach to a different part of government or society, help to regain the impact that the first wave of letters had?

cTIPS

c Keep it simple

Simple plans are usually easier to organize and therefore more likely to happen. Simple ideas are easier to explain and more likely to be understood and acted on by others. Less can go wrong with simple ideas.

c Make it easy

The easier it is for someone to do something, the more likely they are to do it.

If you send an appeal asking for a donation, how easy is it for someone to respond? Have you made it clear who the payment should be made to? Have you provided an envelope for them to return their donation in? Is the postage pre-paid?

If you ask an organization or individual to send a letter on behalf of a prisoner, have you provided all the information they need, such as the address, background information, points for letters?

If you are asking a trade union or other association to pass a motion of support, should you provide them with a model resolution that is likely to need minimum modification?

c Do not ask people for what they cannot deliver

Whether in lobbying, outreach or other campaigning, it is important to find out what the person you are approaching is able to do. Journalists, for example, may not be able to guarantee that a story will make it to print or to air as this decision is taken by an editor. Government officials may not be senior enough to take the necessary decisions.

Making unrealistic demands of people may lead to frustration on both sides, and can make AI look unprofessional and badly informed.

Representatives of governments must be clear about what AI is asking for: the immediate release of a prisoner of conscience, abolition of the death penalty, etc.

c Success breeds success

Everyone is motivated by achieving what they set out to do. Successes create new opportunities and lead to new challenges. They also create momentum and attract support.

Defining success and failure is partly in your hands. If your campaign aims to end torture in six months, people will be disappointed if it fails, even if your campaigning has secured access to detention centres by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) – a major safeguard against torture.

If, however, you had stated access to detention centres as an aim and then achieved it, people will be motivated to continue campaigning because they can see that they have helped to achieve change. The first and perhaps most difficult step has been won and you will probably be able to build on this success. The results of the campaign were the same – but one is seen as a failure, the other as a success.

Sometimes it is useful to state your objectives as the things you hope to achieve if everything you can control goes to plan and circumstances are favourable. But it is also useful to state realistic aims that you think you will be able to achieve if some things do not go to plan or external circumstances are not favourable.

Measuring the effect of AI's work is not always easy or possible. Processes of change in any society are complex, and it can be very hard to judge AI's precise impact on a situation. Yet it is normally possible to build into our strategies some indicators of success (for example, the number of governments or NGOs supporting access to detainees by the ICRC), even if the impact of this on the pattern of torture is a matter of informed guesswork for some time.

To check how specific and measurable your strategy is, ask yourself what you hope and what you expect will be different after the campaign. Write down the answers.

c Set the agenda

Campaigning on the death penalty provides a good example of how different sides of the debate try to define the issue in different ways. Those in favour of executions want the death penalty defined as a law and order issue and seek to play on fears of crime or violence to mobilize public opinion and put pressure on politicians and governments. Abolitionists try to ensure the death penalty is defined as a human rights issue and seek to keep the debate focused on the cruelty of the punishment and the unfairness of the justice process. Abolitionists will often have to explain that

there is no evidence that the death penalty is a deterrent to crime. This means acknowledging and trying to counter the fact that the death penalty is seen by many as a law and order question. Other examples of this principle can be seen in the responses of governments to AI's campaigning. Governments often seek to divert AI's campaigning by trying to redefine the issue, for example by presenting AI's report on torture as an infringement of national sovereignty. They may also attack AI's credibility, motivation and information, or deflect the discussion into a debate about which rights are more important than others.

N Quotations

Establish a file of useful quotations. Include statements that you see in the media or obtain through campaigning from politicians, human rights activists, business leaders, etc. These quotes can be useful, for example by showing the degree of support for AI or the issues AI is campaigning on. A collection of quotes is included in Appendix I.

Tools for building strategies

Strategic campaigning cycle

AI's global strategies to improve human rights in particular countries and in relation to particular themes need to be explicit to enable national strategies to contribute to them. National campaigning strategies also need to be explicit to enable AI groups and other membership structures to campaign strategically.

N Decide what the problem is (issue).

This is distilled from an analysis of the human rights violations of concern to AI, the domestic political environment in which they occur, the forces (including individuals) that are directly or indirectly responsible for the violations, and those inside or outside the country who may influence them. Other factors worth considering are information on the effectiveness of past campaigning, whether current perceptions are adversely affecting domestic or international action on the problems, and whether the government or security forces have developed strategies to evade accountability.

N Agree on the specific change in the present situation that AI needs to work for in the short and long term (aims).

This could be the repeal of particular legislation, the release of specific prisoners, an acknowledgement that violations have occurred and an explicit commitment to end them, ratification of international human rights instruments, etc.

N Decide the best way to achieve these aims based on your earlier analysis.

This could be:

- M membership action, such as letter-writing to the target government by members;
- M outreach, such as letters or statements by law societies and lawyers to the government and judges in the target country;
- M lobbying/intergovernmental organization (IGO) work, such as raising the issue at the UN Commission on Human Rights and asking member governments to pass a resolution;
- M media work, such as publicity about military supplies and training that are contributing to human rights violations.

N Decide the best way to get the action you need (action forms).

This could be a major campaign involving most of the membership (country campaign), a very quick worldwide response (rapid response or UA), lobbying of key governments, long-term work by a few groups, a publicity splash, etc.

N Evaluate the analysis of violations, the context and any changes, as well as the existing strategy and actions, and adjust to them as required.

Look at AI's position in your society and the links between your society and the target country – cultural, economic, institutional, political and/or military links (see Chapter 2). Then look at the opportunities any of these links may offer for influencing the human rights situation in the target country, and develop strategies for exploiting these opportunities.

Building a country strategy

Answering the following questions may help you develop a country strategy:

g QUESTIONS

g What is the human rights situation in the target country? Are torture and ill-treatment of prisoners, or “disappearances” widespread?

g What specific changes do we want to see? Do we want action to improve the treatment of prisoners, to begin investigations into cases of “disappearance”, etc?

g Who in the target country is directly responsible for the human rights situation that we are trying to change? Are they prison officials, opposition groups, etc?

g Who in these countries is indirectly responsible for human rights abuses? Are they politicians, prison authorities, etc?

g Who in the target country could influence those responsible? Are they health professionals, the media, religious organizations, trade unions, etc?

g Who in your country could persuade the influential people in the target country to act? Are they doctors, journalists, politicians, religious groups, etc?

g How can you persuade the people or organizations in your country to put pressure on those with influence in the target country? What campaigning techniques could you most effectively employ: lobbying public events, petitions, media work, writing letters, etc?

The need for specific country strategies

Every country strategy is different. For example, AI condemns the death penalty in the USA as much as it does in China. It is equally committed to achieving abolition in both countries. In both countries government legislation allows the state to kill citizens. In both countries achieving abolition poses a major challenge for AI. Will the same strategy work in both countries?

A campaign for abolition of the death penalty that does not recognize the differences between Chinese and US society will be unlikely to succeed in either country. The boxes on this page show just some of the differences. These need to be reflected in different international campaigning strategies.

For example, it may make sense to try and change public opinion in the USA on the death penalty as local politicians would then not win votes by promising to put more people to death than their political rivals.

It may not make sense to target public opinion in China because it is not clear how public opinion affects government policy on crime, nor whether public opinion is in favour or opposed to the death penalty.

Possible objectives for campaigns

This section looks at some possible campaigning objectives for AI and whether they are long or short term, specific or general.

N The release of all prisoners of conscience in a country

This is a final objective in relation to a country with an AI mandate concern. At certain times, such as when a government has changed, it may be a short-term and final objective.

N The release of specific prisoners of conscience

As a short or more specific objective on the way to achieving the release of all prisoners of conscience, AI may decide to concentrate on particular individuals or groups of individuals. This is a tactic that worked in relation to Indonesia in the 1970s, and was used to highlight the cases of people such as Andrei Sakharov in the former Soviet Union and by the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa in relation to Nelson Mandela.

N The reduction of sentences for certain prisoners

This is rarely a stated external objective of AI, but may be an internal (or expected rather than hoped for) objective.

N Improvement in prison conditions

This can be a final objective for prisoners, or an objective on the way to the final objective: the release of a prisoner of conscience.

N Change in legislation that would affect AI's concerns

This can be a final objective, but is more likely to have been identified as a step that can be taken towards achieving the final objective of ending a particular practice. It could therefore be the focus of a particular campaign.

N Increase awareness of abuses

This should never be a final objective. It may have been identified as an important step towards the final objective of ending abuses. As expressed, it is not specific and is very hard to measure. Its relationship to action that would provide evidence of moving towards ending violations is therefore difficult to establish.

N Elicit a response from or dialogue with government authorities about AI's concerns

This is not a final objective, although it may be the objective of a specific campaign. The sort of response or dialogue wanted and why a response is important would need to be explained in the strategy.

N Increase the debate within government circles about human rights violations

This can be an important campaign objective, particularly when AI believes that there is controversy and opposition to the violations within government circles. It would need to have some form of measurement, such as comments by ministers or journalists, or a policy change. It is not a final objective.

N A target government to start investigations into human rights violations

This may be identified as an important objective as evidence of a commitment to end impunity – and the violations themselves. It is easy to measure and opens up further opportunities for campaigning.

N Independent access to detainees at risk of torture

This can be an important campaign objective. If respected, access is one of the major safeguards against torture and ill-treatment. It can be an important step towards ending torture. It is also measurable and specific.

N Abolition of the death penalty

This is a final objective, although it can also be a short-term one. Several new governments in recent years have made abolition of the death penalty one of their first acts. It is very measurable. A campaign objective may be to establish a moratorium on executions.

N Reduction in the number of offences carrying the death penalty

Some AI campaigning strategies have taken an incremental approach to abolition of the death penalty on the basis that focusing efforts on total abolition would be unrealistic and ineffective. Abolition remains the long-term objective. Abolition in practice may be the mid-term objective, with restriction of the death penalty to aggravated murder the short-term objective.

N Increase awareness of AI's goals

This should only be an objective if its relationship to some other action is clear – if a case can be made that it is a necessary step. Awareness is notoriously difficult to measure and for this to be a specific objective it would be necessary to measure awareness before and after the campaign, and to specify among whom awareness was to be raised.

N Statement from home government
on human rights situation in target country

This is a specific objective that may be an important way of bringing pressure to bear.

N Increase AI's membership

This can be a valid internal objective of AI's campaigning, particularly if a lack of members has been identified as a weakness. Specify how many new members are to be gained over what period.

N Enhance AI's impartial image

AI's image in the community may have been identified as a weakness that is adversely affecting the impact of its campaigning. In this case, enhancing AI's image is a necessary step to achieving other objectives.

N Increase participation in AI's activities of a particular section of the community

This may be an important objective in relation to either a specific country campaign or to AI's campaigning more generally.

You are at A. You need to get to B. You have to choose the best way of getting there. Public opinion, help from the legal community and international action are all options. © Beate Kubitz

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)

STRENGTHS are positive factors of the AI Section that might be of particular importance in different campaigns or actions. They might include financial and material resources, good access to home government, a good public image, an efficient organizational structure, contacts (for example, in the media or other organizations), supporters, specialist knowledge or the existence of many groups.

When planning your work, consider how your Section's strengths might be useful in the context of a particular campaign. For example, if one of the international objectives of a campaign includes getting action from the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy and you have a strong religious outreach program with that church, then this might be one of the most effective areas of work for the Section.

WEAKNESSES are factors that inhibit the Section's ability to act generally or on particular issues. Weaknesses might include a lack of experienced members, limited (or no) funds, lack of facilities, poor organizational capacity or poor public image.

It is very important to identify your weaknesses so that you can either take steps to overcome them or avoid activities that you will be unable to cope with.

OPPORTUNITIES are factors about your society which might affect your campaigning. They might include an interested and sympathetic media, close links between your society and the target country, a meeting of an aid consortium, a visit to your country by the head of state of that country, other organizations that might be able to put effective pressure on the targets of your campaigning, such as trade unions, women's groups, professional groups or ethnic groups, and important dates in the calendar.

When planning your work on a campaign or action, consider how you might take advantage of these opportunities.

THREATS are factors in your society that may have a negative impact on your ability to contribute to a campaign or action. They will usually be out of your control, although as campaigners we may, in the longer term, hope to change at least some of the factors that represent a threat.

Threats might include a political or economic crisis, a hostile government, an intolerance of campaigning or voluntary organizations, business or other sectors saying that human rights are against the national interest, a poor image arising from factors beyond the group's control, human rights violations, security issues, local restrictions on AI's work, etc.

Threats also need to be analysed carefully when planning involvement in a particular campaign or action.

Note: Strengths and Weaknesses are mostly internal questions and relate to AI, Opportunities and Threats are external and relate to the campaigning environment.

The child may be able to go up the steep path, but the grandmother will need to take the longer way round. Choices must be made on the basis of your situation.

© Beate Kubitz

“No one starts a campaign... without first being clear in their mind **WHAT** they intend to achieve by the campaign and **HOW** they intend to conduct it. This governing principle will set [the campaign's] course, prescribe the scale of means and effort which is required, and makes its influence felt throughout down to the smallest operational detail.”

Carl von Clausewitz, a renowned military strategist

AI has been described as an organization of idealistic pragmatists, or realistic idealists. Its mandate looks impossibly idealistic, yet it works towards achieving its objectives through realistic, practical steps that have contributed to real change.

Carefully timed events can reinforce the impact of a campaign. During the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the UK Section hired a tank and drove to the Chinese Embassy in London to protest against human rights violations in China. The tank was chosen as a well-recognized symbol of the student demonstrations in Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

A group of AI campaign coordinators outside the International Secretariat

© AI

“There is one key rule in any sort of communication... start from where your audience is, not from where you are.”

Sue Ward, *Getting the Message Across*,
Journeyman Press, 1992

“Know the adversary and know yourself; in a hundred [campaigns] you will never be in peril. When you are ignorant of the adversary but know yourself, your chances of winning or losing are equal. If ignorant both of your adversary and of yourself you are certain in every [campaign] to be in peril.”

Sun Tzu, around 500 BC

Shock to generate interest

The UK Section of AI has for a number of years run a very successful series of fundraising and membership recruitment advertisements in national newspapers and magazines. Their advertisements broke many advertising conventions by relying heavily on a long text. They use shock to attract the readers' interest. They then tell a compelling story to keep that interest while they explain a terrible human rights situation. Finally, they offer the reader an opportunity to do something about it. Their target audience has been people with a tertiary education, interest in world affairs and disposable income. They have gained many donations and new members.

f

Shock advertisements have worked well in Ireland and the UK, but not in other countries.

f

Look for important dates and anniversaries which might be helpful to a campaign. Also watch out for dates to avoid as offence can easily be caused by planning action for a time that is sensitive in a particular culture or country.

“I think that is what hurts most. Until... people like that said they had doubts about our convictions no one really wanted to know. Yet nothing is different now to what it was 10 or 12 years ago... All that has changed is the people telling it... Unfair isn't a strong enough word for what I feel about it all, but I can't think of another one.”

Carole Richardson, writing from prison, was wrongly convicted in the UK after an unfair trial in 1974. She was freed in 1986.

Reinforcing AI's credibility: a queue of people wait to present testimony to an AI delegation visiting Guatemala.

© Jean-Marie Simon

Carnations and Colombia: challenging assumptions

Researching information on Colombia in preparation for the international campaign in 1988, the Australian Section discovered that Colombia was a major exporter of carnations. This surprised many, partly because Colombia's image was overwhelmingly of drugs and drug-related violence. One aim of the campaign was to change these perceptions and highlight the human rights violations in Colombia. Carnations proved a positive and attractive way of challenging these images. For example, a local AI group in Townsville, a small town in Queensland, was filmed during a publicity action in which they used carnations. They were then interviewed on a major regional television network.

Making it easy to say 'yes': a non-AI campaign

Tim Anderson was convicted in 1991 of charges arising from the bombing of the 1978 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Sydney, Australia. He immediately lodged an appeal and applied for bail pending the appeal. The campaign group protesting his innocence decided to seek support from prominent Australians for the bail application. The stated objective was to get bail, although the secondary objective was to gain widespread support and favourable media coverage.

A short statement expressing concern over aspects of the conviction and calling for his release on bail was drafted. It included a pledge to provide \$A 1,000 in surety to support bail, which was intended to demonstrate the commitment of those signing the statement. Over 30 leading Australians signed. The bail application was refused, but the judge remarked on the extent of community concern over the safety of the conviction and this received substantial media coverage. (The conviction was quashed in the appeal court six months later.)

Had the statement asked people to state a belief in Tim Anderson's innocence, rather than concern over the conviction, many fewer people would have signed it. The strategy would have failed. Its success lay in making the statement easy to support.

Maris-Stella Mabitje, a former political detainee in South Africa, meets AI members who successfully campaigned on her behalf

© Anders Kallersand

USA

- N Elected state government decides punishment options
- N Public opinion is thought to have a major influence on the death penalty
- N Trials are long and costly
- N Executions are increasing but still less than 100 annually
- N Few crimes are subject to the death penalty
- N AI and many other groups campaign against the death penalty
- N Race is believed to be a factor in verdicts and sentencing

CHINA

- N Central government decrees punishments for different crimes
- N Public opinion is not thought to have a major influence on the death penalty
- N Trials are often summary and unfair
- N Thousands of people are executed annually
- N Many crimes are subject to the death penalty
- N No known organizations campaign against the death penalty
- N Race is not known to be a factor in verdicts and sentencing

To welcome or condemn? Case One

Government A announces a moratorium on the death penalty. Should AI welcome the decision as a positive step towards abolition or condemn it as a lost opportunity for abolition? AI has taken both positions at different times in the past. What factors do you think may have led to these different responses? What might be the advantages and risks of responding in either way to such an announcement?

N If AI welcomes the moratorium it risks being accused of retreating from its position of calling for complete abolition. A moratorium may not be the best decision the government could have made in the circumstances and strong criticism may make it go a bit further and announce abolition.

N If AI condemns the moratorium it may be excluded from further debate with the government, and be seen as negative and unrealistic in refusing to acknowledge a step forward. The moratorium may have been the best decision in the circumstances and defining it as a negative step may mean missing the opportunity of using the momentum of the decision.

To welcome or condemn? Case Two

AI hears reports of government soldiers being involved in a massacre and calls on Government B to launch an independent inquiry. Government B announces an independent inquiry but does not provide details of its composition or terms of reference. Should AI welcome the inquiry or condemn it? AI has taken both positions in the past. What factors do you think may have led to these different responses? What might the advantages and risks be of responding in either way to such an announcement?

N How AI reacts will open up or shut down further campaigning opportunities.

CHAPTER 2 CAMPAIGNING IN THE MODERN WORLD

“The greatest evil today is indifference. To know and not to act is a way of consenting to these injustices. The planet has become a very small place. What happens in other countries affects us.”
Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

The massive growth and changes in world trade, including in the field of military, security and police transfers, the integration of the world economy and the communications revolution have transformed international relations. There are more links between more states than ever before. These changes have opened up opportunities and challenges for AI’s campaigning. This chapter looks at these new and exciting areas for AI’s work in the following three sections:

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Relations between Countries / 31

Military, Security and Police Links and Transfers / 39

Information Technology / 51

MODERN WORLD RELATIONS BETWEEN COUNTRIES

The world has become a smaller place. States are more closely linked than ever before, through trade, international relations and modern communication systems. Finding those links and making the best use of them is an important part of AI's work in the modern world. This section looks at:

- N Relations between countries / 32
- N Information about relations between countries / 32
- N Links with the government in the target country / 33
- N Links with society in the target country / 34
- N Using the links / 37

Intergovernmental organizations, such as the United Nations, are good starting points for gathering information about your target country and researching links between your own country and the target country

© UN

Relations between countries

AI must take account of the international political environment in which we campaign. Usually, we have some basic understanding about the broad nature of the relations (or lack of relations) between our own country and the country in which the human rights violations we wish to address are taking place.* Even when we do not consciously discuss such relations, they influence our planned actions.

In trying to develop a more strategic approach to campaigning, discussion about the relations between countries is often helpful. Sometimes it is useful to have the discussion on the basis of existing knowledge. Sometimes it is worth finding out the details in a specific area. The important thing is to develop our capacity to use the information to make our campaigning more effective.

There are a number of areas where Sections can choose to develop specialist approaches:

N Military relations

In this area we have specific policies and action strategies on military, security and police (MSP) transfers (see next section). Some AI Sections have also developed specialist groups of military or former military people, police or former police who are AI members and are willing to use their professional skills or status in AI work. The development of this specialist capacity was prioritized by the 1995 International Council Meeting (ICM), AI's supreme policy-making body which is held biennially.

N Economic relations

In this area some Sections have developed specialist groups, involving AI members with a background in the business world, to make approaches to companies and business people about how they can contribute to human rights (see Chapter 10). The further development of work on company approaches was prioritized by the 1995 ICM. There have also been movement-wide policy discussions about how we can most effectively work for human rights in the context of the economic relations between governments. Many governments have policies which link human rights and economic relations with other countries.

N Cultural relations

In this area the development of AI's work has been more sporadic. It has included outreach to religious communities by many Sections. There have also been a number of campaigning initiatives which have been linked to international sporting events, such as the Olympic Games.

Information about relations between countries

In order that Sections can best analyse which links provide the best strategic opportunities, individual country strategies provided by the IS should:

N state which sectors of the government/society are most responsible for human rights violations and which are most likely to be in a position to influence the human rights situation;

N state which international links have the most potential for influencing a human rights situation in a particular country.

AI Sections are best placed to develop the knowledge and expertise on the links between their society and the society of the target country, and the human rights potential of these links.

Fulfilling this potential is likely to need a combination of AI's campaigning techniques, including outreach, lobbying, company approaches, publicity work and letter-writing.

Links with the government in the

target country

The following questions may help you determine the links between your society and the government in the target country:

g QUESTIONS

g Which international organizations are your government and the government of the target country members of? Do they belong to the UN, the UN Commission on Human Rights, the UN Security Council, regional organizations, the Non-Aligned Movement or trade associations?

g What is the position of your foreign affairs ministry in relation to the country? Apologist? Adversary? Mixed?

g Has the target country been the subject of parliamentary or government hearings in the past few years? In what connection and with what results? Who testified, and what link if any exists between the testimony and AI's concerns?

g Does your government belong to an aid consortium relevant to the target country? Such consortiums may provide an opportunity for raising or discussing AI's concerns.

g Does your government provide Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) to other countries? Which ones? Have AI's concerns been raised during discussions on ODA programs? Is there an explicit human rights component to discussions?

g Are there formal connections between your MSP agencies and those in the target country through international bodies or alliances?

g How do these associations function? Are there MSP transfers between your country and the target country?

g How much is known about the target government officials most directly responsible for human rights violations? Did any of the officials or politicians live, travel, study, train or serve in your country at any time? When, where and in whose company? Are there professors, business executives, foreign service officers past or present, journalists or others who could offer a first-hand view of the officials, what motivates them, who they think is important?

g Does the government of the target country routinely send trade delegations, delegates to professional and cultural conferences and events, and other semi-official or unofficial emissaries to your country? And vice versa?

g Has the government hired public relations agents in your country? Who are they? Are they open to a meeting to discuss AI concerns?

g Is there an embassy of the target country in your country?

g Is there a "fixer" attached to the target country's embassy in your country – someone who arranges invitations, receptions, travel for members of parliament or other important people in your country? How public are the activities of the "fixer", or how possible is it to monitor them?

g Does your government have a "special visitors" program through which leading individuals from other societies can be invited?

g Who in government and private institutions has a knowledge of, or special interest in, the country of concern?

Links with society in the target country

The following questions may help you determine the links between your society and that of the target country:

g QUESTIONS

g What are the powerful economic, social and cultural influences on the government or non-governmental entity from within the society?

g Is religion a powerful force in the country? Which religions and which government officials are most influential? Is there a connection between the religion/s and the religious organizations in your country? Are there any relevant events, visits or exchanges happening?

g Are there a number of formal political parties competing for power? Do they have international links with other parties of a similar political system? Are they members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union? Do they have youth or women's sections/departments that are linked with international federations? Do these have contact with organizations in your country?

g Who are the most important business and industrial leaders in the country? Which of them has lived, studied or worked in your country? Who are their colleagues or associates in your country? Are there links through trade or industry associations? Do any of them represent joint venture holdings with companies based in your country? Have any of them ever expressed public concern for human rights or been detained by former governments?

g What is the volume of trade between the societies? In whose favour is the balance of trade? Is it growing or decreasing? What is the nature of the trade – services, manufactured goods, primary products? Are there forthcoming trade promotions? Is there contact through trade associations or regulatory organizations? Is either government actively involved in encouraging trade through incentives, seminars, bilateral contact?

g Are trade unions powerful in the country? Are they officially represented in government? What is the government's relationship with the International Labour Organisation (ILO)? Are the unions active on wider issues, outspoken, independent? What are their internationally affiliated unions and umbrella groups? Are they members of international unions or federations which have affiliates in your country? Are there regular contacts between union members and officials in the two countries?

g Is the media influential on government policy in the target country? Does the media ever publish reports of human rights violations by the government? Is it self-censored, government controlled, or free? Does it have correspondents based in your country? Is there an active foreign press corps there? Do media organizations from your country have correspondents based there? What is the level of ownership of television and radio? Do they receive international transmissions?

g Is the government sensitive to its image in the international media? And to the media in your country? Why? What is the routine level of media interest in your country? When was the most recently increased media and public interest in the target country? What caused this?

g Is there an active bar/legal association? Does it influence legislative reform? Does it take a stand on human rights violations? Is it a member of regional/worldwide professional associations? Did leading professionals train or practice in your society? Are there historical links between the professions? Are there visiting or exchange programs between the professions in your society?

g Do other professional associations have influence? How are academics and internationally known writers, scholars, doctors, specialists and laureates regarded? Are there institutional or organizational links between your society and the target country in these areas? Are there exchange programs for academics/students? Are there institutions about which the government seems to take a “hands-off” policy?

g What are the communications links between the societies? In particular, is mail delivered, is it monitored or otherwise interfered with? Is it necessary for people to pay bribes for mail delivery? Is franked mail preferable to stamped (in some countries letters are stolen for the resale value of the foreign stamps)? Is registered mail delivered more reliably than regular mail? Is the telephone system functioning throughout the country? Are international calls monitored? What languages will operators understand? Is it possible to obtain telephone numbers through directory information? Are fax machines widely used in government and business? Does e-mail offer opportunities for reaching important audiences?

g Do human rights assemblies, legal aid institutes and other domestic human rights groups exist legally? Are their leaders free to travel? Are there ways to strengthen the domestic human rights lobby? (This needs to be discussed with the IS, which is in touch with all such bodies.)

g Is there an expatriate/exile community from the target country resident in your country? What is its relationship with the home country? Does it provide the basis of a solidarity movement for opposition groups in the home country? Does it contribute to any human rights movements there? Is it associated with (armed) opposition groups? Does it have its own media? Is it influential with sections of government or the society in the home country?

g What are the sporting links between your societies? Do your societies have the same national sports? Are sports stars in your society famous in that society? Are they seen as “role models” in either society? Are there major sporting contacts/events scheduled over the next year? Will these be attracting major media coverage in both societies?

g What are the cultural links between your societies? Are musical, literature or theatrical traditions shared? Are popular music stars in your society famous/attract publicity in the target country? Are musical or theatrical tours planned between the societies?

g What are the links between your academic institutions and those in the target country? Are they linked through the Internet and e-mail? Are there exchange programs ?

g Are there city/region links or twinning arrangements between the two societies? Do these include exchanges of officials, students, teachers and others on official visits that may provide opportunities for building dialogue?

g Is there tourism between your societies? Is tourism a major source of revenue for the other society? What proportion of this tourism does your society represent? Does this raise opportunities for spreading human rights information?

g What is the popular perception in your society/media of the other society? Does this represent an obstacle to generating the necessary human rights action?

g Is there an AI Section in the country?

Using the links

Which of these links will be most useful, and how they can be used creatively, will change from country to country and over time. Some illustrative examples are included in this manual to show how links have been used in the past.

AI has policies on how these links may be used in its campaigning for human rights, and it is important to know these and to keep up to date with the changes (policy is decided at ICMs).

Developing knowledge about the country and society you wish to influence is vital to knowing which links offer the best opportunities and when.

N Some governments seeking closer economic relationships with your country or to join a particular economic or political bloc or organization can be very sensitive to the raising of concerns about their human rights record. This might make them susceptible to pressure.

N A presidential, trade or cultural visit can present many opportunities for campaigning. They provide a focus and many others will also be working to generate interest and media coverage – albeit with a different angle.

N Some governments actively promote a particular image of their country to build tourism. Again, this can make them particularly sensitive to the different images conjured up by knowledge of their human rights record. It can be easier to use this existing awareness of a country as a hook to gain interest and shift perceptions than to create entirely new perceptions.

N As links between countries grow, so they extend beyond the specialized area of foreign affairs ministries. A close relationship between governments may involve the education, industry and trade, defence, finance and other departments of governments. This can mean that while the foreign affairs ministry has positive policies, they are not reflected in the behaviour or policies of other departments, or human rights have remained compartmentalized. Each department should be encouraged to have a human rights strategy.

N Building the profile of particular human rights activists by inviting them on a speaking tour, or persuading others to invite them, can help to build connections between human rights activists in both countries and provide greater personal protection to the individuals in their work.

N Encouraging contact between different sectors of your society and their counterparts in another society around human rights issues can help to build lasting relationships and a commitment to take action. It can also increase knowledge and expertise on what would be the best forms of action to take. The international city and community twinning movement has grown rapidly in recent years, leading to increased contact between schools, mayors, local businesses and cultural organizations across many societies.

N At least one Section has persuaded a parliamentary committee to institute an annual review of their government's record on human rights internationally. This review includes taking public and private submissions from concerned individuals and organizations.

* AI often refers internally to these relations as military, economic and cultural relations (MEC).

Sri Lanka and Turkey have both promoted themselves as tourist destinations. In both cases AI Sections have used this popular image and contrasted it with the grim reality of human rights violations. The UK Section mailed their supporters an envelope containing “holiday photographs from Turkey”, which consisted of photographs of victims of human rights violations. Other Sections have produced brochures highlighting human rights violations and approached travel agents asking them to display these along with the travel brochures. This poster was produced by AIUSA for a campaign against human rights violations in Sri Lanka and displayed on a roadside billboard. Campaign material displayed in places normally associated with commercial advertising and travel information can make the necessary link between the image of an attractive holiday destination and the reality of human rights violations.

There is a single category of links between countries where AI may take a position of expressing concerns, raising questions or calling for cessation in very specific circumstances. This is in the case of military, security or police transfers.

During an official trade promotion of India in Australia, AI members handed out letters to the Australian guests arriving at functions, providing information on one particular human rights case and asking them to raise the case with visiting Indian Government officials. An e-mail link with a school in an Indian city was part of the promotion. AI members used this to register Australians’ concern and begin a discussion over the case and other human rights violations perpetrated against Indian schoolchildren.

An Australian theatre group, sponsored by the Australian Government, travelled to Jakarta as part of an Australian promotion in Indonesia. One member of the group was so concerned about human rights violations in East Timor that he staged a personal protest during the performance. His protest subsequently received significant media coverage in Australia.

During campaigns on countries in Africa and Latin America, AI Sections have used their societies’ interest in the music from these countries to interest people in the human rights situation. They have produced music tapes, held concerts and staged other events.

Aid, development assistance, trade and conditionality: AI’s position

As with sanctions or boycotts AI does not oppose or support the attaching of human rights conditions to trade, aid or development assistance. The debate continues through the human rights movement on the “issue of conditionality”. On the one hand “conditionality” is clearly one of the most important levers of influence that governments possess and a visible way of demonstrating concern. On the other it tends to be effective because of imbalances of power. It can be used in the interests of maintaining that imbalance and may have an adverse impact on the economic, social and cultural rights of many people. For these reasons it can place those supporting sanctions and boycotts in opposition to the views of the domestic human rights movement. AI does not formally engage in this debate.

AI’s position most simply expressed is that it is the responsibility of all aid bodies, development organizations and governments to look at how their policies and practices are affecting and contributing to all human rights.

Targeting investors in China

“Should businesses and their shareholders be concerned about violations of human rights in the countries in which they work? Such a question is likely to receive an equivocal or evasive answer,

if it receives an answer at all. But it is a question which in future is likely to be asked with increasing insistence.”

These words, by Chairman of the Business Group of AIUK Sir Geoffrey Chandler, opened an article entitled “Business and Human Rights”, a paper included in the investors pack prepared for the campaign on China.

During the China campaign, AI produced an information pack aimed at Sections who were approaching businesses and individuals investing in China. It included opinion pieces, fact sheets, suggested actions and summarized AI’s policy on approaches to business sectors.

Sanctions and boycotts: AI’s position

AI does not call for, oppose or support restrictions on links between societies. Arguments rage and will continue to rage about the effectiveness and impact of sanctions or boycotts in different circumstances. AI avoids these arguments in relation to the many different countries where it has concerns. It concentrates on asserting the responsibility of all involved to look at how they may most effectively contribute to bringing about improvements in human rights.

In international campaigning, sanctions and boycotts had their highest profile and most sustained focus in the international campaign to end apartheid in South Africa. In this case the demands for sanctions and boycotts originated from and were pursued by South African organizations and political movements that were seen as representative of South African opinion.

In some circumstances, particularly where there is a public momentum, not supporting calls for sanctions can be seen as opposing sanctions and care often needs to be taken to avoid giving this impression.

AI does oppose the transfer of military, security and police training and materials that can reasonably be assumed to contribute to human rights violations. AI also opposes the trade in organs of executed persons.

The Fax Revolution

Fax machines in Malawi played such an important role in the political change that led to the release of many long-serving prisoners of conscience and the end of one-party rule that the change was dubbed “The Fax Revolution”. To beat strict controls on freedom of expression and restrictions on access to information, news was sent into the country by fax and then copied and distributed within the country.

MODERN WORLD MILITARY, SECURITY AND POLICE LINKS AND TRANSFERS

Around the world military, security and police (MSP) personnel are committing human rights violations. The MSP training, equipment, technology and personnel they receive from other countries (transfers) may facilitate these violations – and the supplying country might be yours. Finding out about these MSP transfers, including the logistical and financial support such transfers require, and explaining how such transfers may contribute to the human rights violations in AI's mandate, can offer important campaigning opportunities for AI and help stop violations. This section looks at:

- N Introduction to MSP transfers / 40
- N Investigating MSP transfers / 42
- N Using the information / 45
- N Approaching companies about MSP transfers / 46
- N Transfers of MSP training and expertise / 47
- N The international dimension / 49
- N Measuring our impact on MSP transfers / 50

Left to right: Derek Evans, Deputy Secretary General of AI; Tony Lloyd, UK Minister of State responsible for arms transfers; and Dr Oscar Arias, Nobel Peace Laureate and former President of Costa Rica, launching the International Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers in London, 9 June 1997

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Introduction to MSP transfers

AI has been developing its work on military, security and police (MSP) transfers since 1983. MSP transfers include the trade or free provision by governments or companies of equipment, personnel, training or technology.

The purpose of AI's work on MSP transfers is to:

- N prevent transfers that can reasonably be assumed to contribute to human rights abuses;
- N identify international involvement which contributes to human rights abuses and strengthen pressure for international action to prevent such abuses;
- N apply pressure directly on those military, security or police forces responsible for committing human rights abuses.

Our overall aim is to achieve effective international monitoring, regulation and control of MSP transfers. This will require the commitment of all governments and there is therefore a potential role for all AI Sections.

Investigating the current types and quantities of MSP transfers from your country is often a time-consuming and difficult task. AI Sections have the lead responsibility for collecting MSP transfer data from their own country, provided this is not against the law or a security risk. Research teams at the IS usually concentrate on information from target countries in which violations are occurring and may not receive much data about the country where you are based. Before starting any action on MSP transfers, you must be clear on three issues.

- N Clarify the MSP personnel committing abuses and their links to your country
- M To decide which MSP transfers might present the best strategic opportunities for campaigning against human rights abuses, AI needs reliable information on the human rights abusers in question and on the types of foreign MSP equipment, technology, training and personnel that are used in the country. Much of this information may already be available at the IS or be easily obtained by a research team.
- M To gauge the quality of the information we have about MSP perpetrators, use the questions outlined in Chapter 10 (Outreach/Military and Law Enforcement Officers). These questions may help establish which MSP personnel are committing human rights violations, who within the country can influence those responsible, and whether the military, security or police are involved in economic activity. Find out whether there have been any direct or indirect links in the past between such personnel and the government, army, police or companies in your country.
- N Clarify current MSP transfers which may contribute to human rights violations
- M Investigating MSP transfers is difficult because relevant information is often clouded in official state secrecy, obscured by export or technical classifications, denied by companies on the basis of "commercial confidentiality" or even falsified by people wishing to discredit someone else. However, with patience and attention to detail, it is often possible to piece together important data on MSP transfers. Apart from letter-writing, one effective method is to get members of parliament, journalists or others to ask detailed questions about MSP transfers. Another effective method is to keep asking questions until you have some answers.
- M If you can establish reliable information about MSP transfers sent from your country, immediately alert the relevant IS research team and your Section's country or RAN coordinator. Check with them and in AI publications to see if any of these MSP transfers are likely to contribute to human rights violations within AI's mandate.

- N Clarify legislation and regulations on MSP transfers

M Do not start any public action on MSP transfers without first knowing about your country's basic laws and regulations on MSP transfers. This can be a complex subject and you may find another non-governmental organization (NGO) or lawyer who can help you.

At a minimum, grasp the essentials before undertaking any public action. Most countries have laws and regulations concerning MSP transfers, especially where these may be deemed to be lethal. Some laws cover the domestic possession and sale of such equipment as well as transfers abroad. Others deal with foreign trade. There are laws and regulations covering private business as well as government transfers, but these may have important loopholes which arms dealers can exploit.

Lists of military and security products which are prohibited or considered very sensitive or just subject to normal controls can be checked, but these sometimes change, so the lists may be included as an annex to the main law.

Other laws may deal with the conduct and training of MSP personnel in the home country, and these laws may affect foreign training by the home country's MSP personnel. Try to map out all the laws and regulations that govern the full range of MSP transfers, concentrating on the types of transfer that may contribute to human rights violations. Make note of which government ministers or officials can authorize or review such transfers, and who reports on them.

M It is vital to find out if any MSP laws and regulations contain mechanisms included for human rights protection.

The following questions may help you:

g QUESTIONS

g Is there a law requiring the sending government to first establish that a proposed MSP transfer will not contribute to human rights violations in the receiving country?

g Does the legislation require parliamentary oversight of this provision?

g Is there a system of formal review or independent scrutiny?

g Are monitoring mechanisms in place to allow officials to check whether the end-use of MSP transfers may result in human rights violations?

g Are there legal guarantees in the end-user certificates so that if any MSP transfer is misused for human rights violations, further transfers of the same type of equipment will be stopped along with related spare parts, servicing and training?

g Are there enough officials, for example in customs and excise and border control, to implement the law properly?

All these questions need to be explored in written exchanges with the government authorities until satisfactory answers are provided.

Investigating MSP transfers

Despite official secrecy and other barriers, there are many ways of finding out about MSP transfers. The sources of information include:

N Government information provided to the public (ministerial speeches, annual reports to the UN and other intergovernmental organizations, freedom of information searches, patents);

information given to members of parliament; and information "leaked" to journalists and NGOs by officials. The advantage of this information is that it is "official". Even if it is found to be wrong, the onus is on the government to correct it. The disadvantage is that the information may be misleading and couched in obscure categories, with vital data missing.

N Company product and services information listed in major directories and periodicals. These include Janes Defence Weekly, Janes International Defence Review, the weekly Defence News, Law Enforcement Product News, Police and Security News. Also useful are company advertisements, brochures and other promotional literature and events, especially exhibitions.

N Company address and ownership details listed in telephone and trade directories, company registers (for example, Kompass Directories on different countries, Thomas Register, Who Owns Whom), microfiche sources (company registrar offices), CD Rom (Medline, Financial Times annual reports service, Kompass, Thomas Register), computer on-line databases (Datastar, Dialog-Piers, STN International, Echo, Echo, Corporate Critic) and sites on the World Wide Web (Multinational Monitor, Namebase, Guardian Online and a growing number of other newspaper services). The danger here is having too much irrelevant information.

N Human rights information from AI and other reputable human rights and humanitarian organizations.

N Field reports from direct witnesses willing to speak out, such as religious figures, journalists, lawyers, medical personnel, other NGOs, business people, trade unionists, transport and other local officials, or even sometimes local MSP officials or visiting MSP personnel.

N Specialist arms institutes and databases, which publish regular reports and sometimes can answer particular queries. A few specializing in MSP transfer information are listed in Appendix II. These can be invaluable, but many such organizations tend not to relate their information to human rights violations, and tend to collect most of their transfer data on large weapons systems. They may also have difficulty in dealing with many outside requests.

Collating and analysing the information

To start with, prioritize certain countries, types of equipment and types of companies and decide a limited period which you want to cover. Whether you use old fashioned index cards, document files and filing cabinets, or computer database software, there is no escaping the need for rigorous categorization, dating and cross-referencing, as well as updating as best you can. Always err on the side of caution when drawing conclusions from such data. Double check the consistency of the evidence and the credibility of the sources. Always take extreme care when analysing the information.

Each AI Section's MSP group or co-group should try to pool its MSP transfer data so that collation and cross-checking are easier. Each Section should also share what it considers to be the most significant data with the MSP coordinator and the relevant country researchers in the IS so that important leads can be followed up by the IS.

Types of MSP transfers

Many human rights violations involve the use of small arms, paramilitary equipment and security technologies. Yet the international transfer of such equipment is usually not disclosed by governments even though the proliferation of such weapons can fuel armed conflicts and internal disturbances resulting in mass human rights violations. It is therefore vital that AI plays a leading role in trying to secure international and national controls on such equipment.

Most people think of guns and ammunition when the term "arms" is used. And they think of killings or injuries as the main tragic consequence. But in AI's experience, there are several other types of weapon that are commonly used in human rights violations and in breaches of humanitarian law. There are also many violations apart from killings carried out with such weapons, including torture and other ill-treatment, and arbitrary arrests. The following categories might prove helpful:

- N Security or "crime control" equipment
- M torture and death penalty equipment (AI calls for a complete ban of such equipment)
- M electro-shock weapons (guns, batons, shields and belts)
- M "non-lethal" weapons and riot control equipment (tear-gas, plastic and rubber bullets, etc.)

- N Small arms or light weapons
- M automatic handguns and pistols
- M machine-guns and sub-machine-guns
- M sniper rifles, automatic rifles and semi-automatic rifles
- M hand grenades
- M landmines, especially anti-personnel mines
- M unusual or exploding ammunition
- M mortars, bazookas, and shoulder-fired/hand-held rockets and missiles

- N Larger arms and logistical military equipment
- M armoured vehicles, especially armoured patrol cars and armoured personnel carriers
- M military helicopters and other military transport and ground attack aircraft
- M artillery systems, tanks, rocket launch vehicles
- M military communications equipment, and surveillance equipment

These weapons also depend upon the transfer of expertise, knowledge and skill in the use of such equipment. Such MSP training can therefore also help facilitate human rights violations, as can the financial flows and the provision of transport for such transfers. AI has found that medical or other "research" can aid the commission of torture or carrying out the death penalty.

It is therefore important to try to focus on these types of MSP transfers and the logistical support used for them, and not to gather information about every type of MSP transfer.

Using the information

If you have credible evidence of a clear link between MSP transfers from your country and such transfers being used for human rights abuses, you should refer this to your Section's MSP coordinator and to the relevant board member in your Section. They will ask the IS whether to call for a cessation of such MSP transfers. The IS will check the evidence and see how this fits into AI's existing strategy on that country before reaching a decision on whether and how best such a call for cessation can be made. It is likely that a call for cessation will also be relevant to other AI Sections in potential supplying countries, so international coordination will be required.

If the IS has sufficient evidence to call for a cessation of MSP transfers to a particular country, a request for such a call may then be referred by the IS to a Section for consideration by its MSP coordinator and the Section's board. If AI has no Section in that country, the IS will take the decision. Once calls for cessation have been included in a campaigning strategy on a particular country, these can be carried out using any or all of AI's campaigning techniques as appropriate.

If a Section or the IS has evidence which is not conclusive but is strong enough to suspect that particular MSP transfers might contribute to human rights violations in AI's mandate, then warning signals should be issued to the sending government and the sending company, and possibly to the general public. These warnings should also take the form of searching questions.

Such questions should focus on how the intended MSP transfers will be used and aim to make those responsible for sending the transfers answerable for their possible misuse. Sometimes these questions will not be public (for instance, in letters to the government and the company). But if the general public and parliament of the sending country need to be alerted to a very real danger that MSP transfers will be used to facilitate violations, then the questions need to be publicized. This will increase international pressure on the receiving government.

Searching questions can be raised through media releases, public statements or external reports. Sympathetic journalists, members of parliament and NGOs can also be asked to raise the questions.

Approaching companies about MSP transfers

Most representations of AI concerns about MSP transfers are made to government authorities, but there are times when AI Sections need to make approaches to companies as well. In these instances, the AI guidelines on company approaches should be followed and the Section's co-group on company approaches should be informed in advance.

Particular care needs to be taken when you identify a company as having been involved in MSP transfers which contribute to human rights violations. If you make unsubstantiated allegations, the company may suffer loss of earnings and take legal action against you. Therefore, do not accuse companies unless there is a particular need to do so in order to protect human rights and you are absolutely sure of your evidence.

It may be wiser to pose tough searching questions to the company, or to keep looking for evidence.

If you do make an approach to a company, then follow these steps:

N Read the AI policy guidelines on company approaches and discuss your approach with the relevant coordinator in your Section.

N Put your concerns (preferably as questions) about MSP transfers in writing to the manager, stating clearly that you are an AI member and outlining AI's policy on impartiality and independence, as well as AI's policy on MSP transfers and MEC relations. Always ask about the company's code of practice regarding human rights.

N Do not assume that because a company sends MSP transfers to a particular country where human rights abuses are common that this is conclusive proof that particular transfers are actually being used for human rights abuses. Rather, use this as an opportunity to warn of the danger of sending such transfers, and ask for specific information about the contracts, safeguards, interlinked companies, training, maintenance, etc.

N Consult your MSP coordinator and co-group about your information before proceeding with any action. Check with the IS research team about the human rights information you wish to cite. Always link any such action to approaches to your government. The advice of a lawyer may also be wise.

N Do not have "off the record" exchanges or ask for money or sponsorship from the company.

N Keep records of all exchanges with the company and other relevant data on the company.

Searching questions

Where AI has some evidence to suspect that MSP transfers may contribute to human rights violations, the first action is to ask searching questions to elicit more information and to warn of the danger of permitting MSP transfers to a particular recipient. Always design questions to:

M elicit further information about how the MSP transfers will be used;

M seek assurances as to whether the sending government or company is meeting its obligations to ensure that such transfers cannot reasonably be assumed to be contributing to human rights violations.

These warning-type questions can be made public, and this is often the first step to mobilizing public pressure around AI's concerns, as well as provoking media interest.

Such questioning is normally part of a series of exchanges with the authorities and the company, and so the path of questioning needs to be thought about in advance. Examples of such interconnected questions to government officials responsible for a bilateral MSP aid program are as follows:

g QUESTIONS

g How much and what kind of military, police and security aid and training does your government provide to the government forces of the country where human rights violations are committed?

g Is the aid and training directed at particular parts of the military or police?

g Does the aid and trade include a human rights component? Does it include security equipment and training?

g Are human rights conditions placed on this military or police aid?

g How is the human rights impact evaluated?

g What is the level and nature of bilateral contact and exchanges between military and police in both countries? Are there joint exercises, or exchanges at military and police staff colleges?

g Is there joint participation in international peace-keeping missions, seminars or conferences?

Transfers of MSP
training and expertise

Transfers of skills, knowledge and expertise to foreign MSP personnel are a growing reality and can be crucial in contributing to further human rights abuses or in helping prevent such abuses. AI can campaign to ensure that human rights are an integral part of any training provided to, or conducted with, foreign military, security and police forces.

The increased use of private companies in security and even military roles, as well as the increase in multi-national forces in international peace-keeping missions, has brought a new dimension to this issue.

The basis of AI's position on MSP training is simple: it should not contribute to serious human rights violations. We must always point out that the training of military and law enforcement personnel should be the responsibility of the governmental authorities, and that human rights training cannot be meaningful or effective without the establishment of proper systems of accountability.

AI takes no part in the drafting of human rights training programs for MSP personnel from countries where human rights within AI's mandate are systematically and persistently violated.

However, AI can try to help clarify how international human rights instruments should routinely be part of the training of all MSP personnel.

It can be difficult to judge how far particular MSP training is a necessary contributing factor in human rights violations. Governments of foreign military trainers have been fairly unwilling to disclose full details of the training and how it relates to human rights. For example, the US Government tried to promote its "expanded" International Military Education and Training (IMET) as "human rights friendly", and AI has begun a discussion with the government about this. However, the information received so far is not satisfactory. The same is true of the UK's MSP training programs for foreign personnel, which affect over a hundred other countries.

One way AI can make "reasonable assumptions" about the effect on human rights of any transfers of skills, knowledge and expertise to MSP personnel is to seek answers to the following types of questions:

g **QUESTIONS**

g Is there a serious pattern of human rights violations such that any MSP training may first require a program of legal reform in accordance with international standards, as well as the disbandment of certain types of security force units which are significantly responsible for committing violations?

g Have any candidates selected for the military training been responsible for human rights violations and, if so, what action has been taken to make them accountable? (AI's position is that systems of MSP training and accountability have to go hand in hand.)

g What human rights expertise do the trainers have?

What evidence is there that the trainers themselves are able to teach practical exercises based upon international human rights law and standards, and not just aspects of humanitarian law?

g What is the human rights content of the MSP course curricula?

Does it include rigorous training exercises based upon international human rights standards? Are the same trainees being subject to other parallel courses and, if so, what is the human rights content of these courses?

g Is the institutional environment where the MSP training takes place conducive to promoting human rights?

What other types of people and training courses take place there, what other materials are available to trainees, what are the extra-curricula activities and what is the overall institutional culture?

g What procedures are in place to monitor the human rights impact of the MSP training, especially in relation to the conduct of the trainees once they put their training in practice?

Each of the above questions could be turned into a statement of principle should this be necessary. Once you have obtained answers to the questions, you will have to assess whether AI may oppose the training altogether, expose certain aspects of it, or simply encourage further monitoring of it with other NGOs. A basic consideration will be whether the training includes lethal weapons training and the use of force because such knowledge can easily be misused. A high standard of evidence that such training will not be misused for human rights violations will be required.

The international dimension

Governments which recognize the need for more effective control of MSP transfers state that where such transfers are stopped in order to protect human rights, it often provides an unfair

market opportunity for commercial competitors. In other words, the governments themselves recognize the need for multilateral controls of MSP transfers and that bold unilateral actions may not prevent human rights violators obtaining MSP goods and services on the global market. AI activists involved in work on MSP transfers are thus increasingly making efforts to link demands for effective controls on MSP transfers at the national level to appeals for new initiatives by governments to establish international controls.

Most MSP actions now include reference to governments implementing their existing commitments to human rights protection in the UN, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union (EU) and other intergovernmental organization (IGO) agreements, such as the Wassenaar Arrangement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other states, including the Russian Federation.

In the context of their lobbying work, AI Sections have also called on governments to give fuller and more precise descriptions of the arms transfers in the UN Register.

At the level of regional IGOs, some AI Sections in Western Europe began in 1995 to lobby home governments and their EU members of parliament to support the implementation of provisions contained in a "Code of Conduct" which was developed by several NGOs (including AI).

By 1996 this "EU Code" was endorsed by over 600 NGOs and many prominent individuals. AI also submitted a report on arms control and human rights to EU governments as part of the Maastricht Treaty review process. It included reference to the need for arms control in terms of human rights in submissions to the Asia Pacific Economic Summit and to the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

The most developed set of principles for the international control of conventional arms and paramilitary equipment and training was launched in May 1997 by Dr Oscar Arias and other Nobel Peace Laureates, including AI. It is hoped that other Nobel Peace Laureates will help build a worldwide campaign over the next few years to have the Code considered in the UN and by national governments as a basis for new laws. The principles embodied in the Code can easily be used by AI Sections and include considerable overlap with AI's mandate and with AI's policy on MSP transfers. Discussions have begun with some diplomats, government officials and other NGOs to support this initiative, as well as with other international bodies. The Code is being translated into different languages.

Measuring our impact on MSP transfers

It is not simple to measure the effectiveness of AI's MSP work. There are quantitative and qualitative as well as short- and longer-term considerations. With regard to the purposes set out at the beginning of this section, we can ask how any AI action may:

- N stop or remedy individual violations or abuses in receiving countries;
- N promote better conduct and preventive measures;
- N develop the capacity of AI and the human rights movement.

Our MSP work can obviously be focused at all three levels, but it is at the second level that the key results are measured. Any evaluation of our progress should be assessed primarily in terms of specific end-results defined to measure:

- M public opinion and awareness of the effects on human rights of MSP transfers;
- M new legislation, government policies or regulations affecting MSP transfers;
- M standards of human rights education and training for foreign MSP personnel.

It is also important to seek to measure how well we have used the lever of our work on MSP transfers to more broadly press for action on a human rights situation. It is more difficult to measure what direct impact MSP work has in the target country.

Achieving concrete results in these areas clearly requires a long-term program of work on MSP transfers.

For AI to be effective, the right message must be delivered by the most appropriate messengers to the most powerful and influential targets. This requires the organization to develop a range of work on MSP transfers where such transfers relate to human rights within AI's mandate. The work requires a degree of specialization and international coordination to succeed, and is interlinked to the development of AI's home government and IGO lobbying, to its media work, and to its outreach to military, police, business and financial actors.

Most governments will not agree to arms control unless other governments do so as well. It is important to link any action to our campaign for international controls.

Combating atrocities

In late 1996 in the east of former Zaire, the discovery of military procurement documents provided sickening evidence to confirm AI's 1995 report stating that in the midst of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, Rwandese armed forces responsible for mass killings were supplied weapons and ammunition – through former Zaire – from Albania and Israel, secretly flown in by traders from the UK and Nigeria. These traders contributed to the genocide, but to date none has faced prosecution. As a result of campaigning by AI and other NGOs, the UN established an International Commission of Inquiry which found that arms had been transferred to the perpetrators of the genocide via former Zaire.

Examples of AI action on MSP transfers

N AI publicized that in 1996 Indonesian security forces used military vehicles against demonstrators. The USA banned exports of light weapons and armoured vehicles to Indonesia, but the German and UK governments readily offered new contracts to supply light tanks, armoured vehicles, water cannon and lethal combat training.

N AI obtained US Government documents in November 1995 which showed that US weapons exported to Colombia to fight drug-trafficking actually went to Colombian army units responsible for deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians and other grave human rights violations. Campaigning by AI and other NGOs led to such aid being suspended.

N In 1997 AI published a report *Arming the Torturers: Electro-Shock Torture and the Spread of Stun Technology*, which achieved widespread worldwide media publicity. Sections raised AI's concerns about the use of electro-shock stun guns, batons, shields and belts for torture and ill-treatment with their governments and the responsibility of several supply companies. This helped focus international attention not only on the weapons, but also on particular cases of torture and ill-treatment, on the conduct of law enforcement personnel, and on the efforts of governments to provide human rights protection through proper export control of security equipment.

AI Spain identified government secrecy as the main obstacle to effective monitoring and control of MSP transfers. Together with Greenpeace, Médecins sans Frontières and the development NGO Indermon, they developed a highly successful campaign under the slogan "Killing Secrets". In spite of initial opposition, in March 1997 the Spanish Congress of Deputies unanimously approved a motion on transparency and control of the arms trade.

Summary of AI's policy on MSP transfers

N No position on arms embargoes or sanctions

AI neither supports nor opposes sanctions against governments which are guilty of human rights violations, and takes no position on punitive measures of any kind, such as sanctions or boycotts.

N Opposition to a MSP transfer

AI may oppose MSP transfers (of equipment, personnel, training or technology), including proven financial or logistical support for such transfers, to governments and NGEs that can reasonably be assumed to contribute to human rights violations within AI's mandate.

N Calls for cessation

A "call for a cessation" of an MSP transfer requires the mutual agreement of the IS and Section who can make this decision when one of the following three conditions can be verified:

M the sole practical use for the MSP transfer is to commit human rights violations within AI's mandate;

M the transfer of the type/class of equipment has been shown in practice to contribute to such violations in the receiving country; or

M the transfers support those specific military, paramilitary or security units which are significantly responsible for such violations and which AI would press to be disbanded.

N Searching questions

When the conditions necessary to call for a cessation cannot be verified, AI may ask "searching questions" of the supplier government and companies in their home countries about the use to which intended MSP transfers will be put by the receiving country. Such questions could draw attention to the danger of the MSP transfer being used in the receiving country for the violation of human rights within AI's mandate, but should contain no demand, explicit or implicit, that the transfer be stopped. Where appropriate, such actions could be publicized. These questions should be approved by the board or executive of the Section concerned after prior consultation with the IS.

N MSP legislation: onus on the sender

All AI Sections should call for legislation and regulations which prohibit MSP transfers from taking place unless it can be reasonably demonstrated that such transfers will not contribute to human rights violations within AI's mandate. Such laws usually address issues broader than AI's human rights concerns.

Searching questions

Searching questions raised with the supplying government or company must always warn of the danger of sending the particular MSP transfers. They should also seek precautionary action by the authorities such as:

N conducting a human rights impact study before any decision on MSP transfers is reached;

N carrying out on-site monitoring of the use of MSP transfers;

N ensuring that human rights monitors have access to the affected areas;

N providing legal guarantees in all end-use certificates that any MSP transfers (not only equipment, but also spare parts, maintenance and training contracts and so on) will be immediately cancelled if they are misused for serious human rights violations.

Main principles to include in legislation on MSP

All legislation and regulations should prohibit MSP transfers from taking place unless it can be reasonably demonstrated that such transfers will not contribute to human rights violations within AI's mandate. Such laws usually address issues broader than AI's human rights concerns, but AI can support or oppose provisions in principle according to the following criteria:

N human rights in the intended receiving country must be taken into consideration prior to any decision to approve an MSP transfer;

N effective channels for receiving human rights information from NGOs are established;

N reports are issued on the human rights record of governments and, where applicable, armed opposition groups in all receiving countries;

N the sender should take responsibility for the use of MSP transfers in practice (including regular monitoring of end-user certificates);

N prohibit the transfer of any MSP equipment, personnel, training or technology, as well as logistical and financial support, unless it can be reasonably demonstrated that such transfers will not contribute to human rights violations;

N legal provisions are precise and concrete, avoiding ambiguities;

N the legislature is notified of all information necessary to enable it to exercise proper control over the implementation of the law;

N regular and comprehensive reports, including of small arms transfers, are made for inclusion in the UN Register of Conventional Arms.

A Chadian soldier stands outside a military camp in N'Djamena which is frequently used as a detention centre. Foreign governments, including those of China, France and the USA, have armed and trained the security forces of Chad.

© Reuters/Popperfoto

Questions to Shell

After human rights violations in Nigeria increased, AI Sections put searching questions to the Shell Group of companies, which has influence in the country. The questions included: "If Shell has been negotiating for the import of weaponry or non-lethal equipment for use by the Nigerian police, what precautions has Shell taken to ensure that such equipment is not used to violate human rights? Will Shell make public the rules of engagement it developed for police engaged in oilfield operations? Will Shell consider trying to help promote a range of practical measures such as improving training programs for Nigerian police, prison officers and military?"

Shell eventually responded positively and provided significant information on all these questions.

AI Sections in Europe and the USA publicly questioned the transfer of attack helicopters, fighter jets and artillery by the US Government to Israel following atrocities committed by the Israeli armed forces in Lebanon using such equipment during Operation Grapes of Wrath. Questions took the following form: "Were US weapons used in Operation Grapes of Wrath? If so, please identify them. Were US weapons used in incidents where civilians were killed or injured? Please identify these incidents and the weapons involved." Significantly, the US Government took the unusual step of refusing to reply to AI's questions.

Examples of those questioned

N On Indonesia and East Timor, AI Sections fielded searching questions publicly in statements and open letters about the use of Spanish military transport aircraft, as well as UK and US jet fighters and military training. The questions sought information about access to human rights monitors in outlying areas of Indonesia and East Timor.

N On Chad, searching questions were asked publicly in AI reports about the use by Chadian armed forces of US, French, Dutch and Chinese arms and military training.

N On the USA, the US Section asked searching questions regarding the human rights impact of the annual US government military assistance program. These were published as part of an annual report by the Section. This report is sent to many officials involved in Congress and relevant departments of state, as well as to other NGOs.

Members of a Colombian army counter-insurgency unit. AI members in the USA have campaigned to prevent military aid being supplied to the Colombian forces without adequate controls.

© Ascodas

AI reports by the UK and USA Sections on military, security and police transfers

MODERN WORLD
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information pours around the world instantly. News about human rights violations can reach an enormous audience in seconds. Human rights activists around the world can be linked by new technology. Understanding and using this fast-developing means of communication is vital to AI's work. This section looks at:

- N Electronic communications / 52
 The Internet / 52
- N Online research / 53
- N Campaigning and action / 54
- N Helping the movement work together / 55

Electronic communications

Electronic communications (electronic mail, bulletin boards, the Internet, etc) can be extremely useful to AI's work. It is an area of work that is changing and developing rapidly – as is the Internet itself. The examples of national and local work cited here are intended to be illustrative, not comprehensive.

Electronic communications can be used in a wide variety of ways:

N Detailed research on countries, themes, corporations, IGO instruments, what other NGOs are doing, and even specific cases can be done through the Internet to help prepare for a campaign.

N Putting campaign materials on the Internet can help to publicize the campaign, encourage activism, distribute materials to people who might otherwise not have access to them, and raise general human rights awareness.

N Action appeals can be put on the Internet to generate a worldwide response and get people interested in joining AI.

N Special fundraising appeals can be issued over the Internet.

N Consultation networks and discussion groups can be set up inside and outside AI to generate and discuss ideas, provide feedback, and keep campaigners and activists in touch throughout the campaign.

Several countries already have committed volunteers, and in some cases entire groups, who can help you with this work. If you do not know who is available to help, contact the Information Technology Program at the IS, or scan the Internet for material posted by members in your country – usually an e-mail address will be included.

The Internet

The Internet offers wonderful opportunities to campaigners. You can supply information to millions of people around the world in an attractive and interactive form. It is also relatively cheap to set up.

One of its many advantages is that distance is largely irrelevant. Connecting to a computer in your town is just as easy and costs the same as connecting to one on the other side of the world.

The main disadvantage of the Internet is that only some people have access to it in the wealthiest nations, and almost no one can use it in the poorest countries.

As with other campaigning materials, it is important to have a specific purpose and target audience in mind before embarking on an Internet campaign.

If you do set up a website, there are some useful tips to refer to.

c TIPS

c Before you begin, look at as many other sites as possible. Make sure users can find the site easily.

c Ensure that users can get around the site easily. Every page should include links leading to all the key parts of the site.

c Keep making changes to the site.

The site should be in the web's primary language, English, as well as the local language.

c Aim to provide everything electronically that you would otherwise make available to the public, such as leaflets, posters and press releases.

c Consider who the information is primarily aimed at.

c Do not put non-public information online.

c Maintain a mailing list by asking users to leave an e-mail address if they want to volunteer, join AI, or be kept informed of changes to the website.

c Make sure there is a way for users to reply with constructive criticism or praise.

c Perhaps add a questionnaire to get an idea of who is visiting the site.

- c On-screen buttons and logos can be borrowed from AI's sites, but get permission from the webdeveloper first (see margin).
- c Large graphics and excessive animation slow down the speed at which pages are received and can leave visitors frustrated.
- c Advertise your website on other websites and elsewhere.

Online research

There is a wealth of data on the Internet that is useful to AI's research. A few of the categories of information available are listed below.

N UN and other IGO information. UN information is available via gopher at:

<gopher://nywork1.undp.org/>

or the web:

<<http://undcp.or.at/unlinks.html>>

Material from a range of other IGOs is also available, such as the Organization of American States, the International Labour Organisation, and so on; the UN web page contains links to a wide variety of pages by other international organizations.

Information published by Human Rights Watch, the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, and Physicians for Human Rights are all linked through the human rights gopher at:

<gopher://gopher.humanrights.org:
5000/1>

Websites may also be maintained by legal libraries, university human rights programs, civil rights organizations and disaster relief organizations.

N Public news sources range from Reuters and Agence France Presse news wires to local newspapers from all corners of the world. For sources of international news, try:

<<http://yahoo.com/news>>

N Informal discussion groups (usenet and similar conferences of the Association for Progressive Communicating) about human rights. The most popular are probably:

<soc.rights.human>

and:

<misc.activism.progressive>

There are many others, including a wide range of country-specific discussion groups under the general rubric soc.culture.(countryname).

Quality can be quite variable, but a good country-specific discussion group can provide grassroots information not available through more traditional news media.

N Mailing list/discussion groups (listservs) about a country are often more private and of higher quality than open discussion groups, but can be more difficult to find. If you cannot locate one, ask for information in the soc.culture newsgroup for that country.

N Prisoner pages have also been established in a few cases. For example, see:

<[http://www.xs4all.nl/~tank/
spg-1/sigaction.htm](http://www.xs4all.nl/~tank/spg-1/sigaction.htm)>

There are several sites which try to maintain nearly complete lists of the constantly expanding human rights material on the Internet. A good general "clearing house" site is the directory of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) at:

<<http://shr.aaas.org/dhr.htm>>

Campaigning and action

Publishing AI's information online can accomplish many purposes: raising general levels of awareness about human rights, both in general and as they apply to specific situations; providing detailed and accurate information to activists, other NGOs, governments and the media; publicizing AI's work on behalf of victims; and inviting others to take part in that work.

Means by which AI information is currently “published” online include:

N General information about AI is located at the international web site (www.amnesty.org) and on many other AI websites. This information includes the AI mandate, how AI addresses specific concerns such as the death penalty, and addresses of AI offices. Information about national and group activities is included on web pages established by AI Sections or local groups.

N The news service is available on the main international website and by subscribing to the Amnesty-L list. To subscribe to the list, send an e-mail to:

<majordomo@oil.ca>

Put the words “subscribe Amnesty-L” in the body of the message without the quote marks.

Many news releases are cross-posted to general usenet groups such as:

<soc.rights.human> and: <misc.activism.progressive>

Some AI volunteers also cross-post news releases to usenet groups that discuss specific countries or human rights issues.

N Most country and campaign reports are available on the international web site at:

<<http://www.amnesty.org/>>

and on many other national and group sites.

N AI information is sometimes posted in forums where it can be publicly debated, such as in the Peacenet conference ai.general or when information is cross-posted to Internet news groups. This “open forum” publication is useful and more dynamic than posting information in read-only forums; however, the poster must be willing to monitor the news group in order to answer any questions, challenges, or other issues that may arise from the posting.

N Another growing area is the provision of action material via the Internet, and in some cases using the Internet itself as a tool for appeals or protests.

N Urgent Actions (UAs) can be distributed to members of the UA network by e-mail by the national UA coordinator. Some UA coordinators who already maintain e-mail distribution services are:

M for the USA, Scott Harrison:

<sharrison@igc.apc.org>

M for the UK, Ray Mitchell:

<rmitchellai@gn.apc.org>

M for Germany, Guido Gabriel:

<ggabriel@amnesty.cl.sub.de>

M for Canada, Marilyn McKim:

<aito@web.apc.org>

M for Belgium (francophone), Xavier Zeebroeck:

<xzeebroeck@aibf.be>

If your national UA coordinator does not have access to e-mail, contact the AIUK UA coordinator who may be able to help. Full UAs are generally not distributed publicly because of concerns among the UA coordinators’ network about balancing worldwide response. However, the information portion of a UA is often posted to public forums with a footer inviting readers to join the UA network.

UAs are available through the APC networks in English at: <ai.uan> and in German at: <ai.uan.de>

N Worldwide Appeals, greeting card appeals and other special appeals are posted on the international website and several national, group and volunteer sites inviting the general public to respond. In some cases, electronic response forms are also provided.

N The American Freedom Writer appeals are distributed by e-mail to the Freedom Writer network.

N Web pages about a specific prisoner or other cases have been established by some local groups, with requests to write on behalf of the prisoner, copies of letters received from the

prisoner or his/her family, and other information. These individual human stories can be very effective in illustrating how AI works and encouraging non-members to become active. For example, see the page on an Argentine prisoner maintained by Mike Katz-Lacabe of Group 64 at: <http://www.best.com/~mlacabe/puigjane.html>

The potential for using the Internet to build the human and financial resources available for AI's human rights work is just beginning to develop. Areas that need to be worked on further include: how to register as a new member through the Internet; how to buy AI reports and merchandise; and how to donate funds to AI. A useful resource on using the Internet for fundraising is maintained by Howard Lake of the UK Section at:

<http://fundraising.co.uk>

A few Sections have put membership application forms on the Internet, which is an extremely convenient way for new members to join, although people should not be asked to send credit card details over the Internet without adequate security.

Helping the movement work together

There are many ways of using electronic communications to keep in touch internally, to foster consultation, information sharing, coordinated action and international solidarity. Below are just a few of the things being tried by various national and local bodies.

N Several Sections (in the USA and Canada, for example) have linked their board members and other activist-leaders by e-mail in order to facilitate quick consultation and in-depth discussion without constant meetings.

N Several Sections have opened private conference or bulletin boards for AI members in their country using private bulletin board software (in francophone Belgium, Sweden, the Netherlands and Argentina, for example) or by establishing private conferences through a public service provider, such as the [ai.ideas](#) conference on Peacenet, or, for more specific concerns, [ai.computer](#) and [ai.policy](#)

These bulletin boards may include: information on events; cross-postings of AI reports and AI internal information; and AI action forms. They provide a convenient and cheap way of making information and consultation available to members. Please remember that pre-embargo press material and information about strategies on forthcoming campaigns are sensitive and should not be published to the entire membership.

N There are a number of conferences, "listservs" and other electronic distribution networks open to AI members with specific interests. Many conferences have a "conf-to-mail" facility so that people who have only e-mail access can participate. A small sample includes:

M "Amnestyd" is an internal e-mail discussion group for sharing ideas and questions among members. For information, send an e-mail to:

amnestyd-request@magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu

If you wish to join, please give your name and indicate your AI affiliation in the body of your message.

M "ITGen" is a manually maintained discussion group for general issues about information technology. A similar group, "Ticorreo", operates in Spanish. To join, send an e-mail to itgen@amnesty.org

putting the words "subscribe ai-www" in the body of the message without the quote marks.

M "AI-Fund" is a manually maintained discussion group for fundraisers. To join, send an e-mail to Howard Lake at the UK Section:

hlake@ai-uk.gn.apc.org

A similar group, "redrec", operates in Spanish. To join, send an e-mail to David Coe at the UK Section:

dcoe@ai-uk.gn.apc.org

M AIUSA maintains a number of theme networks.

The Legal Support Network:

<sfarrior@igc.apc.org>

The Conscientious Objectors Support Network:

<jcdickinson@igc.apc.org>

The Educators Network:

<janets@igc.apc.org>

The Government Action Network:

<gan@aiusa.usa.com>

M Several countries have national computer volunteer groups that will provide training on how to use e-mail and public networks. There are active national computer groups in the USA, UK, Germany, Australia, Italy, Canada and several other countries.

M All staff at the IS are available by

e-mail. If you do not have a specific contact but need information from the IS, you can send an e-mail to the general mailbox at:

<amnestyis@amnesty.org>

The first line in the main body of the message should be general information, for example

Attention: Africa Research

or ***Please deliver to the human rights education team***.

Be sure to include your name and e-mail address in the body of the message, as well as contact information for other ways of reaching you (postal address, fax number, etc). The workload at the IS is very heavy; please do not send an e-mail there if your query can be handled by your national office.

N Other ways in which electronic communication could be used are: to link members in a country linking project; to plan international campaigns; or to support members of a particular membership network (such as a lawyers' network or a medical action network).

AI's webdevelopers

Visit AI's developer's resource site :

<<http://www.amnesty.org/webdev>>

Send an e-mail to:

<webdevelop@amnesty.org>

org>

for username and password.

To join AI's webdeveloper's discussion list, send an e-mail to:

<majordomo@oil.ca>

Put the words "subscribe ai-www" in the body of the message without the quote marks.

Campaigning on the Internet: escaping censorship

The exchange of information on the Internet is not governed by national or international laws, and most governments find it almost impossible to police Internet activities. The size of the Internet makes it virtually impossible to enforce censorship. The extract below from the International Herald Tribune illustrates the possible implications of the use of the Internet for human rights education and campaigning in countries where human rights information is restricted.

Award-winning website

If you want inspiration, visit AI's award-winning refugee campaign web site at:

<www.refuge.amnesty.org>

Campaign organizer at the IS, Beate Kubitz, explained: "It's the first time we've had a whole website dedicated to a campaign. It goes further than just publishing existing information like press releases and leaflets. The site provides ways that can directly help the campaign, for example you can download posters or add your name to an electronic petition."

International outrage, concern and solidarity following the massacre in Beijing in 1989 was able to reach into China as never before because of the rapid growth in the number of fax machines, particularly in the Chinese business community.

A CD-ROM produced by AIUSA entitled Amnesty Interactive.

If you maintain an AI website, or are planning to set one up, you will need a copy of AI's Electronic Publishing Guidelines, which will give advice on what to publish, and what not to publish, on the Internet.

CHAPTER 3 ORGANIZING FOR ACTION

Campaigning in AI is always part of a coordinated global effort. The information and strategies produced at the international level of AI are the basis of national campaigning strategies and action. This chapter deals with the relationship between these two levels. It also looks at the internal context within AI of campaigning and the structures and organizational health of AI.

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“If you cry ‘Forward!’ you must without fail make a plan in what direction to go. Don’t you see that if, without doing so, you call out the word to both a monk and a revolutionary, they will go in directions precisely opposite?”

Chekhov

International action planning

To help maintain AI's reputation for impartiality and independence, the organization has developed an Action Planning Process, which aims to achieve balance of action across geographical regions and themes. This process, which is guided by AI's research and analysis, also ensures that there is campaigning not just on countries or issues that feature in media headlines or excite widespread interest in our society, but also on those which are "forgotten" or "difficult".

Action forms

AI has developed a number of standard ways of generating different levels of action from its membership. These are known internally as action forms. Action forms are continually adapted as campaigning needs change and AI evaluates its methods. Standardized action forms are important to:

N allow clear choices to be made by AI about the most effective action to be directed towards cases, countries or issues over time;

N allow advance action planning by all parts of AI;

N provide clarity about expectations for levels of campaigning activity.

Standardized action forms are not intended to stifle creativity or result in standardized campaigning – AI is committed to creative and strategic campaigning at all levels of the membership. International action forms are standardized to make expectations and advance planning readily understandable and communicable between AI structures.

Section campaigners are encouraged to adapt actions to make them more effective. This involves analysing the capacity of your Section and society to influence different human rights situations. This may mean prioritizing particular international objectives or upgrading levels of action on some countries. It may mean not participating in some actions or participating only in parts of them. Advice on adapting IS strategies, actions and materials is given later in this chapter.

Specific details about current action forms are outlined in AI's Menu of Actions (AI Index: ORG 32/01/96). This provides:

N a brief explanation of all the action forms currently used by AI;

N expectations about the levels of activity that Sections and other AI structures will generate in relation to the different action forms;

N standards regarding IS production of internal circulars and external materials.

Deciding actions

Most country actions initiated by the International Secretariat (IS) come from the process of reviewing a country strategy (in which Sections participate) and the rolling program of strategy meetings which occur on each country. Needs for long-term campaigning action are assessed and planned. Changes to longer term strategy may be necessary because of an unforeseen change in a country situation.

There are agreed criteria for deciding when it is appropriate to implement full-scale country campaigns. Sections are involved in developing the strategy of these campaigns.

Sections are expected to take part in major country and theme campaigns at some level. They are also expected to take the information on planned actions and assess which of them should be a priority for their Section on the basis of strategic opportunities and principles outlined in the guidelines on Section specialization.

Campaigning on a national level

The campaign coordinator

The primary focus of AI's campaign coordinators is to develop the effectiveness and capacity of AI's members, of the wider society and of the government to protect specific human rights around the world.

A campaign coordinator is at the centre of AI campaigning in his or her country. S/he is also central to communication with the international movement and plays a key role in planning, implementing and evaluating a campaign.

Although specific functions will vary, most campaign coordinators will have the following responsibilities:

N developing the strategic campaigning capacity in AI's membership by encouraging local and specialist AI groups and other membership structures to think about how they can best contribute to international and Section campaigning objectives and by providing training in campaigning techniques, etc;

N organizing initial consultations to discuss and plan action calendars and campaigns;

N ensuring that all relevant people in the Section/structure (media, co-group, lobbyist, fundraiser, outreach coordinator, etc.) are involved from the earliest stages of discussion and kept informed throughout the planning and implementation of major campaigns;

N producing national campaign strategies, in cooperation with all relevant members of the Section, which outline:

M how national campaigns will contribute to the achievement of the international objectives of the campaign;

M national objectives for lobbying, outreach, publicity, etc;

M any "internal" objectives of campaigns to help improve the Section's work, such as recruiting members, strengthening contacts with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), fundraising, etc;

M the suggested involvement and activities of different parts of the membership structure in relation to campaigns, and the materials and support that they will need;

N informing the Campaigning and Crisis Response Program (CCR) at the IS (or, in the case of non-Section structures, the IS Regional Development Team) of your Section's plans and progress;

N producing campaign materials (depending on resources), giving advice and generally supporting action from the membership;

N coordinating the involvement of the Section and various membership structures in campaigns;

N coordinating and monitoring throughout campaigns, being in regular contact and providing feedback to the IS and to groups/individuals working on campaigns in your country;

N evaluating campaigns to see whether and how the national objectives were achieved, and contributing to the international evaluation.

Information

AI relies on information. In practice, this means that an enormous amount of information from the IS arrives by post, fax or e-mail. It also means that campaigners must keep themselves informed of international current affairs and domestic political, social and economic developments as these form the context for the Section's campaigning.

The most important sources of IS-originated information for the campaign coordinator are (at present):

N the Action Planning Bulletin, which is the basic action planning tool for all Sections, issued in April and November;

N the weekly campaign coordinator's fax (in English, French and Spanish) and mailing, which provides updates on action planning, warning of unscheduled actions, advance copies of campaigning circulars, requests for feedback, etc;

N the News Service, which provides advance warning of media initiatives and AI's responses to human rights developments worldwide (these go directly to Section press officers);

N UAs, which provide the latest information on particular human rights violations that should be acted on, as well as the most recent background summaries of AI's concerns on any country (they are sent almost daily to UA coordinators and are included in the Weekly Mailing);

N the Weekly Mailing to Sections, which contains full country reports, policy and organizational developments, financial statements, etc, and has a contents sheet so that the most relevant can be easily selected.

There are also different campaigning strategies and circulars. There may be separate mailings to intergovernmental organization (IGO), death penalty and outreach coordinators, although copies of these circulars are often in the mailing to the campaign coordinator.

c TIPS

To avoid drowning in a sea of paper and being overwhelmed by the many demands, you may find it helpful to develop a system for prioritizing mail and managing your time.

c Be realistic about how long things take to do. Keep a record of how much time you spend on tasks in a typical day or week so that you can plan your time realistically.

c Make sure that you allow time for tasks that are important in the long term, but which may suffer when urgent tasks arise. For example, filing is important, but is rarely urgent. However, if you do not allow time for it, your other work may suffer when you cannot find the papers you need.

c Some people have found it useful to divide their work into categories, such as "Urgent and Important", "Important but not Urgent", "Urgent but Not Important", "Not Urgent and Not Important", or alternatively, "Must Do", "Should Do", "Would like to do if there is time". This enables you to prioritize your work. It also means that you can set aside a certain amount of time each day or week to do the "Important but Not Urgent" or "Should Do" tasks.

c Write daily or weekly task lists in the morning or the night before, remembering to keep to your priorities. Alternatively, set a "task for the day" and do it. This is a useful way of forcing yourself to decide your priorities and will give you a sense of achievement when you do what you set out to do.

c Fix deadlines for tasks. Try to be realistic about how long things will take but also bear in mind that tasks tend to expand to fill the time you give them so try to stick to your deadline once you have set it.

c Try to set aside periods of time that are free from interruptions: ask others to take your telephone calls (and do the same for them sometimes), have meeting-free periods, etc.

c Do one thing at a time. If you remain focused, you will get things done quicker.

c Do not try to be a perfectionist when it does not really matter. Try to do some things "well enough".

- c Try to deal with pieces of paper only once. Every time you start to look at something, it will take you time to focus on what needs doing. The more times you do this, the more time you are wasting on refocusing your attention on the issue concerned.
- c Plan your work, especially large tasks. Time spent preparing what needs to be done and when will save you time in the long run.
- c Try not to postpone important matters that are unpleasant. They can preoccupy your mind and block your creativity.
- c Learn to say “NO”!

What level of action?

Part of the campaign coordinator’s role is to filter information received from the IS and adapt it to local circumstances. Pressure of time may simply mean that this involves translating or cutting texts into a more digestible size before distributing them within the Section or externally.

Wherever possible, however, the process should mean deciding how your Section’s membership, government and society can make the best contribution to AI’s international campaigning objectives.

The IS should provide a brief explanation of why participation from your society is of particular importance. This may also suggest which sectors or individuals may be of particular importance for the action. This advice is one of the starting points for determining whether your Section takes part and your level of participation. Other important factors are the capacity of your structure and the priorities it has set for growth and development (see below).

Integrating or upgrading actions

The levels of action suggested by the IS are in general for guidance only. It is therefore possible, and sometimes advisable, to upgrade or downgrade actions, to integrate actions, or to initiate your own actions.

Sections may upgrade an action if they see that there is the potential in their country to give it a higher profile, or to make a greater impact than was suggested internationally, or to balance its campaigning program.

It is often possible to link or integrate actions to suit a Section’s priorities, resources and working style or to use fully the opportunities that exist nationally.

c TIPS

c Find out if any AI groups are working on Action Files on the countries or issues in question. Can these files be used to help illustrate the campaign and boost the action on these cases?

c Can UAs on the country or issue be used during a campaign as an ongoing focus of action by supplying them to the media or constructing special actions such as vigils or embassy visits?

c Can UAs help the work of local or specialist AI groups working on Action Files or other actions by providing fresh opportunities to highlight related issues?

c Can IS news releases be adapted to highlight issues of particular concern to AI, such as impunity?

c Can particular campaigns be used to strengthen and expand specialist groups or Regional Action Networks (RANs)?

c Give the demands for action in IS news and campaign media releases a national focus. Use a local spokesperson and a quote from them in the release. Direct the campaign demands specifically towards your government. What would you like them to do? Provide details of what the campaign aims to do and what it will involve.

c Make leaflets and campaigning materials interesting to your public and audience. International leaflets have by their nature to be general and you are best placed to make them connect effectively with people in your country.

c Give a national/local focus to actions. Provide the addresses of relevant embassies and consulates. Suggest that people write to newspapers or government officials in your country as appropriate.

c Make use of your national culture in your campaigning. Emphasize its similarities with international human rights values – its respect for fairness, sticking up for those who are vulnerable, respect for life, compassion, etc.

c Are there cultural or historical factors that could help people relate to human rights violations in other countries? Has your society suffered from political repression in the past? Is there significant interest in the music and culture of the society of the country you are campaigning on?

Section-initiated actions

Some Sections initiate their own actions from time to time to take advantage of a particular situation in their country, such as heightened media interest in a country or issue, or to link in with the Section's priorities, such as fundraising. In such cases, it is important to discuss the plan with the IS to ensure that the action fits in with the internationally agreed strategy on a country or theme and to agree the required level of IS input.

Adapting IS strategies and materials

The information sent by the IS for any campaigning action is supposed to meet the average needs of every Section. Most Sections will want to adapt it to make it more appropriate to their own campaigning environment.

For example, the IS will produce an international strategy for a campaign. It is then up to the Section to devise a national strategy and set down measurable aims (see Chapter 1). A campaign will be most successful if it is based on an analysis of the potential of different sectors in your society and of your government to stop human rights violations in the target country.

Similarly, campaigning circulars and leaflets should be adapted to include appropriate recommendations specific to your country and to make the issues interesting to your audiences. Wherever possible, campaigning materials produced at the national level for the membership should seek to develop their strategic and campaigning skills.

There are usually a variety of ready-made or easily adaptable materials for campaigns, including photograph displays, videos, leaflets, etc. The IS also often produces more basic material, such as photographs and quotes, which Sections may choose to use in displays, leaflets or magazine articles.

In some cases it may be possible for Sections to link together with other Sections to share resources for designs and materials in a common language.

The following questions may help you when deciding how to adapt IS strategies and materials.

g QUESTIONS

g What do you want to achieve?

For instance, what parts of the government do you want to take what action?

g What do you want groups or individual members to do?

For instance, do you want them to visit their local members of parliament?

g What materials do you need to provide to enable them to do it?

Supporting action from the membership

N Groups

For most major campaigns a campaign kit can be the best way to supply AI local or specialist groups with all the advice and material they need to take action. Giving groups enough notice is important: it will encourage participation and enable these groups to plan properly for maximum effect.

If time allows, send out an initial preparatory campaign kit to introduce the campaign objectives and strategy and to provide questions that may help to focus group discussions on the development of their strategy.

One of the advantages of AI groups for Section campaigning work is that they can plan a range of activities and mobilize action from others in their community. This means that the advice and materials supplied give them the power to do what individuals alone could not.

N Individual members

Servicing individual members and getting action from them can be more problematic. Sending them all campaigning materials can become very expensive. Groups tend to hold individual members accountable for action – formally and informally. It is much more difficult to know that a member will act on the material received. In many Sections even hard-hitting direct mail appeals with a simple action request of returning a coupon with money achieve, on average, only a 10 per cent response rate. Nevertheless, involving AI's individual membership in campaigning actions remains an important goal. It can enhance AI's campaigning effectiveness and build a wider commitment to AI.

c TIPS

Mobilizing individual members

c Include campaigning actions in newsletters for members and supporters.

Most AI structures produce a newsletter for supporters. This can include feature cases with points you could raise and people to write to. Include sets of campaign postcards stapled into the centre pages and pre-addressed so they only need a stamp and signature.

c Organize specialist letter-writing networks.

Invite members to join the UA network. Some Sections and other organizations have established networks of letter-writers ready to respond quickly to media coverage or political developments related to AI's work by writing letters to editors and local and national politicians. Be aware that establishing such structures can often mean an ongoing commitment of resources.

If possible, make these networks self-financing by encouraging their members to pay an extra fee or encouraging others to specifically fund the scheme.

c Include campaigning actions in fundraising appeals.

c Ask individual members to get others to join AI and take action to persuade organizations of which they are members to support AI's campaigns.

N Feedback

Feedback is often the forgotten part of a campaign coordinator's role. Feedback from Sections on participation in campaigns and campaigning is essential for planning and monitoring campaigning at the international level.

For example, a strategy may not be working because certain parts of the membership are not taking action, rather than because it is a bad strategy. Without feedback, AI will not know and an effective way of stopping human rights violations may be abandoned.

Timely feedback also allows monitoring of campaigning impact and adjustments in strategy. For example, it is important for a campaign to know if some embassies agree to meet AI in one country as other Sections may be able to use this information in their approaches. If some particular government representatives have begun to respond to AI's representations from a particular country, this may be important for focusing future strategy.

Feedback can help to identify areas where some form of assistance, in training, materials, information or resources from the IS or elsewhere, may help overcome problems. It also enables resources and ideas to be shared and campaigning to be improved. Campaigners can face similar problems, overcome them differently and produce materials that have a much wider usage than simply in their own society. Without feedback these things can remain a "national" secret.

Theme campaigning

In AI's early days, the term "theme" referred to a type of human rights violation within AI's mandate. Theme campaigns against torture, the death penalty, "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions (political killings) were major events in the life of the movement.

Today the word "theme" has a broader meaning within AI. It can be:

N a category of human rights violation that AI opposes;

N a section of society at risk, such as women, refugees or trade unionists;

N an event or anniversary, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights' 50th anniversary or the 1993 UN World Conference on Human Rights.

Human rights violations

When an individual's human rights are violated AI can respond on an individual basis. If the violations continue, especially if they appear to be endemic, AI responds by looking at the patterns of violations which emerge. These patterns will form the focus of AI's country strategy and may result in a major country campaign.

There are times, however, when the persistence of torture or other violations in many countries leads AI to conduct a worldwide campaign, focusing on that particular form of human rights violation.

Such campaigns can help to generate the momentum for global action on the particular violation. One aim is to establish and strengthen international standards and mechanisms. They can also help to build awareness and educate AI's membership on complex areas of AI's mandate. Moreover, they help to show that AI is universal in its approach – taking up violations in countries across the regional and political spectrum. The campaign against the death penalty in 1989, for example, highlighted the USA and China, and built the momentum of governments ratifying the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The major categories of human rights violations that AI has campaigned against are:

M Torture

- M Death Penalty
- M Political Killings
- M “Disappearances”

Identity

When one group or section of society is particularly targeted for human rights violations, either because of their identity or as part of a larger pattern of violations, it can be useful to focus on the identity of the group in order to draw attention to and mobilize a response against the attacks. Sometimes there might be specific preventive measures that AI will advocate. Sometimes focusing on a specific group can in itself have a preventive effect. On an emotional level, people often respond better to people than to issues. AI is frequently asked: “Who are the victims?”

An international overview may reveal that similar groups of people are targets of similar human rights violations around the world. When this happens, AI can illustrate and campaign on global problems that need global solutions.

The groups or sectors of society that AI has focused on have included:

- M Women
- M Indigenous people
- M Refugees
- M Children
- M Trade unionists
- M Human rights defenders
- M Conscientious objectors

Events

Theme events are often anniversaries, although they may be conferences or sporting events that provide opportunities for AI’s work. AI and other organizations, for example, campaigned around the death penalty at the time of the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, USA.

The 1993 UN World Conference on Human Rights presented the opportunity to work for reform of the UN human rights system and to challenge the concerted efforts by some governments to use the conference to undermine the basis of AI’s work. AI’s campaigning led to the creation of the post of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The 1996 UN World Conference on Women in Beijing was also the focus of major campaigning by AI and other organizations.

How theme campaigns work

AI is continually campaigning on the themes identified above through its work on individual appeals, Action File work by individual groups and country actions and campaigns. It also focuses on these themes at different times of the year, such as International Women’s Day on 8 March, International Children’s Day, AI Week in October, and a Trade Unionists’ Action on 1 May. Sections can decide whether or not, and how, to participate in these actions.

AI also organizes regular major theme campaigns involving the worldwide membership. These involve the production of campaigning materials that have a much longer shelf-life, for AI and for others campaigning on these issues, and are useful campaigning references. They include:

- M Torture in the Eighties
- M When the State Kills... The Death Penalty vs Human Rights
- M Getting away with Murder – political killings and “disappearances” in the 1990s

Strategies for these major campaigns are worked out in consultation with Sections, the IS and other NGOs. Section campaign coordinators are encouraged to adapt and develop their own strategies to complement internationally agreed objectives.

Campaigning and organizational health

Context of campaigning

Campaigning and campaigns do not happen in a vacuum. They are affected by the context within which they take place. The local, national and international conditions affecting AI's campaigning can broadly be classified as "internal" (related to AI as an organization) and "external" (related to the world outside and the human rights issues on which AI campaigns). This section deals with the internal framework for campaigning.

The core internal, organizational factor affecting AI's campaigning is the mandate. This defines in broad terms what members, groups, Sections and the international organization as a whole campaign on. There are also organizational working rules (such as the work on own country rule); decision-making structures and processes (such as groupings and International Council Meetings); and international priorities (such as those decided at ICMs). All these provide a context at the international level for the activities carried out by AI Sections and groups all over the world and help to ensure the efficient functioning of the international movement.

At the national level, organizational factors are an important consideration for Section campaign coordinators. AI cannot end human rights violations in the short term. This means we must constantly build and regenerate our organizational capacity to sustain campaigning activities in the future. Campaign coordinators have a vital role in ensuring that structures and organizational procedures serve rather than hinder campaigning work, and that campaigning contributes to the maintenance, regeneration and effective functioning of the whole organization.

This section focuses on why campaign coordinators need to concern themselves with:

- N organizational structures and processes in the Section
- N building the capacity of the Section
- N ensuring continuity within the Section
- N internal organizational objectives for the Section.

Structure and organization

For campaigning to be effective, it needs to function within a stable, flexible and appropriate organization. For an AI structure to be strong and credible, it needs a dynamic and effective campaigning program. Maintaining an appropriate balance between campaigning activities and the organizational needs of a mass movement is a constant challenge for AI.

There is no one organizational structure that suits all countries or situations. Different options have been explored by AI Sections over the years.

Your Section may need only one or two of these structures, or there may be others that would suit your Section's needs better. The golden rule is that a structure must meet an identified need and be appropriate for its intended purpose. In AI, this means that structures must be responsive to the needs of the campaigning that they exist to support, and appropriate in terms of the resources and overall priorities of the Section. Only your Section can decide the best organizational structure for your needs. When taking such decisions, the following issues are worth considering.

N Integration

How will you ensure that the various functions within your Section – media, fundraising, campaigning, membership development – are integrated? What methods of organizing will improve integration of these functions? How will you ensure that members, local groups, specialist groups, and so on are appropriately involved in the formulation of national campaigning strategy? How do you encourage local and specialist groups to develop strategies that would complement the national strategy?

N Balancing campaigning and organizational resources

Campaigning activities without adequate organizational attention and resources may become chaotic, disjointed and ineffective. Likewise, formal campaigning structures absorb resources, so

you need to ensure that the structures are effective in terms of campaigning end results, and do not become a bureaucratic or financial burden.

N Communication

Clear and timely communication is essential to effective campaigning. National campaigning strategy must be communicated to groups in advance to allow them to plan appropriate actions. Similarly, groups must keep the Section informed of their activities so that the Section can maintain an overview of what is being done. What communication mechanisms are needed to ensure that the different bodies in your Section receive the information they need, when they need it? Again, you must exercise caution to ensure that communication does not become an end in itself. Overloading people with irrelevant information can be as great a problem as not giving them enough.

N Decision-making

Commitment from the decision-makers (such as the board) to strategy – and the resources that the strategy entails – is also important to effective campaigning. Decision-making processes should be clear and responsive to the needs of relevant people at the relevant time. Campaigners should provide decision-makers with the appropriate information and alert relevant people in the Section when unclear decisions have a negative impact on the Section's campaigning effectiveness.

Expanding capacity and developing skills

There are always more human rights violations than AI can campaign against effectively. This is one reason why strategic campaigning is essential for AI. In addition, all structures need to build on their existing campaigning capacity. The campaign coordinator's role is central to this.

AI expects a lot of its members. They need to know about AI's mandate, current concerns, working methods and fundraising, and how to plan a campaign and undertake a myriad of campaigning and organizational activities. It is obvious that they need support to develop the appropriate knowledge and skills. Some of the main ways of offering such support include:

c TIPS

N Full training programs

Many Sections have an ongoing, structured program for training their members. This may include an induction program and more advanced training in AI's mandate, concerns, working methods and techniques for active members. Many Sections provide specialist training for people with particular responsibilities – board members, country coordinators, press officers, group campaign coordinators, etc. They also recruit professional trainers to identify members' training needs and design and run the program.

Campaign coordinators have an important role to play in ensuring that the training program is responsive to the campaigning priorities of the Section. This may mean contributing to the overall design of the program to make sure that campaigning needs are addressed, and helping to run training sessions on campaigning techniques, strategic planning, campaign coordination and other issues.

A training program should always be part of the overall strategic plan of the Section. For example, if outreach has been identified as a priority, then the training program should contribute by training the membership in how to do outreach work.

N One-off training sessions

Groups, networks, the Section board, staff and others may occasionally need one-off training sessions on particular issues. For example, at an annual general meeting prior to the launch of a

country campaign, people within the Section may need to be briefed on the background and main concerns underlying the campaign, as well as the Section's objectives and strategy and perhaps the specific techniques relevant to the campaign.

N Materials

Written materials are an important way of training members. Some sections put a Tip of the Month in their regular group mailing on techniques such as letter-writing, planning or organizing a demonstration.

Campaign materials can also incorporate a training element by including, for example, questions to guide the group's discussion on their strategy for the campaign.

c Identifying and analysing needs

What is the need? (Is there a major campaign approaching, for example?) Is training necessary? (A group might ask for a training workshop when you may be able to meet the need by a letter or telephone call). Who needs training? When do they need it? Who is the best person to do the training and what are the priorities?

c Training objectives

What exactly do you want the training to achieve? If you are not clear about this, it will not achieve the results you want.

Training objectives should state what the participants will be able to do as a result of the training (for example, write a one-page news release). Objectives will vary according to whom the training is aimed, even if it is on a similar subject (training for new members on the mandate will aim for a lower level of understanding than mandate training for group coordinators). The key is to be specific and realistic.

A report by the Committee for the Systematic Evaluation of Techniques (SYSTEC) in 1989 (AI Index: ACT 11/03/89) into long-term prisoner of conscience work showed clearly that Action Files that were part of a country strategy were more successful than those for which there seemed to be no strategy.

Action forms

Action forms cover all AI's campaigning – from the short blast of thousands of letters, faxes and telegrams of Urgent Actions to the steady activity of local AI groups on Action Files or the major concerted worldwide efforts of country campaigns.

All action forms are meant to be part of an integrated strategy on a country or issue. They should allow AI to focus its resources for a period, to sustain a level of action and to vary the amount of pressure or concern according to that strategy.

The movement needs to review consistently the impact of these action forms. For example, if Action Files do not seem to be working, other forms of action, such as a special action for lawyers, could be tried.

Theme campaigns can be initiated from International Council Meeting decisions, Sections or the relevant teams in the IS. They require ratification by the International Executive Committee.

When the IS announces an action, Sections will normally be given 18 months' notice for a major campaign or six months' notice for a smaller action. For crisis situations action will have to be mobilized more rapidly.

Criteria for country campaigns

Proposals for country campaigns should meet the following criteria:

N the gravity of the human rights situation should merit the high investment of resources which a country campaign entails;

N there are specific strategic reasons for undertaking the campaign at this time;

N the proposed country campaign should contribute to ensuring a regional and political balance in AI's campaigning;

N the proposed country should be a designated "high priority" or "super-high priority" country;

N there should be the potential for achieving concrete positive results in the country;

N there should be a requirement for the involvement of a significant part of the membership (if not, another action form will be more appropriate);

N the country strategy should appear to be relatively stable in the medium term (18 to 24 months) to enable planning and the preparation of materials (this does not exclude campaigning on volatile countries so long as the underlying political situation, the power structures and the human rights context are unlikely to change dramatically);

N it must be possible to obtain the information needed to prepare the campaign.

The proposal for a country campaign should also identify:

N the implications for AI membership development and strengthening of the NGO movement in the country;

N how the campaign might strengthen international and regional human rights standards or mechanisms.

c TIPS

WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS

c Spend time making sure volunteers have what they need.

c Find out what motivates them and ensure you keep giving the motivation.

- c Try and match volunteers' skills and interests with appropriate tasks.
- c Give people a definite list of tasks for which they are responsible.
- c Provide some variety and room to develop new skills and experience.
- c Do not overwork volunteers!
- c Involve volunteers in discussions and activities.
- c Create a pleasant working environment.
- c Show appreciation and celebrate success.
- c Where possible, let people work together on tasks.

There is a widespread recognition that to be more effective AI must develop ways of encouraging AI's membership at all levels to make strategic choices about how they can most effectively contribute to AI's objectives.* There are various materials available to help different levels of the membership to make strategic choices. You can also contact relevant IS development and/or campaigning staff for further advice. (See Strategic Thinking in Amnesty International, AI Index: POL 50/05/94.)

Making decisions

Decisions about Section participation in campaign should be based on:

- N the international strategy
- N national context/issues
- N available resources

International strategies should identify the countries on which campaigning action is particularly important. Where this is not explicit, campaigners can contact the relevant researcher or campaign coordinator at the IS to discuss their expectations.

Nothing succeeds like success! Feedback is an important way of encouraging and motivating people at every level of the movement by the good news and success stories of other campaigners and campaigns.

An AI group campaigning kit

- N Background to country/issue and summary of AI's specific concerns.
- N Summary of international and national strategy and rationale for it, including a list of the specific objectives of the campaign.
- N Question and Answer (Q&A) sheets to answer anticipated questions that group members or the public may have.
- N Advice on outreach actions, such as how to approach local religious leaders and what action to ask for. Provide separate sheets specific to the different outreach sectors you are prioritizing. If there are materials specifically designed to appeal to these outreach sectors, include enough copies of these.
- N Advice and materials for gaining media coverage (see Chapter 9).
- N Advice on lobbying, such as how to approach and arrange meetings with local politicians, points to raise, what action to ask for (see Chapter 11).
- N Letter-writing advice, such as points to raise with officials in the target country. Include advice on correct style, salutation, when and how many letters to send to each address, whether to write as AI members or not, the addresses to write to (see Chapter 7).
- N Suggestions and advice for fundraising during the campaign (see Chapter 5).
- N Suggestions and advice on conducting public activities to highlight the campaign (see Chapter 7).
- N Advice on leaflets/posters/petitions, such as how they can be used and distributed (see Chapter 8).

N A list of significant dates for the campaign – in the target country or the home country.

N A copy of the relevant AI report or briefing with an order form.

Some Sections use coloured paper for different topics to make it easier to follow. Make sure coloured paper can be photocopied.

‘Lives behind the Lies’:

(clockwise from top right) a street artist in Zurich; AI delegates meet relatives of the “disappeared” in Lima, Peru; a table set for the “disappeared” in New Zealand; 43 cattle in Copenhagen, Denmark, highlight a case from Colombia where 43 people were made to “disappear” for allegedly stealing cattle; the Bourequat brothers, former “disappeared” prisoners from Morocco, at the campaign launch in Stockholm, Sweden; footprints of the “disappeared” in New Zealand.

© ai

AI campaign on China as seen from around the world. Top two pictures: the UK Section launches the campaign in London’s Chinatown. Below: a mural in Brazil; a demonstration in Pakistan; AI’s Secretary General Pierre Sané delivers a copy of AI’s China report to the Chinese Embassy in Bangkok: riot police block his path.

© ai

Problem solving

Before rushing to find solutions, you should check that you have identified the problem correctly. As Einstein said: “The formulation of a problem is often more essential than its solution.”

N Identify the problem

M Break the problem down into component parts by listing all the “symptoms” of the problem, such as low morale, inadequate access to the media.

M Gather any background information on the problem by talking to the people involved.

M Brainstorm: What do we know about the problem? What are the causes? (See margin, page 71.)

N Find solutions

This can be easy if you have correctly identified the problem. But do not commit yourselves to the most obvious solution before considering alternatives. There are several ways you can do this:

M Brainstorm.

M Ask probing questions of a variety of people. What strategy could resolve the problem? What approaches have not been thought of?

M List ideas under two columns. What could make the problem better? What could make it worse?

M Invite someone with little relationship to the problem to provide ideas. People often find it difficult to be creative about familiar problems.

N Make the decision

You probably have many ideas now. To decide on the right one:

M Start by eliminating unworkable choices.

M Look at combining solutions.

M Look at the potential costs, risks, benefits and rewards of the remaining options.

M Test the chosen solution. Does it solve the root cause of the problem? Does it satisfy everyone or most people? Is there time to implement it? Do we have the resources to implement it?

f

Training is often more difficult than you think. Participants may be nervous about trying new things. It is often tricky to train people in something on which you are an expert. Knowing how to do something and being able to train others to do it are completely different skills. If possible, seek the advice of an experienced trainer, particularly if it is a difficult issue or if the training is using a lot of Section resources. Advice is also available from the International Development Unit at the IS.

Logo for AI's 1997 campaign on refugees' human rights

c TIPS

BRAINSTORMING

c Start with a question relevant to the topic being considered.

c The lead person should write down people's ideas as they arise, preferably on a large sheet of paper so that everyone can see.

c People should not comment on or challenge others' ideas, or try to interpret their meaning during the session as this will stifle creativity.

c Try to generate as many ideas as possible.

c After the session, discuss and analyse the ideas.

CHAPTER 4 RESPONDING TO CRISES

The world is likely to witness an increased number of human rights and humanitarian crises. AI needs to react to these quickly and effectively, as we are expected to do by victims, AI members, the human rights community and the general public. This chapter looks at how AI does this and how the organization is developing this area of work.

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“When written in Chinese, the word crisis is composed of two characters. One represents danger and the other represents opportunity.”

John F. Kennedy, former US President, in a speech made in 1959

Criteria for launching a crisis response

AI must respond swiftly to human rights crises. In order to sustain the commitment of our activists and broader public support, we must find ways to respond effectively to situations of massive human rights violations. As this is a relatively new area of work, AI's response to crises is still evolving (see Appendix 4: Mobilizing the IS during Crisis Response).

AI's Secretary General is responsible for judging when it is necessary to invoke AI's crisis response mechanisms. Each decision takes account of the following four criteria:

N an upsurge of human rights violations within AI's mandate on a scale which is very serious in the context of that country or region – or the risk of a serious upsurge of human rights violations;*

N previously agreed action plans and resources are insufficient to respond effectively to the situation;

N the need to manage within the IS the overall institutional response to the situation;

N the need to mobilize rapidly the capacity of the whole movement in order to respond effectively.

The crisis response mechanism will normally be operational for only a few months and will end when an ongoing country strategy has been developed that takes into account changes in the country situation.

The IS will establish a process for identifying potential human rights crises as part of the country strategy development and review process in order to take preventive action where possible and to prepare contingency plans.

The four criteria, which were developed in consultation with the membership, are important because without them AI risks:

N taking too much time to decide on each crisis;

N sliding from crisis to crisis;

N only reacting to crises which are already in the limelight;

N reacting to crises which are of interest to those Sections in a good position to influence the IS;

N unleashing competition within the IS to launch many crisis responses.

A beginning for long-term work

As a crisis response can by definition only be a short-term exercise, the long-term strategy to deal with any crisis country is of paramount importance. Attention of media, politicians, public, members and AI's leadership will soon be drawn to yet another crisis. Much fear has been expressed that after a crisis response is finished, the country would be forgotten. This should not be the case. Whereas AI's contribution to stopping violations in the midst of a crisis might often be limited, it could be in a position to make a major contribution at a later stage. Any crisis should motivate AI to:

N develop an extensive post-crisis strategy;

N raise money for the immediate crisis response as well as for long-term work;

N reprioritize staffing and resources, organize the movement better and expand the program on the country.

Sections need to remember this when working on a crisis. What will the long-term consequences be of a period of intense effort on a particular country or region? How will you maintain links with all those outreach contacts you worked with? How will you ensure that the public (possibly even new members), motivated to act with AI because of their outrage over gross human rights violations in a particular country, do not feel three months later that this country has been abandoned by AI?

Aims of crisis response

Many of the world's worst crises are much more than human rights disasters. They are crises of civil war, collapsing states and international confusion. Expectations of AI may be too large. We cannot solve the total crisis, so it is essential to make clear:

N the specific human rights aspects of the crisis that AI can address;

N what AI and the people it seeks to mobilize can contribute to the effort to resolve those human rights aspects;

N any other purposes, besides addressing the specific crisis, that should be pursued.

In the light of this, we should consider the level of our response.

Although AI must be realistic in what it can achieve, each individual helped represents success. Nobody is obliged to succeed, but we do have an obligation to try. Our contributions fit into the following categories:

N help prevent, stop, diminish or relieve human rights violations in the target country;

N focus world attention on forgotten crises;

N add an authoritative voice about human rights violations in the face of rumours, exaggeration, propaganda or fragmented reporting;

N provide analysis of human rights aspects in the crisis;

N suggest solutions to be pursued by others;

N help prevent future violations.

There are other aims to pursue which go beyond the immediate situation. These include:

N improvements in the preparedness of the international community for future crises, such as the reinforcement of intergovernmental human rights mechanisms and of early warning systems;

N alerting the world to the need for preventive actions in the crisis region or elsewhere;

N ending practices which may contribute to human right violations such as the export of military, security and police transfers;

N creating human rights awareness, knowledge and willingness to campaign;

N AI publicity, membership recruitment and fundraising to support the movement's activities in relation to the crisis and in general.

AI policy and crisis response

A perfect organizational system for crisis response is useless if AI has not developed its policies relevant to crises. Issues pertinent to crises, such as military intervention, cooperation with other organizations on research, security risks for the membership and staff deployed to the field require attention.

Clear answers are needed for these difficult issues and at times expectations of what we can do in relation to a particular crisis situation will have to be modified.

Section objectives

Sections should consider which aims outlined in an international strategy they are particularly well placed to pursue. Does their society's relationship with the crisis country provide particular opportunities to influence the situation which would merit additional aims? Sections will also have to decide which aims they have the capacity to pursue.

However, Sections must act speedily on the international aims that are set, otherwise the response of the movement as a whole will lose impact. This means that there is less scope for extensive discussion and consultation. Decision-making needs to become faster, more directed, and competencies need to be very clear. At the same time, those with most knowledge about a situation should play a key role in decision-making and quality control.

During crises emotions run high, the organization gets stretched and people feel stressed. That is why communication about what is expected of the movement is so important during crises. Malfunctioning communication at such times divides the movement. Good communication will unite it, motivate it and strengthen its effectiveness.

It is the responsibility of everyone in the movement to communicate and respond in a timely and appropriate way. Once decisions are made we all need to stick to them.

As crises often have a high media profile, no unilateral initiatives should be launched. Sections should consult the IS on their initiatives and pursue the internationally agreed objectives. Common action initiatives should be shared and supported by all in the movement.

Mobilizing for action

A crisis situation may require much creative thinking to find ways in which the membership can contribute to often unclear, complicated and chaotic situations. In many Sections, big or small, mostly centralized action will take place in the early stages of a crisis because speed is vital. Centralized Section structures for crisis response therefore need to be clear.

Sections need to set up structures for dealing with crises, operating in parallel with the IS.* Each Section will need to adapt the suggestions below to their local circumstances.

j CHECKLIST

What Sections can do

j Alert all relevant people of the crisis response, including Section staff, volunteers and some intermediate structures.

j Form a crisis committee. This should include key people in the Section, such as Section director, campaign coordinator, press officer, fundraiser, administrator, relevant co-group and/or Regional Action Network (RAN) group representative. Agree who will coordinate the team and who will have final decision-making authority.

j Agree one central contact person between the IS and your Section and inform the IS immediately. If possible, provide a contact number outside working hours.

j Feed into strategy consultation requests from the IS.

j Consider how best to use membership structures to take action. It is important to proactively develop actions and proposals once international objectives are clear. Our experience is that while some Sections have developed creative and dynamic activities, others have been paralysed by the enormity of the problem and frustrated by the lack of recommendations about what they should do.

j If relevant, identify at least one person at Section level able to work in English pending translation of materials. At times of crisis it will often not be possible for the IS to issue materials at short notice in languages other than English.

j Agree division of other tasks within the crisis committee and review regularly. Use the committee to brainstorm for creative ideas in responding to the crisis. A set meeting slot each day should be available, even if it is not always used.

j Assess administrative needs for the crisis. Good administration is vital to running a crisis response. From evaluations of past crises, the IS has identified the provision of additional administrative support as a priority. You may need help with mailings, photocopying, translations, etc. For many Sections, additional administrative support will come from volunteers.

j Review existing communication plans. What mailings or newsletters to members or others are in production or planned? Do these offer opportunities for getting across AI's message, showing AI is acting and starting action and fundraising.

j List relevant sources of information and possible targets for action and make contact with them:

M relevant government departments;

M local UN offices which may have useful background documents;

M media contacts, particularly journalists going to or returning from the crisis area;

M local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with operations in the crisis area or surrounding region.

Consider how they can support AI's efforts and vice versa. For example, some Sections have found an informal NGO working group useful for crisis situations. Others have directed journalists to other NGOs/UN offices for information on the crisis in the absence of, or to supplement, AI reports.

j React to initial requests for action, information gathering and NGO liaison from the IS. Some Sections may also need to consider requests for deployment of their staff or Section contacts to work at the IS or join missions.

j Consider fundraising initiatives which enable AI greater flexibility in its crisis response. Some Sections have placed special advertisements, putting AI's position and seeking funds. Others have found that an emergency slip of paper mentioning the crisis included in scheduled direct mail appeals has been effective in raising funds.

j Consider the best way of keeping the membership informed and involved. A weekly bulletin can be useful to keep everyone in the Section up to date, but this may be costly and/or time consuming. Consider including a telephone number in the regular newsletter advertised as a "crisis hotline". This could be a recorded message, giving the latest news and ideas for action.

A daily or weekly meeting to update people of developments can be a good way of establishing a shared sense of purpose, relevance and momentum. It can also provide a good opportunity for people to provide ideas and suggestions for action.

Getting crisis response information to groups and members is important – and vital if you need them to act. Usual communication channels to the membership may be too slow. Decide early on who in the membership really needs action information fast, make this a priority and look at the options for faster methods of communication.

Money

If at all possible, set aside money in your budget to be used only for crisis response work: new actions, travel, translation or additional staff.

Decide criteria for the use of this budget and who authorises such expenditure before you need to use it. If no extra money is available then be clear about who has the authority to cut resources in other areas.

Crisis response coordinators

Crisis mechanisms in Sections will need clear decision-making structures and processes to adjust priorities. These will not be uniform, as they need to suit the structure of each Section. However, where the capacity exists, appointing a crisis response coordinator could help to organize these functions. She or he should enable your Section to operate better in conjunction with the international system.

A Section may feel it is justifiable to recruit someone specifically to such a post. Alternatively, it may be the campaign coordinator, the head of the campaigning department, or, in smaller Sections, the director who are used to coordinating the work of many people in the Section.

The crisis response coordinator should have the authority to make things happen or have easy access to those who may need to take immediate decisions. The list below gives some ideas on the role of this person. A crisis response coordinator:

N triggers the crisis response mechanism in the Section and coordinates the work of those involved;

N is the central contact for communication with the IS; s/he will be expected to react to requests for information or consultation quickly;

N informs the IS of actions taken and of new Section initiatives;

N mobilizes extra staff and volunteers within the Section;

N initiates activities to support the international effort and facilitates the search for Section staff and volunteers to be deployed by the IS;

N controls a crisis budget;

N develops the crisis response capacity of the Section in an ongoing way;

N participates in the development of AI's international crisis response capacity and policy by participating in international workshops, evaluation and training exercises where appropriate.

Groups and membership

Mobilizing local groups and the wider membership during crises may often prove more difficult than activating at the central Section level. For a start, it takes time. When a crisis develops quickly and the situation changes continuously it is a challenge to keep your membership up to date with new action suggestions and background information.

So, should the Section resign itself mainly to centralized action? Many Sections think not. Among their reasons are:

N displays of public dismay, outrage and action in response to human rights crises can have an enormous effect on decision-makers in your own country and, either directly or indirectly, on those committing human rights abuses;

N large-scale or symbolic actions can provide enormous moral support for victims and human rights defenders: there are times when grassroots pressure can greatly enhance and support efforts made at the Section level in lobbying, media work, outreach, etc;

N not involving the wider membership risks missing important opportunities – including using the skills, knowledge and influence of AI's members: if members feel the crisis is being handled by “experts” at the centre they may not realize that their contribution is needed;

N many of the crises will be in the public eye: groups and members will want to do something and if an effective role for them is not found they will become increasingly frustrated and demoralized.

However, it is important to get some strategic action almost immediately. Showing AI members that the crisis is being acted upon might mean changing the front cover of the newsletter or the content of an appeal letter, or including a special letter with the newsletter.

A “red alert” system may be necessary. This means mobilizing certain elements of your membership to work on the crisis with an assumption that their other work is suspended for a set period. Make sure this system is clearly explained to your membership.

With this in mind, do you set up new structures to deal with crises or work with those you already have? Below are some ideas. You can use a combination of some or all of them.

Urgent Action network

Your UA network has often received action requests on the crisis country before crisis mode is officially declared. Over the crisis period the network is likely to be mobilized again. The very

nature of the network is to respond quickly, so you probably have many rapid forms of communication with members – e-mail, telephone trees, etc.

Some members of the network might be willing to sign up for crisis response activities using techniques which are similar to those they employ on UAs (letter-writing, faxing, local press work). Training needs are therefore minimal as members are already familiar with such work.

Such an option would require consultation with the network and your UA coordinator(s). It is likely that if the UA network was used in this way, strict guidelines would need to be agreed to avoid overburdening the network or undermining their main work.

Crisis response network

Sections could consider setting up a separate pool of their groups or individual members who are prepared to be mobilized at short notice. (You might consider using such a pool for rapid response actions too if the frequency and level of action was felt to undermine enthusiasm for such a project.)

Experiences from setting up your UA network, particularly the practical aspects, will be valuable on such a project. You will also need to think about:

N How to encourage groups/members to get involved Working on a crisis situation is very different from working on behalf of individuals. The scale of crises can create feelings of paralysis in terms of what AI or you as an individual can achieve.

N Setting realistic expectations and boundaries for the network

You may find that in some cases the very mention of a crisis is attractive to your members. You will also need to consider how to keep the network motivated when there is no crisis response and how large the network should be. You will need to maintain a balance between crisis work and the ongoing program.

N Communications

Look at how your UA network currently functions: the potential for rapid communication varies enormously between Sections. Tailor the expectations of the network to the speed at which it can work and the servicing that is realistic to provide.

N The network's relationship with the Section and intermediate structures

Make sure that reporting lines and division of tasks between the Section, intermediate structures (such as the relevant co-group) and the network are clear.

N Training and preparing the network

Try not to wait until a crisis happens before thinking about solutions to problems or providing relevant training. Being prepared will make the network's response more effective. What will you want people to do in a crisis? Is there specialized training that could help, for example in communications technology?

N Evaluating, improving and maintaining the network

Make sure that any system you put in place includes a set time for evaluation. Try to do this after the system has operated over two crises. If you want network members to give you feedback make sure you give them some. Tell them about AI's successes regarding the crisis and how the movement intends to continue work on the particular country in the long term. Do not let the network feel that a country has just been dropped. Tell the IS crisis response team about your experiences so that lessons learned and positive experiences can be shared with others.

Country/RAN coordinators and their groups

You have country/regional interest and expertise on tap here so use it for crisis work. If a country coordination group exists on the crisis country, heavy demands can be made of them. At times RAN coordinators can also be in this position, particularly when there is no co-group. Below are some tips to consider if you want this part of your membership to take action during crises:

c TIPS

c If at all possible the Section should make efforts to reinforce country coordination groups covering possible crisis countries. One Section has considered a “floating resource” coordinator whose speciality would be crisis response and who could assist country coordinators with response to an action. Another has looked at a crisis coordination group with the same function, formed and run in the same way as a country coordination group and essentially part of that intermediate structure, attending the same meetings, etc.

c Ensure that systems for rapid communications between the Section and the group are put in place. Some Sections have thought about providing fax machines for the co-group where they do not have one or have helped connect them to e-mail.

c If a particular country is classified “at risk” through the Review of Country Strategy, look at strengthening the co-groups for those countries (or try to set up a group if one does not already exist) in advance of a potential crisis.

c Look at the issues that may be particularly important in a crisis, or the actions that are likely to be a priority. For example, if it is media work then identify particular journalists with an expertise and begin to establish a relationship with them. Provide them with information and briefings, etc. If it is lobbying then seek to develop a positive working relationship with departmental officials responsible for this country and try to establish which individuals may be in a position to influence government policy.

c Consider strengthening and supporting relevant RAN coordinators and groups active in that RAN.

c Combine training for the RAN and co-group coordinators in crisis response work, looking at plans for both practical and strategic issues should a crisis break.

c Make sure responsibilities between the RAN and co-group are clear and that the tasks are divided so the work is shared. Ensure lines of communication and responsibilities between Section and co-group and/or RAN coordinator are agreed. If a crisis coordination committee is formed at Section level, consider how best to involve the co-group and/or RAN coordinator in this.

c Familiarize RAN groups, through your RAN coordinator and RAN group training, with the demands of crisis response work. A fast RAN may be issued as part of the actions for the crisis.

c Build in evaluation of the systems you use and the impact these are having, not just on the target country but also on other ongoing program work.

Mobilizing a large-scale reaction

Large-scale actions involving wide support from your members and the public can be an extremely important element of your crisis response. A way of mobilizing a large part of your

membership to offer an outlet for outrage is often as vital as targeted action from specific elements of your membership.

The following are some tips on how to try and make sure AI members and others know quickly that the crisis is being acted upon.

c TIPS

c Run a simple announcement on radio or in newspapers (especially if you can get free or reduced-price space) saying what AI is doing and calling on people to contact AI if there is action for them join.

c If you have a mass action you want people to take part in, or just want to provide more information about the crisis, give out a telephone “hotline” number at the Section, which people can call for more details. (This could be a recorded message.)

c Consider forming a telephone tree to communicate that crisis mode has been declared and that members can call the Section office with ideas and receive information. For example, each member of the crisis response network could be asked to call five other local group contacts.

c Groups and individual members could be encouraged to prepare a list of organizations and individuals they could mobilize at short notice and the ways they will do this.

c If your Section has an AI site on the Internet, or is planning one, think of ways to use it to publicize the crisis and provide action ideas.

c Make a special appeal for volunteers at the Section office if you have tasks that need doing. For some people, being involved practically in the office is as important as taking more direct action on the crisis country itself.

c Start a debate immediately in your newsletter to groups and members or in meetings about how the broader membership could be involved in human rights crisis situations. Ideas from them are likely to provide you with realistic and effective answers.

Campaigning techniques

Campaigning techniques to react to crises are in principle the same as those we apply to other situations. However, the severity of crisis situations forces us to make more creative use of those techniques and to implement these at speed. Much will depend on the particular situation and the analysis of what will have an impact. Some of the key areas are outlined below.

Media

At times of crisis the IS will try to get out at least a public holding statement to Sections within the first days of the crisis. Such a statement may not contain much news but will aim to help Sections to respond to media inquiries. The IS endeavours to have a presence in the crisis area as soon as possible. Often this will lead to possibilities for media work, initiated either directly from the region or from the IS.

If the crisis is being covered in the media, journalists may be interested in a “local angle”, which you can provide through campaigning actions such as vigils, demonstrations or symbolic actions.

The media can become the most dramatic public expression of AI’s position. AI’s message, if well packaged and visualized in creative, demonstrative actions, can be conveyed to both those responsible for violations and those who have an influence on them through the media.

The media may also be a vital source of information about the crisis. Journalists are likely to have access to the latest information through news agency and correspondents’ reports. Although AI

Sections cannot base actions solely on these reports, they can help to make sure that AI's comments are relevant and up to date by providing the latest background knowledge.

Make contact with journalists either travelling to or returning from the crisis area. Persuade them to include human rights issues in their reporting of the crisis.

If human rights concerns are not being covered, or if reporting lacks analysis, offer to hold a briefing for journalists.

Ask members to write letters to the editors calling for coverage.

Offer journalists a service. Direct journalists to reliable sources of information such as UN reports or those from NGOs, in addition to AI material, particularly if AI has not been able to issue detailed information immediately.

Assess whether media reporting is pressing your government into action.

Make contacts with "academics" or "experts" on the crisis country who may be interviewed by the media. Keep them informed of AI's concerns and try to get human rights issues covered in their briefings to the media.

Lobbying

During any crisis AI will have strong opinions about what action foreign governments, individually or combined in the UN and/or regional intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), should take. Some governments will be very willing to take action. They may have established their own crisis team in their foreign affairs department, which could be an invaluable source of information and pressure on the target country.

The first steps before deciding your strategy are:

N find out the relevant official to contact;

N find out what they have done about the crisis so far;

N find out what they are currently doing and what they are planning to do;

N ask whether they already have details of AI's position and information;

N ask if they have been discussing the situation with other governments and find out the outcomes of these discussions;

N find out what action the embassy is taking on the ground in the crisis country, and what action is being taken at the IGO level;

N find out what they believe will be the most effective action;

N find out how they propose to consult/liaise with NGOs, including AI, over future actions.

Sometimes it will be important to involve the membership in this lobbying. Local groups may be able to put pressure on the government to act, as may other organizations.

Where letter-writing is seen as ineffective – either to the target country because of internal chaos or to your own government because of the need for speed – petitions, public events, or face to face lobbying of local representatives can provide good vehicles for AI's message.

Sections in the same region as the crisis country will be particularly important in putting pressure on their own government and regional organizations. Where limited capacity exists, this may require the energy of most of your groups and members, as well as the Section.

Letter-writing

Where central authority is clearly defined, our traditional membership approach of letters, faxes and telephone calls will often be an important part of our response.

Where state authority has broken down, or communication lines are disrupted, letter-writing and similar techniques may still be an important channel of pressure, but directed towards the diplomatic representatives of the crisis country, including those at IGOs. Another target might be your own media or home government.

Outreach

During a crisis, some organizations will be more involved with issues directly related to AI's mandate than others. It may be that these organizations are not the usual ones your Section reaches out to.

These are likely to be human rights, development, and medical or other emergency relief organizations, which are often present in the field and witness what is happening. Human rights issues become an integral part of their work. Quickly identify which of these organizations will be particularly relevant by:

N exchanging information about the human rights situation;

N sharing insights for strategies to fight abuses;

N exploring how their actions (for example, towards your own government) complement AI's work and looking at where common action could be effective.

Some Sections manage to set up or participate in ad hoc groupings with other NGOs to facilitate this.

Information gathered from national NGOs with a presence in the field should be shared with the IS. Contacts with such organizations will be extremely helpful both for AI's work and their own.

In addition, key Sections might be asked to take on consultation with particular regional or international NGOs.

Evaluation

It is essential that our crisis response work is evaluated. Evaluations might look at impact (in terms of the aims for each response), process and organization.

While the crisis response team at the IS is normally responsible for initiating evaluations for the movement as a whole, the role of Sections in cooperating with such evaluations and ensuring that the process of evaluation is mirrored at Section level cannot be stressed enough.

Tanzanian Section's refugee coordinator Joseph Muganda interviews children in the Mtanga Refugee Camp who have lost their parents when families fled from the former Zaire

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* Possible indicators would include the demise of those institutions which should protect human rights, such as the collapse of state authority, withdrawal of human rights monitors, etc.

This is how a planned crisis response might look in table form. In practice, events dictate how and when responses are required and they may not coincide exactly with the schedule.

Seeking volunteers

The Irish Section ran an advertisement in its newsletter asking for volunteers to help during crisis response. They were looking for a team of volunteers that could be called upon at very short notice who also lived within easy reach of the office. They quickly recruited six people.

* Sections committed themselves to this in Decision 4, 1993 International Council Meeting, Boston.

In February 1996 the Belgian Section placed 840 pairs of shoes in front of the European Union building to symbolize those who had "disappeared" or been killed in Burundi during the Great Lakes crisis

© Frank Huysmans

Effectiveness demands that you are selective about who receives action material quickly. Rapid communications are usually more expensive. So, try and target your actions so that you can mobilize quickly.

During the Rwanda crisis in 1994, it was not until there was sustained media interest in the situation that many governments began to act. Understanding the relationship between your government and the media regarding the crisis will determine your most effective focus or angle.

An AI mission to Tanzania during the Great Lakes crisis response attracted an impressive amount of media attention in Tanzania. Media coverage was also reported in Denmark, the USA, Austria and Canada. From left: David Bull, Director of AIUK; Everest Mbuye, Chair of AI Tanzania; Mr Brahim, Head of the Refugee Division of the Tanzanian Ministry of Home Affairs; government official (unintroduced); Firoze Manji, former director of IS Africa program.

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AI launched the Great Lakes crisis response on 31 October 1996 after escalating conflict in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo

(former Zaire)

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CHAPTER 5

Fundraising and campaigning

Every campaigner knows the importance of having funds when taking action. However, seeing fundraising only as a means to an end is likely to lead to lost opportunities – for both campaigning and fundraising. In order to harness properly its potential support, AI members at every level need to recognize that both campaigners and fundraisers want action in support of human rights, and that action can be in the form of time or money.

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“The cost of liberty is less than the price of repression.”

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois

What is integrated fundraising and campaigning?

“If only we had the money we could...” As a campaigner you have probably thought this at least once, or if not, you probably will in the future.

Fundraising is an integral part of the work of a campaigning organization. In some AI Sections, campaign coordinators are also responsible for fundraising. In others, the roles are separate. In both cases, the campaign coordinator has an important role to play in creating a culture that places equal value on campaigning and fundraising and in breaking down the artificial barriers that can exist between them.

AI’s most valuable resource for campaigning and fundraising is its supporters (members and financial donors). To make the most of their commitment, it is important for AI’s different programs to plan together. Servicing and maintaining AI’s support base is the responsibility of both fundraisers and campaigners.

For these reasons it is useful for campaigners to acquire at least a basic knowledge of fundraising techniques and practice. Likewise, marketing principles and techniques essential to fundraising can help campaigning work.

Integrated fundraising and campaigning means making sure that:

N campaigning includes the message that AI needs support (both money and time) and provides the opportunity for people to give that support – for example, by including on leaflets coupons that ask people to join or donate funds;

N fundraising activities promote as much as possible the current campaigning objectives of AI;

N campaigns offer a wide range of actions to cater for all AI participants and structures;

N integration of fundraising and campaigning should take place systematically at the overall strategic planning stage, and in the action planning process.

Planning schedules and periods for fundraising and campaigning may not coincide exactly, yet it is important that action planning (which is often shorter term) takes place within an integrated plan.

The experience of many AI Sections shows that members and supporters change their method of support – from time to money and vice versa. Younger supporters may, for instance, be in a position to give time. As they become older and take on other responsibilities they may wish to show their support mainly through financial contributions. It is important that AI has the systems in place to enable and encourage people to make these choices.

The key fundraising task for Sections is to develop a base of members and donors outside of any group structure. Building such a support base may cost money at first but it is a proven path to financial self-sufficiency and raising income in any country.

Finally, fundraising is campaigning, as both activities:

N aim to influence behaviour;

N rely on targeting messages to different audiences;

N need clear communication and calls for action;

N need to make it easier to say “yes” than “no”;

N rely on building long-term relationships with supporters;

N provide opportunities for people to support AI’s human rights work;

N build awareness and knowledge.

Why integrate?

There are several reasons why AI needs to integrate fundraising and campaigning.

N AI’s fundraising reinforces its reputation for independence from government or major funders, thereby contributing to AI’s campaigning credibility and effectiveness.

N Integration prevents supporters and potential supporters from seeing AI as two separate organizations – one asking for money, another asking for time.

N AI's messages to both its supporters and the public need to be consistent and reinforcing. If AI is campaigning on the importance of building awareness on a particular human rights situation, this message will be strengthened or undermined by whether or not it is also carried in fundraising communications.

N Integration ensures that there is a clear image of what AI stands for and does. If AI excessively uses the images of children to raise funds there is a risk that AI could be wrongly perceived as a children's organization.

N Integration allows for multiple use of the same materials, thus saving money and providing extra resources for campaigning. For instance, campaign T-shirts can be sold, coupons can be included on campaigning literature, greeting cards featuring the images of the campaign can be sent to members, and AI reports can be sold.

A key fundraising principle is that "people give to help people not organizations". This means that fundraisers need to know the campaigning information to feed into appeals – and be able to transform them into gripping personal stories so that potential supporters can feel and see the need to donate to and join AI. People take action because of a combination of emotional and intellectual reasons – appeals to the head and heart!

The basics of fundraising

When AI needs action the first people it turns to are its members or known supporters, whether for time or money. It follows that a successful long-term fundraising (and campaigning) strategy depends on attracting and retaining support.

The basic conceptual tool is the fundraising pyramid (see diagram overleaf). The Pareto principle states that 80 per cent of income comes from 20 per cent of supporters (the top of the pyramid). A lot of fundraising energy and resources therefore go into trying to get people into the base of the pyramid – that first gesture of support through time or money. The investment of energy and resources spent on attracting supporters is then consolidated by seeking to move people up the support pyramid through developing their knowledge of and commitment to AI.

Techniques for attracting support

Attracting support, whether through advertising, inserts or letters, can be expensive. AI has found that in at least some countries people often join after thinking about it seriously three or four times first. So it is essential to give people as many opportunities as possible to think about joining, taking part or donating money.

It is also essential to have in place systems for recording the details of people who join – or who are interested in joining – so that you can continue to communicate with them. This can be a simple card index system or a computer database. The main techniques of attracting support are:

- N direct mail
- N advertising and promotion
- N telemarketing
- N merchandise
- N special events

Direct mail

Direct mail is one of AI's most successful techniques for attracting new support in countries with inexpensive and efficient postal systems. As printing and postage costs can be quite high, direct mail is most likely to be cost-effective when it is carefully targeted at people believed to be most likely to support AI – such as members of organizations who might be sympathetic to AI's concerns.

Sometimes it is possible to exchange a mailing with these organizations. The other organization mails your letter to its supporters and you mail their letter to AI supporters. In other situations, it is possible to rent or buy mailing lists. In some countries there are "list-brokers" who do mailings.

Direct mail can also attract support through member-get-member schemes. Either your members ask their friends to join or they send you likely names and addresses for you to mail directly. (The UK Section has a helpful list of guidelines on the conduct of mailing exchanges with other organizations.)

Send direct mail appeals to your members and donors at least four times a year. The main NGOs and AI Sections do this about six times a year. Your members will feel involved and appreciate your prompt thank you letters. Response rates to existing supporters range between 6 and 12 per cent.

Break-even costs vary substantially but may be at about 2 per cent response from cold lists. From exchange mailings you may get up to 5 per cent. The expectation in many organizations is not that the first mailing will make a profit but that over the period each new person can be expected to stay with the organization they will contribute a certain amount.

Advertising and promotion

Advertising in the national press, radio, television or cinema can be effective, although it is very expensive. It is important to make it easy for people to respond to the advertisements by including a clear coupon or telephone number. The best way of evaluating the effectiveness of your advertising is to check the number of responses.

If possible, test before you invest. You can do this by finding out how successful other organizations have been using similar techniques, by researching industry standards, or by running a small test before embarking on the major project.

Inserting membership/donor leaflets in magazines or newspapers can be effective, although carefully targeting the audience and the appeal can make the difference between success and failure. Look at previous results.

Magazines and newspapers may be able to provide you with market research results on the audience they reach, which can help you decide by matching that audience profile with the characteristics of your existing supporters. You can also place membership leaflets in stores, cafés or restaurants.

Telemarketing

Telemarketing is an established technique used in market research and selling in many societies. Many charitable and campaigning organizations also use it, as do a number of AI Sections. It involves telephoning supporters or potential supporters and persuading them to make a commitment to extra or continuing support. It is a very direct and personal way of communicating AI's need for support, and there is a much higher positive response rate than there is to direct mail, although the costs are higher. Some Sections have used this technique to successfully renew support from lapsed members.

Telephone companies can supply telephone numbers (probably for a fee) or they can be collected on membership forms and stored on databases.

The Norwegian Section has perhaps the most successful telemarketing program and has produced a guide (available in English) on running a telemarketing operation.

Merchandising

Merchandising – anything from ferry rides in Sierra Leone to greeting cards in Iceland – provides a valuable part of AI's income and another opportunity for people to show their support for AI. In some Sections, particularly where direct mail is inappropriate, it has become a significant source of income.

Much merchandise simply promotes AI by including the candle or the name on products such as pens, T-shirts or wash-bags. Some simply include a message that the profits will go to support AI's work. In other cases T-shirts promote specific campaign messages.

Merchandising can be a good way of reaching new audiences and recruiting supporters. Again, there needs to be some evidence that a market exists for a product. AI's membership may be a large enough market, but it can be best to look beyond these limits – and not to assume that AI's members share the same tastes.

Distribution of merchandise can be through AI's local groups for sale on stalls, through advertisements placed in AI's and other organizations' newsletters, or through a catalogue.

A marketing and distribution program for AI documents can also be a useful way of raising funds and spreading AI's message. Public libraries, school and university libraries, government departments and specialist bookshops may be interested in taking all or some of AI's publications.

Special events

Activities often associated with fundraising are special events such as music concerts, theatre performances, art awards, auctions and street appeals.

There is a saying for special event fundraising: "The first time is for making mistakes, the second to make money." For large events it is therefore strongly advised that professional assistance is sought before any decisions are made about investing significant resources or going ahead with the event.

A number of AI Sections have experience of special event fundraising. Their advice should be sought, and it is likely to be cheap!

Regular special events can be a valuable part of a fundraising strategy and a fairly reliable source of funds. They can also be a publicity vehicle for high profile figures to show their support.

It is usually best to stick with proven money-makers rather than trying things that are totally new. Even when successful in raising money, large special events do not have a good record for AI or other organizations in attracting long-term support. Special events are high-risk and involve considerable investment with no guarantee on the level of return or income. The more ambitious the plan, the higher the risks.

Many organizations have lost money even in events with very popular performers. High profile events take on a momentum of their own that becomes unstoppable. Because they are high investment and high risk, with few if any long-term benefits, they should not form the core of any fundraising program.

Risks can be kept to a minimum by the following steps:

N be clear about the audience you are seeking to attract – an impressive list of performers can fail to attract because their appeal is to too many diverse audiences;

N sell as many tickets as possible in advance;

N use venues with established audiences and get the owners to undertake the promotion of the event and underwrite costs;

N set a budget and profit goal before committing to the event: over-estimate expenses, under-estimate income and look at the time involved for staff and volunteers;

N calculate break-even point – how many tickets need to be sold to cover costs?

N check the legalities – licensing regulations, health and safety standards, public liability insurance, etc;

N keep careful records of income, expenditure and organization to make a repeat performance easier;

N publicize the event (cost publicity into your budget);

N investigate other possibilities for making income from the same event, such as having collectors asking for donations, selling T-shirts, etc.

Special event fundraising can, however, have many benefits. They can bring the community into contact with AI, provide AI with a vehicle for public and media promotion, and be fun for all involved. These are side-benefits though. The primary aim must still be to raise funds!

By and large, in special event fundraising small is beautiful. Events such as dinners, film or video evenings, and musical performances can be an important source of funds for AI groups. They can also increase AI's profile and the profile of a campaign in the community.

Campaign coordinators can encourage groups to organize small events with a specific campaign theme:

N During a country campaign fundraising dinners can be organized that feature the food of the country.

N Events can be billed as for the country campaign and the campaign slogan and logo can appear on all literature and publicity associated with the event.

N A special concert evening featuring the target country's music can be organized.

N A raffle can be run at events with prizes originating from the targeted country.

Do be careful, however, not to give the impression that all the money from that event will go to that campaign exclusively (unless it really will). Remind groups to evaluate the event – what worked and what they would do differently next time.

The AI Canadian Section (English-speaking branch) have produced an excellent and comprehensive guide to organizing special events which they are happy to supply to others on request.

Techniques for consolidating support

The principal way of building commitment to AI and for moving supporters up through the support pyramid is regular communication, including personal contact. This means reporting back to supporters on the results of campaigning, including good news stories of people being released. Let people know they are helping to make a difference!

The following techniques are used in developing regular communication with a support base of thousands of supporters:

N Direct mail

N Regular giving schemes

N Top supporters clubs

N Telemarketing

N Legacies and bequests

Direct mail

Direct mail is an important technique for renewing and building support. Once people have joined or made a donation they are then encouraged to give again to appeals. This is generally most effective when mailings are integrated with campaigning – when they are based on specific and current campaigns.

It is worth testing to see whether these appeals will be enhanced by adding an action element such as a postcard to be sent to a government. This testing is usually done by putting the card in half the mailing and coding the return coupons so that you can see which half responds with more donations.

Again, the campaign needs personalizing through the use of moving case histories.

Some AI Sections successfully mail their supporters for donations six times a year. Reasonable response rates range from 6 to 14 per cent for any one mailing.

These appeals also provide an opportunity to receive feedback on what the organization has achieved and to develop supporters' knowledge of and commitment to AI.

Each donation should be acknowledged – if possible by a thank you letter. Some organizations successfully use the thank you letter to seek a further donation. Some make a thank you telephone call in response to large donations.

Regular giving schemes

Direct mail can also be used to encourage supporters to give on a regular basis – preferably automatically. It represents a significant increase in cost-effectiveness, saving on administration, etc. This level of commitment represents another step up the donor pyramid. AI's experience is that people who gave perhaps a \$40 annual donation may be willing to give \$10 a month – tripling their donation. When this is done by automatic financial transfer, or deduction from credit cards, it is usually allowed to run on from year to year, providing a stable source of income at low cost.

Top supporters' clubs

To encourage supporters to take the step up to the next level of the donor pyramid, some AI Sections and other organizations create special schemes to encourage people to upgrade their support. These are sometimes known as donor clubs like “Partners of Conscience”, where people may pay much more each month or year. It is sensible to give these people recognition, which they appreciate. This could be a smart lapel badge or a meeting with the director. It may simply be a telephone call to say thank you personally – or the gift of an AI calendar at the end of the year. When the time comes for a major item to be purchased (such as computer equipment) it is to these people that the Section can turn.

Telemarketing

Sections have used telemarketing to recruit people into special regular and higher giving programs, as well as to renew support. Organizations have found that integrated with direct mail, it is a very effective technique, i.e. mail, telephone call, mail.

Legacies and bequests

At the top of supporters' pyramid are legacies, sometimes called bequest donations. This is a huge source of revenue and many Sections have been saved from financial disaster by the receipt of a timely bequest. There is a complex correlation between actively seeking funds in this way and receiving them, but supporters do need to know this is an option open to them.

Most importantly, as supporters have climbed the pyramid they have been developing a closer and closer relationship with AI. People will not move up the pyramid unless they feel that AI is meeting their needs. Our supporters have options and can easily give to other organizations if we are not dealing with the problems they perceive as important or not keeping them informed about our concerns in a way they appreciate. So, it is crucial to develop our supporters' understanding of human rights issues and how AI's work is meeting human rights objectives.

Other means

The US Section raises considerable funds through trusts and annuities. Many tax systems offer incentives to donate to organizations such as AI. It is worth investigating.

A sustainable strategy

AI needs to plan all its activities in one plan, which can then be implemented by different (specialized) staff and volunteers. Integrated planning at this stage can ensure there is coordinated timing of all activities for maximum effect.

One of the key pitfalls in fundraising is to build an organization on a very narrow base of one or two income sources. One day these will stop. This can happen quite suddenly, especially in today's volatile environment.

A good fundraising strategy should seek to build up a diversified range of fundraising activities and make sure that they are sustainable, not just one-off. Plan the development of your structure carefully so that over the next few years you know which techniques you will maintain, which you will drop and which innovations you will develop.

A key part of this strategy is knowing what resources you will need over the coming years in terms of funds for fundraising and people to do the work. Unstructured growth usually turns into unstructured collapse.

When growth stops, small reserves are quickly stripped away by continuing high fixed costs such as staff. When this is about to happen, funds become tight and Sections that should be investing extra money in fundraising to regain their lost momentum find it hard to take this money “away from” their program activity. Understanding the mutual dependence of fundraising and campaigning can make it easier to regain their position.

Developing a fundraising strategy is much like developing a campaigning strategy. Review your current situation by answering some basic questions.

gQUESTIONS

g What is your current mix of fundraising activities? What is the cost effectiveness of each?

g What proportion of income comes from the membership? What are the costs of different fundraising activities? How long do people stay members? Are you replacing those who leave?

g Can these be reduced without negatively affecting income? What is the scope for developing existing programs?

g Are new programs needed?

g Is there a natural AI constituency to which it would be best to direct appeals?

g What are the barriers to growth, such as lack of communication infrastructure, lack of a banking system, negative public image of AI, government restrictions?

g What resources (time and money) are available for developing fundraising programs?

A SWOT analysis as outlined in Chapter 1 can help this exercise, as can several other steps.

N Agree specific changes needed. Develop a database, include appeal letters in members’ newsletters, build AI’s image in the community, supply fundraising advice to groups, involve fundraisers in the action planning process.

N Plan to implement the change. Who is to do what by when?

N Monitor and evaluate. Are programs working as effectively as they can? Why did one activity fail – or perhaps fail in one place and succeed in another?

N Build on what you have and use one program or activity to strengthen another.

It is important to constantly review the cost to income ratio of fundraising programs. Some forms of fundraising such as a regular donation scheme may have a ratio of 1:10, special event fundraising is more likely to have a ratio of 1:2. An initial mailing to potential supporters or an advertisement may have a ratio of 1:0.75 (but would move into a ratio of 1:4 over a period of a year as these new supporters give additional donations).

AI has a duty to those it works for, and its own supporters, to keep costs to a minimum. Increasingly there is also critical scrutiny of these costs from the outside. If costs cannot be justified then this can have a damaging impact on AI’s image and effectiveness

How integrated are your fundraising and campaigning?

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jCHECKLIST

j Are fundraisers and campaigners involved in the Section’s strategic planning process?

- j Are people responsible for fundraising involved in action planning discussions, brainstorming, etc?
- j Is there a call to join or donate on every possible piece of campaigning material?
- j Do your campaign posters have your address and telephone number on them?
- j Does your fundraising material feature current campaign concerns?
- j Does your fundraising and campaigning material portray a consistent image?
- j Have you included practical fundraising suggestions and advice in your campaign kits for local groups?
- j Are you raising your campaigning profile at the important times of the year for fundraising appeals?
- j Are you making fundraising appeals to take advantage of a high campaigning profile or after human rights violations have received wide publicity?

Help for fundraising

Help is provided by the IS by the Director of International Fundraising. Also at hand is the Fundraising Working Group (FWG), a specialist sub-committee of AI's International Executive Committee. The FWG has a representative who covers each region and a resource group of fundraisers who provide a variety of expertise. All these people can be called upon for fundraising advice and assistance via telephone, fax or e-mail and there are some funds for visits to Sections. The FWG publish Direct Communication, a fundraising newsletter. Let the FWG chairperson know if you want to be on the circulation list.

The FWG encourages fundraisers to attend AI fundraising workshops and can tell you where and when the nearest workshop to you will be held.

The simplest way to acquire good fundraising knowledge is to join six local NGOs, charities or fundraising organizations, receive their mailings and appeals for funds and test out their ideas for AI.

“In some organizations fundraisers are the outsiders, the latecomers and interlopers; their integration into the organization will reflect this attitude and can seriously affect their ability to do the job... Fundraising works best when closely integrated and reporting in at a high level. The fundraiser cannot be hived off as if they did not exist and must be valued and trusted as much as any other functional part of the organization.”

Sam Clarke, head of Oxfam fundraising, in *The Complete Fundraising Handbook*

Professional guidance

Professional marketing tools can be used successfully in campaigning. Direct marketing professionals gather evidence on such things as which colours evoke certain reactions, and whether the day the mail is delivered affects people’s willingness to respond. When making appeals, marketing professionals provide a pre-paid return envelope and a form or coupon to fill in. They add a note of urgency by writing, for example, “please reply by ... because ...” They provide an incentive to respond by writing, for instance, “all those taking part in the action at ... will receive a T-shirt at the special price of ... to help publicity...”

Raising funds from workers

In 1995, following renewed outreach work in the trade union movement, the largest German trade union, IG Metall, made a donation to AI of \$65,000.

During AI’s 1993 campaign on the UN World Conference on Human Rights an Australian trade union donated \$A 2,000 to enable a trade unionist from Asia to attend the conference to challenge the position on human rights being put forward by some Asian governments.

The Dutch Section’s approaches to companies have established schemes in which employees have agreed that a deduction from each pay packet will be paid automatically to AI.

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Avoid referring to those who give money as active and those who only write letters as passive (or the other way around!)

In some countries, it is the fundraisers of AI Sections who most frequently contact the membership and support base. In other countries, appeals for funds are effectively the public face of AI.

Supporters and the public should not detect any difference in value or different response when they contribute time or money.

The Fundraising Pyramid

N Pareto principle – 80% of income comes from 20% of the donors

N The warmer the relationship, the higher up the pyramid, the greater the gift.

N Outside pyramid:

Events, trusts/foundations, sponsorship, licensing, door-to-door collections, company giving, etc.

N Inside pyramid:

Raffles, trading, etc.

LEGACIES

BIG GIFTS/CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS

MONTHLY GIVING/REPEAT PAYMENT PROGRAMS

APPEALS

MEMBERSHIP OR FIRST DONATION

Key questions:

- N How much does a new member/donor cost to acquire?
 N How many are you budgeting for in the next year – a 25% increase?
 N How long do they stay? How much do they give over their lifetime with you?
 N How much do you spend on servicing them?
 N Does your magazine go out four or six times a year – not more surely?
 (Remember, these are not your local group activists).

Direct mail: the essentials

Direct mail is the simple art of sending letters or “appeals” to your supporters asking for additional donations, or to potential supporters asking them to join or to donate money. It was the perfecting of this fundraising technique, above all others, that was responsible for AI’s rapid growth in the 1980s. A direct mail pack usually consists of five elements:

N An outer envelope. This often carries an intriguing message and picture to ensure it is opened. It will have a window for the address, a return address and the discount mark. In many societies national postal services offer substantial discounts for bulk mailings.

N The letter itself. This should read like a letter from a friend. It should be quite clear about asking the reader to give money or join. Let them know which problem their money will alleviate, preferably using real examples. The letter should have a positive tone: it is persuading people they can do something. The first paragraph is read more than anything else. There should be a note of urgency at the end which leads the reader to fill out the reply coupon. Opinions differ greatly on how long a letter should be: like everything else, test.

N A reply coupon. This can be separate or a tear-off strip on the letter. It should have the person’s name and address on it, which will show through the outer envelope. It should re-state the request: “Yes, I would like to join/donate to Amnesty International...” Let the reader know how much you want and allow them to add an extra donation. A line of tick boxes with different amounts greatly increases income (people usually pick the middle box). Allow people to pay any way they want. Never let people just ask for information: this wastes time and money, and fewer people join or give. Code the coupon so you can evaluate its success.

N An additional leaflet. This allows you to show pictures (which can be worth a thousand words), to provide feedback on past campaigning, or to give a more comprehensive picture of AI’s work.

N The return envelope. This should be pre-paid with your address and the name of the person who signed the letter – and who will sign the thank you letter sent for each donation. The envelope should be large enough to take a cheque.

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Make sure all campaigning materials, such as leaflets and posters, include a coupon for joining AI.

Raffles have always been a popular way to raise money for AI. This raffle book produced by the UK Section is attractively designed and highlights the purpose of the fundraising exercise.

cTIP

Prepare some standard coupons you can use easily in different publications.

Good and bad targeting

Good: In 1989 the Australian Section mailed letters to 20,000 supporters of an overseas aid agency and received an excellent response rate of over 10 per cent. A good response would have been 2 per cent. The appeal featured countries and issues believed to be of interest to these supporters.

Bad: In the same year the Australian Section mailed letters to a thousand mail-order purchasers of woollen under-blankets. One person responded. It was difficult to know how to interest this audience in AI's concerns.

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Even when advertising agencies offer to donate all labour and services free of charge, the cost of materials and equipment for making television, cinema and radio advertising can quickly absorb large amounts of resources. Moreover, not paying for services can limit the control you have over what the agency produces.

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Even with months of preparation, outlay and organization, it is not until around 80 per cent of tickets have been sold that a concert moves into profit — and then becomes a fundraiser.

Raising funds while recruiting

The New Zealand Section conducted a membership recruitment campaign by telephone in 1995. Some 46,000 people were called and asked to donate \$NZ 25. Of these, 1,768 new supporters were recruited, making an average donation of \$NZ 27.11. They believe that asking for a specific amount of money contributed to the success of the campaign.

There is increasing cooperation between the merchandising programs of Sections. Designs for some products, such as cards and T-shirts, are shared. In preparing for any major campaign consult other Sections, such as the French, Dutch, Australian or UK, which have large merchandising programs, to see whether they have a suitable design you may be able to use.

A night for AI

The Irish Section held a very successful concert when the performer Phil Collins offered to play an extra night on his tour just for AI. All his other concerts were sold out, providing a good indication of demand. All the major organization had already been done, and the remainder was undertaken by the promoter rather than AI.

Database fundraising

An effective way of communicating with the membership is through a computer database that allows the recording of basic information such as name and address, how and when people first made a contribution, and how much they have donated. A database makes many forms of fundraising possible.

There are a number of commercial computer database packages available, although some AI Sections have developed their own. It is possible to seek advice on this from the IS.

Five steps to success

- N Promotion of AI and recruitment of supporters
- N Welcoming new supporters and providing options for involvement with or support of AI
- N Renewing support
- N Maintaining commitment
- N Efficient administrative procedures

The AI Visa card was launched in conjunction with The Co-operative Bank in the UK. AI received £0.20 in every £100 spent with the card and a £5 donation with every new account.

If your campaigning is in the news, a letter to supporters featuring the same campaign will build on their existing awareness and is more likely to give them the feeling of being part of a successful organization, and therefore more likely to maintain their support.

A small item such as a bookmark can carry a campaign message to readers and provide a coupon to recruit new members.

CHAPTER 6

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS AND ORGANIZATIONS

International human rights standards and agreements make governments accountable, both individually to each other and through regional and global intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). AI and other organizations have an important responsibility to make sure they do. IGOs and international human rights standards are of fundamental importance to AI's campaigning on themes and as part of specific country strategies. AI constantly refers to international standards and seeks to strengthen and improve them. It also lobbies international organizations to promote and protect human rights and seeks to build the capacity and effectiveness of their human rights work.

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"Non-governmental organizations have a responsibility to maintain their vigilance over the system they have helped to establish in the legitimate expectation that it can and should be made to serve the cause of human rights and fulfil the aspirations set by the UN Charter."

Helena Cook, former director of the Legal and International Organizations Program (LIOP) at the International Secretariat

International human rights law

The 1993 UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna reaffirmed that states must respect all rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The UDHR and other international instruments at the UN and regional IGO level specify governments' responsibilities for the protection and promotion of human rights, domestically and internationally. The Vienna Conference also reaffirmed that human rights are not simply the domestic concern of individual nation states. Treaties such as the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment include obligations on governments to prevent and end human rights violations and create mechanisms for international monitoring, reporting and accountability.

The specific rights enshrined in the UDHR have been given a more detailed and often legal character in several international and regional standards. These standards take the form of declarations, treaties, protocols, and other instruments. They provide a legal framework for protecting human rights worldwide.

Some of these standards are designed to protect people from abuses such as discrimination, genocide, torture or slavery. Others are meant to safeguard members of specific groups whose rights are often violated, such as refugees, women and children. Others address concerns such as freedom of information, hunger and the peaceful use of technology. Many of these standards are legally binding and mechanisms have been established for their enforcement.

Only some of these standards, or specific articles in them, relate to AI's mandate. These are useful to include when making appeals. However, AI members are not expected to be expert in these standards, although it is essential to have a general understanding of the standards that relate to our work.

Global and regional human rights standards

N Universal Declaration of Human Rights: adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948. It is not a treaty but most of its guarantees have become so authoritative that they are considered binding on all states as customary international law.

N International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR): in force from 1976 and protects, for example, the right to form a trade union and the rights to food, health and education.

N International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR): in force from 1976 and protects, for example, the right not to be arbitrarily deprived of life or to be tortured; the rights to a fair trial, freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly; and the right not to suffer discrimination. The (first) Optional Protocol recognizes the right of an individual claiming to be a victim of the violation of the ICCPR to make a complaint to the UN Human Rights Committee. The Second Optional Protocol abolishes the death penalty.

N American Convention on Human Rights: came into force in 1978 and protects mainly civil and political rights.

N African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights: came into force in 1986 and protects civil and political rights, as well as some economic, social and cultural rights plus some group rights (such as the right to self-determination). Nearly all members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) are parties to this treaty.

N European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms: came into force in 1953 and protects civil and political rights. When a state becomes a member of the Council of Europe it must become a state party to this treaty.

Standards on specific subjects

There are a variety of treaties and other standards which protect particular vulnerable groups or particular abuses. Some examples of such specific standards are:

N Selected UN treaties

M Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (came into force in 1987);

M Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981);

M Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990);

M 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1954).

N Selected UN Declarations and other non-treaty standards

M Safeguards guaranteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty (adopted in 1984);

M Declaration on the Right to Development (1986);

M Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment (1988);

M Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials (1990);

M Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (1992);

M Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993).

UN institutions dealing with human rights

N Commission on Human Rights

The Commission on Human Rights is the main UN human rights body. It can deal with any aspect of human rights. It is an intergovernmental – or political – body, which means that the diplomats at Commission meetings represent their governments. The Commission consists of 53 states that are elected for four years. It meets in Geneva for six weeks every year in March-April. NGOs such as AI that have consultative status with the UN may be present during the Commission and make written and oral statements. This access allows NGOs to lobby governments at the Commission. The type of action the Commission can take includes:

M Passing a resolution of condemnation or concern. The Commission can call for concrete action by the government concerned. This might include requesting the state to invite a thematic mechanism, such as the Special Rapporteur on torture, to carry out an investigation. A resolution can represent strong criticism.

M Appointment of a special rapporteur (on a country). The rapporteur is mandated to investigate human rights violations in a country and report back to the next session of the Commission and recommend action. This is agreed by a resolution and is the strongest action that can be taken. The Commission is composed of government representatives and can find it difficult to muster the political will to act. It also lacks powers of enforcement. Governments go to great lengths to avoid public sanction, indicating that this public comment can be an effective source of pressure.

M Establishing thematic experts (special rapporteurs and working groups). Over the years the Commission has appointed individual experts (special rapporteurs) or groups of experts (working groups) to focus on particular themes. There are thematic experts (or mechanisms) on subjects such as torture, extrajudicial executions, "disappearances", arbitrary detention, violence against women, independence of the judiciary, religious intolerance, the internally displaced, and on development. Most carry out on-site visits to investigate abuses, if a government allows them into the country. These reports are public and can contain detailed recommendations for reform of law and practice. Some of the experts also send urgent humanitarian appeals in individual cases on the basis of reports they receive from NGOs such as AI. In their annual reports submitted to the

Commission, they also make general recommendations about how the world should tackle the particular violations. AI often argues that the Commission must take action when its own thematic (or country) experts expose violations in a country. The experts' reports are available from UN information offices around the world and from the UN Internet websites (see margin). The IS, and not Sections, approach the experts directly.

M Drafting new human rights standards or carrying out studies. Many of the UN human rights treaties or other standards are drafted by working groups of the Commission in which government representatives negotiate the text. In most cases NGOs are also able to speak and participate in the working groups. Often, the initiative for creating a new standard has come from NGOs who find a state to take it up and introduce it into the UN system. Sometimes, the Commission will ask for studies to be made on particular subjects before it makes a decision.

M Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities
Members of the Commission also elect the 26 experts who make up the Sub-Commission. Unlike the Commission, these experts are meant to be independent and not represent any government, although in practice how independent they are varies a great deal. The Sub-Commission's main work is to study themes, such as impunity, states of emergency or compensation for victims. Some of their studies lead to the Commission adopting new standards or setting up a new thematic mechanism. NGOs can observe and speak at the Sub-Commission as at the Commission. The Sub-Commission meets in Geneva every August.

N The High Commissioner for Human Rights

The leading figure in human rights in the UN is the High Commissioner for Human Rights, who is appointed by the UN Secretary-General for a four-year term. Mary Robinson, the former President of Ireland, became the High Commissioner in September 1997.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in Geneva, provides expert and administrative support for the human rights program of the UN, including the treaty bodies, thematic mechanisms, human rights field operations and the Commission on Human Rights.

The High Commissioner can be very influential if she speaks out against human rights violations in particular countries or in support of new human rights standards. She can visit countries to persuade the government to cooperate with the UN and end violations. She can take practical steps like offering the government technical and advisory services to help change law and train officials or set up human rights field operations, such as those in Burundi, Rwanda and Colombia.

The High Commissioner plays an important role in making sure that other parts of the UN that deal with development, humanitarian assistance, peace-keeping or women's affairs, integrate human rights into their own work rather than leaving it all for her office.

N Treaty monitoring bodies

Several human rights treaties have a group of experts (called a treaty-monitoring body) that monitors whether the states parties are implementing their obligations under the treaty. Most of them meet two or three times a year in Geneva or New York for about two weeks. The experts are elected by the states that have ratified the particular treaty and are not meant to represent any government.

Every four or five years states parties have to submit a report to the experts showing how they have implemented the particular treaty. The treaty body looks at the report, questions government representatives in a meeting and makes conclusions (usually in writing) about what changes the government should make. NGOs such as AI often provide detailed information and advice to guide the experts in their questioning. If the recommendations are good, NGOs can then campaign for them to be implemented. NGOs often also expose that many of the states parties submit their reports very late or not at all.

Increasingly the treaty bodies are taking action in between sessions to react to urgent situations, including calling for emergency reports or putting immediate pressure on a government. Some of the treaty bodies also make general comments about how their treaty should be interpreted— these can be influential in understanding what the obligations mean in practice.

Some of the treaty bodies are:

M The Human Rights Committee has 18 experts and supervises the ICCPR. It meets three times a year in either Geneva or New York. Where states have ratified the (first) Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, individuals can make complaints to the Committee about violations by their government of their rights under the ICCPR.

M The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights also has 18 members and supervises the ICESCR. There is no right of individual petition, although there is growing pressure for this right to be created.

M The Committee against Torture has 10 members and supervises the Convention against Torture. It meets twice a year in Geneva. AI is campaigning for a new body, which might be linked to this Committee, which would inspect places of detention throughout the world and make recommendations to governments about how to prevent torture.

M The Committee on the Rights of the Child monitors the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It has been one of the most innovative committees, pioneering closer relations with NGOs and making some on-site visits to states parties.

M The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has 23 experts and meets in New York to supervise the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

M The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has 18 experts who monitor the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

N Other political bodies in the UN

Other political bodies of the UN also deal with human rights in different ways. The General Assembly, which is composed of all 185 member states of the UN and meets in New York, discusses all the work of the UN, from development and arms control to drug abuse, refugees, law of the sea and outer space. One of its committees (the Third Committee) deals specifically with human rights. The General Assembly can condemn violations, appoint expert investigators or even set up field operations. It was the General Assembly that created the High Commissioner for Human Rights, appointed an expert to look at children in armed conflict and worked on the proposal for a permanent international criminal court. NGOs cannot speak or participate in the General Assembly.

The role of the Security Council is to maintain international peace and security – i.e. to prevent or end wars. It has five permanent, and 10 rotating, members. The Security Council says that it does not deal with human rights. But in practice much of its work is related to human rights – including condemning violations of the laws of war, setting up a peace-keeping operation that has a human rights component or creating the two ad hoc international criminal tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

N UN specialized and other agencies

The UN has several agencies with decentralized field operations throughout the world that are increasingly dealing with human rights issues. The work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees has always included the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers from being returned to countries where they may face persecution. It also provides food, health care and other practical assistance to refugees. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) are increasingly recognizing that their work should include helping to build institutions in a country that guarantee the rule of law and using their voice to promote adherence to human rights standards that support their development work. UNICEF, for example, expressly

says that it works to ensure implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. AI's work increasingly includes developing working relations with such agencies. You can find out more about any operations these agencies may have in your country from their offices in your country.

Regional intergovernmental organizations

AI devotes considerable resources to working on regional IGOs as well as on the UN. Africa, the Americas and Europe all have regional IGOs with human rights bodies. Although the Middle East and Asia do not have similar regional human rights institutions, they do have regional organizations which are worth targeting to take up human rights issues as part of their political, security and economic work.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe, and the Organization of American States (OAS) all have intergovernmental or political bodies that meet at least annually and lead the work of the organization. They are often AI's principal targets, as they have the power to bring human rights more into the IGOs' work. All but the OSCE have at least some way for individuals to make complaints about violations by their governments, with varying degrees of effectiveness. The human rights courts in the OAS and Council of Europe systems are the most highly developed.

The experts on the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, both of which report to political bodies in the OAU and OAS respectively, have quite wide-ranging powers to investigate country situations by visiting the country and making reports. The Council of Europe and the OSCE also have parliamentary assemblies that can be a useful way of generating support and putting pressure on the intergovernmental structures.

AI at times targets a range of other IGOs as opportunities arise, including the Commonwealth, the Francophonie or meetings of the G7, the Organization of Islamic Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement.

There are thousands of other IGOs in the world. AI has developed a program of work on only a handful, but will exploit other openings as this appears useful for particular country or thematic work.

The importance of intergovernmental organizations

IGOs are government clubs. Most states wish to be part of these clubs and states can use many types of pressure to hold their peers accountable to the rules and spirit of the organizations.

AI has devoted much effort to ensuring that discussion and action on human rights is high on the agenda of international organizations, and to ensuring that AI and other NGOs have a place at the table when they are discussed.

Collectively governments remain one of the influential actors on the international human rights stage. The fact that these are organizations of government is both their strength and their weakness for AI.

As organizations of governments they can express international will in a way and with an authority that few other bodies can. To some degree many governments care about the judgment of their peers in international organizations. Sometimes this is because of their national self-image. At other times it is because they are concerned that there will be economic consequences if they are internationally acknowledged as human rights violators. The fact, therefore, that AI and others have succeeded at all in persuading governments to build mechanisms that actively encourage this judgment of peers is a remarkable achievement.

However, the fact that IGOs primarily comprise governments means that discussions are highly politicized and subject to the interplay of conflicting economic, cultural, security and military

interests. There can also be pressure for compromise and consensus on human rights that result in inaction or agreements based on the lowest, but weak, area of shared ground.

Some IGOs have established human rights bodies that AI consistently relates to. However, all the functions and areas of responsibility of IGOs are relevant to AI's work and the organization therefore approaches and lobbies any part of an IGO when it becomes necessary.

For example, although the UN Security Council has no explicit human rights role, it has been central to AI's campaigning strategies on countries such as Angola, Bosnia, Iraq, Liberia, Rwanda and other countries where the issues of security and war are mixed with human rights violations.

AI is opening up new opportunities to influence government thinking on human rights in economic and trade organizations, such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC), that have no human rights charters or bodies dealing with human rights.

AI's strategy in relation to IGOs is partly aimed at ensuring that they acknowledge the human rights dimensions of all aspects of their functions, whether in peace-keeping operations, law enforcement standard-setting, development policy, economic policy, or refugees. IGOs at the regional level also provide AI with a huge range of options for action.

One aim of AI's work is to get statements and resolutions from IGOs. It is often hard to judge the impact of these on patterns of human rights violations. One indicator of their effectiveness is the reaction of governments to such criticism. Another is the lengths to which some governments go to avoid such criticism.

UN and other mechanisms can make detailed recommendations for action to end violations based on their expertise. These recommendations carry considerable weight, particularly when added to the recommendations and campaigning of AI and other organizations. In some countries it has been possible to see a marked decrease in the incidence of particular violations once recommendations have been adopted.

Other areas of the work of IGOs which AI seeks to influence include on-site missions, peace-keeping, human rights monitoring, behind-the-scenes representations, formal investigations, and contributing to the building of civil society.

The importance of international human rights standards

AI's original appeal in the Observer newspaper was founded on two articles (18 and 19) of the UDHR which guarantee freedom of conscience and expression. As the organization has expanded its mandate, it has continued to show how the practises against which it campaigns violate internationally agreed human rights standards, or it has campaigned for new standards to fill gaps. This is important for the following reasons:

N It shows that the values that AI seeks to uphold are universal rather than the views of one organization or culture. This emphasizes AI's independence and impartiality.

N International standards are the result of long negotiations between governments and as such represent the rules of behaviour that governments themselves have accepted.

N International standards establish internationally acceptable practice, some of which over time take on the weight of international law. As most governments are reluctant to be defined as law-breakers, standards can in themselves act as a constraint on behaviour.

N International standards set a broad framework of acceptable law and practice against which national law and practice can be measured.

N Once agreements on standards have been reached it is possible to focus international discussion and action on mechanisms for upholding and monitoring compliance with them.

N International standards emphasize that respect for human rights is not simply the internal concern of any individual government.

For these reasons and others, a key part of AI's strategy on campaigning has been to develop and strengthen international standards. It has, for example, campaigned consistently for the death

penalty to be recognized in international law as a violation of human rights. Evidence that it is gradually succeeding can be found in the growing number of governments supporting the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, aiming at abolition of the death penalty in peacetime. This helps erode the argument of some governments that the death penalty is a law and order question rather than a human rights one.

However, standards in and of themselves are only one step along the way. Clearly, the main aim is to ensure that governments respect them. AI and other organizations therefore put considerable energy and resources into developing effective international mechanisms for holding governments to account for standards they have promised to uphold.

Strengthening the international human rights framework

AI began working with the UN in 1964. AI has formal consultative status (Category II) with the UN (through the Economic and Social Council -- ECOSOC), which was granted in 1969. This provides AI with formal international standing and access and the right to attend and speak at relevant UN meetings.

AI and other NGOs have campaigned hard and to good effect to expand the practical interpretation of that access and participation in order to lobby for action on individual countries and improved standards.

Every part of AI has been involved. Its research of country situations and monitoring of international organizations identifies the continuing violations and the weaknesses of, and opportunities for, action by international organizations. Consultations within AI and with NGOs and individual experts identify what changes are needed and which governments need to be persuaded to act. The campaigning by AI members in Sections persuades governments to support AI's proposals.

Knowledge of the UN machinery and drafting expertise has enabled AI to take advantage of opportunities for standard-setting. It has also allowed it to remain alert to threats to existing or proposed standards.

AI continues to help sustain the work of established mechanisms through lobbying for resources and the provision of human rights information. At least one rapporteur has publicly stated that three quarters of the information he receives comes from AI.*

Using the international human rights framework

The UN and regional IGOs are integral to AI's strategies on many countries and their potential role and influence are always taken into consideration when preparing country strategies.

In situations where the state has collapsed or lost effective control, IGOs can be the most important actors affecting human rights. In many regions, regional IGOs have taken on an increasing role and importance, and AI is working to ensure that its lobbying and other campaigning on these IGOs is coordinated between the membership structures in these countries.

AI primarily relates to the UN and regional IGOs through the IS offices in London, New York and Geneva. Strategies for reform of the international system are also coordinated from the IS. Because of the coordination role of the IS, Sections should not directly approach IGO secretariat headquarters, leading figures such as the High Commissioner for Human Rights, or bodies such as treaty bodies and thematic experts. There is a separate European Union (EU) office in Brussels responsible for AI's relations with the EU and reporting to Sections.

Although AI's relationship with IGOs is the responsibility of the IS, AI Sections play an important role in this area of work. In advance of meetings such as sessions of the UN General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights, Sections raise AI's concerns with their own country's representatives to these meetings. Individual AI members are often asked to attend meetings of

intergovernmental bodies as representatives of the AI movement. Sections are often asked to lobby their government for action by an IGO, as part of AI's urgent response to armed conflict or human rights crises.

In general AI is most effective when it can generate public pressure on governments, from within their own countries, to take action on an issue and then complement this with detailed lobbying on specific proposals at the level of national governments and, where relevant, at international meetings and conferences.

c TIPS

c Find out to which international bodies your government belongs

It is useful to know which international bodies your government belongs to, such as the UN Security Council, UN Commission on Human Rights, etc. In the UN General Assembly and other bodies all governments get one vote. Presidencies of these various international bodies rotate between countries and may provide new campaigning opportunities.

c Sessions on the Commission on Human Rights for new government members

If your government has recently become or is about to become a member of the Commission for the first time, then your Section could offer to provide a training session for officials on how the Commission works. This could include AI's concerns and the status of NGOs at the Commission. Contact the IS for assistance.

c Media briefings for journalists

If you think public pressure may persuade your government to take a positive stand in an IGO, or if you want to get publicity for the human rights situation in particular countries being discussed, consider holding a briefing for journalists. UN and other IGO meetings are not very "media friendly", so it is important to think carefully about the journalists you want to invite and how you can present the issues in a way that will be interesting and relevant to their audience.

c Integrate IGO work into campaigning strategies

When drawing up national AI campaigning strategies on different countries check the AI documents/campaigning circulars to see what reference is made to international standards, and to action by IGOs. Breaches of recognized international standards can be highlighted in approaches to home governments, as can failure of governments to cooperate with international mechanisms, for example, by denying access to UN special rapporteurs. You may want to make these major features of your campaign and publicity work.

c Use UN human rights reports

The country reports of the UN theme mechanisms and treaty bodies can be a source of useful background information when preparing campaigns or actions. It can sometimes be useful to refer journalists and others to these reports, as they can emphasize the seriousness of the situation and help build greater public awareness of the mechanisms. The reports should be available from your nearest UN Information Office.

c Provide information on standards and mechanisms to other interested NGOs

Help build awareness among the wider NGO community of these standards, and the mechanisms and bodies established to implement and supervise them, so that they can decide how they can contribute to their campaigning for human rights.

Useful terms in international law

N Declaration: A general statement of principles that, while not necessarily legally binding, may have considerable authority.

N Convention/Covenant:

A formal, legally binding treaty or agreement between sovereign states.

N Protocol: A formal, legally binding agreement between sovereign states that is normally a supplement to another treaty or agreement.

N Ratification or accession: A decision by a sovereign state to adhere to a treaty or agreement and to be bound by its provisions.

N State Party: A country whose government has ratified or acceded to a treaty or agreement and is legally bound to follow its provisions.

N Signature: Expression by a sovereign state of its intention to refrain from acts that would defeat the purpose of a treaty or agreement, and at some future date to ratify or accede to the treaty.

c TIPS

IMPORTANT TIMES OF THE YEAR

March/April

Lobbying around the current session of the UN Commission on Human Rights. AI strengthens its presence in Geneva during the Commission. Experience has shown that close contact with Sections can enable important last-minute lobbying and campaigning to be done with governments.

August/September

Lobbying for the forthcoming session of the UN General Assembly.

September/October

Lobbying for the following year's UN Commission on Human Rights session. The UN Commission on Human Rights meets for six weeks from mid-March. Many governments begin discussing their positions on countries and issues on the Commission Agenda from the preceding September/October.

Example of the process of a strategy on an AI theme

N Analysis finds gaps in existing human rights standards or a lack of a mechanism to enforce the standards.

N Consult experts, other NGOs, survivors and agree on reforms needed.

N Campaign to persuade governments to agree to reform and strengthen standards and mechanisms.

N Campaign to hold government accountable to stronger standard through new, effective mechanism.

N Evaluate and analyse effectiveness, suggest improvements, etc.

This is an ongoing process which from beginning to end can take many years.

"The international human rights system is fundamental to Amnesty's credibility and legitimacy. The human rights treaties and other standards provide it with a consistent and uniform code by which to assess every government and a defence against accusations of bias or the imposition of personal standards or values. This is imperative for an organization that sets great store by its independence and impartiality."

Helena Cook, former director of LIOP at the IS

Useful websites

For the UN:

<http://www.un.org>

For an index to all UN organizations (French and English):

<http://www.unsystem.org>

For the European Court of Human Rights (French and English):

www.dhcour.coe.fr

AI's work with intergovernmental organizations

AI's work with IGOs aims to:

N stop or prevent violations in individual cases (such as the large number of cases AI sends to thematic and other mechanisms);

N stop or prevent patterns of violations in countries;

N make human rights law a more powerful tool for the human rights movement (standard-setting), and strengthen the capacity of IGO institutions to protect human rights (institution-building);

N influence the international discourse on human rights (such as on the universality of human rights).

In addition, AI's work with IGOs:

N emphasizes that human rights are the proper subject of international scrutiny and that individual governments are accountable for their actions;

N ensures that individuals and NGOs are recognized as part of the international community and have a legitimate role in scrutinizing government action on the promotion and protection of human rights;

N provides further opportunities for dialogue with governments;

N enables AI to offer expertise and advice to other NGOs without the same resources or access.

Working for a new human rights mechanism

An example of AI's impact was the campaign to establish the position of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the lead-up to and following the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993.

1992

AI provided an analysis of the shortcomings of the existing human rights system and made proposals for reform, including the creation of the post of High Commissioner.

October 1992

The proposal was formally launched at the World Conference preparatory meeting in Africa and AI started to work with other NGOs to build support for it.

January 1993

Sections and the IS lobbied Latin American governments and the proposal was adopted by the Latin American preparatory conference.

January to June 1993

Sections lobbied home governments using lobbying meetings, public campaigning activities, outreach to other NGOs and media to gain support for the proposal.

June 1993

AI's lobbying in capital cities and directly at the UN, and campaigning, together with pressure from other NGOs and key governments secured support for the idea in the final Vienna Declaration.

December 1993

Intensive lobbying and media work resulted in the vote to create the High Commissioner for Human Rights by the UN General Assembly in New York.

f

Some members of the Commission on Human Rights change annually. It is important to know when your government is a member as this is likely to give it added influence in relation to particular human rights situations.

AI's worldwide theme campaign against torture and the steady campaigning of the membership was a major factor in the adoption of the UN Convention against Torture. The campaigning involved AI local groups working on individual cases, letter-writing to governments, Section campaigners doing lobbying and media work in relation to their governments, and IS staff lobbying and providing expertise at many meetings.

Left: Eleanor Roosevelt with a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. She was the chairperson of the committee that drafted the declaration. Right: An AI appeal for the release of all prisoners of conscience being presented at the UN in 1983: (left to right) Javier Pérez to Cuéllar, former Secretary-General of the UN, Thomas Hammerberg, former Secretary General of AI, and Suriya Wickremasinghe, former chairperson of AI.

AI's major theme campaigns have often focused on the international human rights framework as being most relevant to challenging a worldwide pattern of violations and the inadequacies of the international response to them. Consequently a common aim of such campaigns is to build momentum for new or stronger standards and mechanisms.

Example of an AI IGO strategy on a country – Sri Lanka

N In the 1980s AI researched and documented systematic "disappearances" in Sri Lanka.

N AI and other NGOs submitted up to 12,000 individual cases to the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, which described this as the largest number of cases from any country in its reports to the UN Commission on Human Rights.

N AI and other NGOs campaigned for the Commission to take action because its own experts on "disappearances" had documented such a serious problem. The Commission called on the government to accept on-site visits by the Working Group.

N The Working Group (and AI) visited Sri Lanka and made detailed recommendations for change.

N AI and other NGOs campaigned at the following sessions of the Commission for political pressure on government to implement recommendations – many were implemented.

N AI's research showed that the changes contributed to a dramatic drop in the number of "disappearances".

Ian Martin (right), former Secretary General of AI, at the UN during a meeting organized by AI to promote ratification of international human rights treaties, 1988.

*Bacre Waly Ndiaye, UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions

A postcard that was used during an international appeal to the President of the UN General Assembly

CHAPTER 7 CAMPAIGNING TECHNIQUES

This chapter provides some suggestions on different campaigning techniques and actions that AI can use to protect and promote human rights. It is not a comprehensive list.

Campaigning is and should be dynamic, with new techniques and variations of existing techniques constantly emerging. The methods described in this chapter, such as letter-writing and speaking tours, should be integrated with the techniques dealt with in other chapters, such as media work, outreach and lobbying. Which ones are most appropriate will depend on your strategy. Pick the right tools for the job.

The following sections outline some of the advantages and limitations of the different techniques as well as practical advice on how to use them.

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Public events and protests/ 129

Contact with embassies/ 135

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“Don’t stop writing... If you give us moral support, we will do the rest.”

Kim Dae Jung, former prisoner of conscience

CAMPAIGNING TECHNIQUES

LETTER-WRITING AND PETITIONS

Letter-writing is the campaigning technique most associated with AI and it remains an important means of trying to effect change in a wide variety of situations. As with other techniques, its impact depends on many factors, including how it is integrated with other campaigning methods. For some campaigns the quantity of letters sent is the key. For others quality is the vital factor. This section looks at:

- N Letter-writing: strengths and weaknesses / 114
- N Who receives AI letters? / 114
- N Organizing a letter-writing action / 115
- N 'Quality' letters / 116
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Members of the Japanese Section participating in an organized letter writing session
 © AI

Letter-writing: strengths and weaknesses

A large number of letters can be a good way of demonstrating the extent of awareness and concern in your society about human rights violations in another country. This level of concern may be important in influencing the policies of your own government or of the authorities in the target country.

Individually written letters can demonstrate a depth of knowledge and personal concern, while letters from eminent people can have a particularly great impact.

Letter-writing is such an old and established technique for AI that there are questions as to its continuing effectiveness, partly because some governments have become adept at countering letter-writing campaigns. Variety is one way to try and maintain effectiveness.

If letter-writing to one official seems to be having no effect, perhaps it is time to approach someone else or to get others to write to the official. If governments begin to send standard responses to letters, it may be time to make your letters more varied or to provide points for follow-up letters. The AI Handbook and the Guide for Letter-writers provide more detailed advice on the style and tone of letters.

Who receives AI letters?

The standard AI letter is addressed to a named government official in another country politely raising concerns and asking for specific action. The letters are usually outlined in materials included in the campaigning circulars provided by the International Secretariat (IS). However, letter-writing is such a flexible technique that it can be used in many different ways. Letters can be directed to:

N local officials, military commanders and others with direct responsibility for human rights violations as a way of directly applying pressure on them and exposing concern, and stimulating them to think and act on human rights;

N the editor of a newspaper in the target or home country for publication as a good way of generating, encouraging and responding to media coverage and generating debate. This should be done in consultation with the AI structure in the target country, if there is one (see Chapter 9);

N newspapers and other media as a way of campaigning to encourage them to increase their reporting on a particular country, foreign affairs or human rights generally;

N supporters as an effective way of raising money (see Chapter 5);

N embassies as a good way of getting the message to target governments;

N government officials as a way of providing them with evidence of AI's concern that they can then use to press for change internally;

N those in a position to influence the human rights situation, such as government or military officials, who may have concerns about a particular policy but feel alone and therefore unwilling to act (the letters provide them with moral support);

N home governments as a way of raising and demonstrating concerns on policies or calling for specific actions (see Chapter 11);

N human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in target countries as a way of providing moral support and encouragement, which can help motivate them to continue their work;

N prisoners and their relatives as a way of boosting morale and offering them an opportunity to communicate with the outside world;

N particular sectors of society in a target country, such as doctors or lawyers, as a way of persuading them to take action in support of human rights (see Chapter 10).

Organizing a letter-writing action

The following questions may help you plan a letter-writing action:

gQUESTIONS

g How many letters would you like each group to send and over what period of time?

Be clear about what you want: this enables the group to plan and decide their work priorities.

g Is it more important to send lots of letters or fewer letters that are more individual?

If, for example, the most important thing is that letters are individual in character, then it is best not to provide a draft text for the letter. Provide a number of points that could be included in the letter (noting that letters need not include all points), or provide a number of interchangeable paragraphs that can be inserted in different parts of the letter. Suggest the type of personal information that could be included in the letter -- such as the writer's profession or trade, whether he or she has visited the country, or details about the writer's own community -- to demonstrate the personal nature of the concern.

g Are letters likely to be more or less effective if people mention that they are AI members?

In societies where AI is seen unfavourably, mentioning AI membership may be counter-productive. Not mentioning AI membership can also help to convey the impression that the issue of concern is not part of a campaign but spontaneous. On the other hand, AI is an organization that is well respected and hard for governments to ignore, so mentioning AI can ensure that the content of the letter is taken seriously. Suggest to groups that if they are writing as members of AI they include information about AI in their own society to show the breadth of support it enjoys.

g Will letters from particular sectors of the community have more impact?

If this is the case, you may need to provide groups with separate suggestions on what points these sectors should raise, the importance of using official titles or headed paper, and any special recipients that may be appropriate for these sectors. You may also need to provide them with advice and suggestions for outreach to these sectors (see Chapter 10).

g How much do the letters to different officials need to vary?

If you want different letters to be sent to the minister of foreign affairs and the minister of prisons, then it may be best to provide separate advice or action sheets.

g What materials are needed?

Groups need enough information to understand what is wanted from them and to carry this out. This will usually mean providing them with the following:

M background material on the issue, country and the particular case and a summary of AI's strategy for addressing the issues;

M points of concern that can be raised, possibly in the form of interchangeable paragraphs;

M AI's recommendations;

M addressees to write to, including titles and salutation;

M advice on the number of letters which should be sent, which addresses are the most important, how long the letters should be, how many points to raise in each letter, etc.

The background, guidance and points to be raised for a single letter-writing action should not be more than one or two pages long. The specific things you need to include are likely to depend on whether it is part of a campaign pack.

If the group is provided with basic information on the target country and the strategy for addressing the issues, they will be in a good position to decide which issues to highlight and the best way to make their letters have an impact.

‘Quality’ letters

High-impact letters

A letter from a former president, a sports star, a famous singer, the head of a corporation, an academic, a judge or a general may have more influence on the addressee than a letter from an AI member or a member of the public. A joint letter from all or some of these may sometimes also be very

effective.

When deciding who is likely to have the most influence, you need to take into account the issue that is being tackled, the society in the target country and any special links between the target country and your own (see Chapter 2).

It can be tempting to approach the same people for high-impact letters, or to ask people who have already made a public stand on human rights issues. But a letter can have a high impact partly because it comes from someone not usually associated with raising concerns about human rights -- illustrating in a symbolic way the extent of concern over a particular case or issue.

Organizing a high-impact letter is likely to be different in every case. There are, however, a few general tips that it is useful to bear in mind.

c TIPS

c Make it as easy as you can for the person you are approaching to say "yes".

c Think carefully about what you want and what they will be comfortable in agreeing to. It may be that the most important factor is the signature, in which case the content, providing it addresses the main issues, can be a fairly bland statement of concern.

c Be very clear about what you would like the person to write, why you would like them to write the letter and why you think they might want to. In many countries you may have to go through the celebrities' agents, one of whose jobs is to filter such requests. You may well have to argue your case a number of times, so it is best to have the arguments ready.

c Before making the approach think carefully about the objections the person may have, and how you could pre-empt or overcome them. For example, some people may think it is too political. Would it help to mention that other people whom they are likely to respect have already taken a stand? Would it help to mention the breadth of support AI enjoys in many

societies? Getting those first few people to "take a stand for AI" is likely to be the most difficult part, but their support can then be used to gather further support.

c If there is any administrative work involved, offer to do it. Some high-profile people are quite likely to ask you to draft the letter for them to sign. In other cases, you should provide the key points and any relevant background information. This should be kept as short, clear and simple as possible.

c High-impact letters can be organized centrally at the national level, although other parts of AI can also be encouraged to participate. Would a local group's approach to a national celebrity work better than an approach from the Section? Would a letter from a mayor or a member of the local business community or council have a greater impact than one from a group member?

c Making these or similar approaches for the first time can be daunting. The materials provided by the Section to AI groups can make a big difference to whether or not the groups feel confident enough to make such approaches.

c If the person's consent is given and it is considered beneficial, it can be useful to make public a high-impact letter.

'OPEN LETTERS'

c If it is an open letter, it can be copied to newspapers for printing on letters' pages.

c Making it public can help build AI's image in your society as a respected organization and thereby increase its influence.

c It can help to attract support from others.

c It can be the focus of other publicity, particularly if the signatory is willing and able to speak to the media about the issues and AI.

c It may be possible to organize a "public signing" as the beginning of a more public event to which the media can be invited.

c It can be copied to the embassy of the country in question and your own ministry of foreign affairs.

Letters from sectors of the community

Letters from different sectors of your community may have a greater potential to influence situations than general letters from individuals. Lawyers, for example, are respected in many societies and therefore letters from them may be more influential. If concerns are being directed towards military figures it may be that they are more likely to listen to fellow military professionals (see Chapter 10).

Personal letters

An individually written letter, rather than a standard appeal, is often more likely to get the attention of government officials. It also makes it more difficult for governments to adopt a standard response.

The more informed individual and targeted the letters are, the better. AI members are the most reliable source for such letters.

Mass appeals

The prepared letter

One of the easiest ways of generating a large number of letters is to prepare them in advance. A simple standard text can be drafted, needing only the addition of a signature, return address, envelope and stamp (see margin, page 117). This sample can then be cheaply copied and distributed to AI members.

New word-processing and printing technology makes it possible to prepare a variety of letters for different government officials. These can then be copied and distributed in the same way as the standard text.

It is likely that the first of these pre-prepared letters to land on a government official's desk will have the most impact as the official will quickly realize that the subsequent letters say the same thing and are part of a campaign. Thereafter, the impact of the letters lies primarily in their quantity -- the total number illustrating the level of concern.

Distributing letters for signing and sending can also raise public awareness of the issues and offer a first step in getting people involved in defending human rights.

Some AI groups set up public stalls -- with prepared letters and envelopes addressed and stamped -- and ask people to sign the letter, add a return address and make a donation to cover the postage. This has the advantage of guaranteeing that the letters will be sent.

Other groups distribute the letters more widely and freely hand them out at public meetings and workplaces, etc. This allows for a wider distribution, but it is unclear how many letters will be posted.

Postcards

The pre-printed campaign postcard can be another way of delivering AI's evidence of human rights concerns and of making sure AI's message stands out as it makes its way through postal systems.

Postcards can be sent to government officials. They can also be sent to human rights organizations as a gesture of solidarity, to encourage them in their work and boost their morale.

On one side postcards can have anything from a picture to a very direct campaign message. On the other, they can outline AI's concerns in relevant languages and be pre-addressed so that all they require is a signature and a stamp.

This is also an easy way of giving individual members something practical to do in support of a campaign. Sets of postcards can be inserted in newsletters or included in other correspondence to members. Postcards can be distributed to AI groups for sale or distribution on public stalls.

jCHECKLIST

Producing campaign postcards

- N Check with your post office the relevant regulations and restrictions concerning:
- M cost of postage;
 - M front-cover colour or design;
 - M thickness/weight of the card;
 - M size of the card (length and width);
- N Check with your newsletter editor:
- M the size of newsletter pages;
 - M whether inserting cards will increase the postage costs;
 - M whether there are plans to insert anything else in that issue of the newsletter;
- N Check with your designer and/or printer:
- M the cost difference between colour and black and white printing on one and two sides;
 - M how many cards can be printed on a sheet of card that will fit inside the newsletter and meet post office requirements for dimensions;
- N Check the colours to make sure there are no sensitivities about certain colours in the target country for political, nationalist or religious reasons;
- N Check that the postcards include:
- M details of the case/issue;
 - M what the concern is;
 - M AI's recommendation for action;
 - M the name and address of the official to whom the card will be sent;
 - M the amount of postage necessary;
 - M space for a signature.

Petitions

Petitions are frequently used in AI's campaigning. They have a tradition in public protest that goes back many centuries.

Although in some countries petitions have been used to such an extent that they may have lost some of their former impact, they can still be an effective campaigning tool. Among their benefits are:

- M they can provide a good focus for group and public activities;
- M they are a simple way of allowing people to express their support;
- M they can illustrate the level of public/community concern on an issue;
- M they are easy (and cheap) to organize.

The following questions may help you decide how best to prepare your petitions:

gQUESTIONS

g What do you want the petition to say?

Make it as short and simple as possible. The more you write the more people will find that they disagree with the content.

g Does it conform to any laws on how the language of petitions should be formulated in order to be legally valid?

g Will you want to use the petition in media work?

If so, pay extra attention to make it concise.

g To whom is it addressed?

Do they have the authority to meet the demands you are making? Should the focus be your government or the target government or particular ministers?

g How will you deliver it?

Do you want local groups and individuals to send their completed petitions directly to the authorities or do you want to collect them at a central point so that you can count the total? Will you send off all the completed petitions? Will you ask for a personal meeting to hand in the completed forms? Would a handing in/sending off ceremony (involving a celebrity) be worthwhile?

g Do you want to publicize it?

Do you want to organize "celebrity signings" to begin the campaign? Do you want to include petition forms in sympathetic publications? Do you want to announce the number of signatures aimed for or collected? You should be careful about stating a target you may not reach as this could make the action look a failure. Is the number you have collected impressive by other comparable standards?

Design

N The layout should be clear. Make sure there is enough space and separate columns for names, addresses and signatures.

N Include the date by which petitions need to be sent back.

N Include the address to which completed petitions should be sent back, and a telephone number to ask for more blank copies.

N Make sure you put AI's name and address on each sheet.

N Use the campaign slogan as a way of getting the overall message across.

N Include a column which people can mark if they want to receive further information on the campaign or on AI.

In some cases, variation of design is effective. Make petitions out of large pieces of cloth. Put the name of their community on it and display it at stalls with some paint so people can include hand or footprints next to their name and a message in support of the campaign's aim. These can provide good photo opportunities for campaign dossiers and can be handed in at embassies, etc.

Make giant petitions. These too can be a good way for a local group to get publicity for the campaign. Write the petition neatly at the top of a large roll of paper. Either lay this along the ground leading up to a campaign stall or suspend it from the top of a wall.

Why letter-writing may not be appropriate or effective

N Some targets are largely immune to international concern delivered through letters. For example, one government leader on hearing how many letters of concern had arrived from Germany reportedly said, "When was the last time people in Germany voted for me?"

N Mass mailings of letters may be counter-productive if there is a poor postal system in the target country.

N Letters are of very limited use in situations of chaos or crisis where government systems are breaking down.

N In some societies, low literacy levels or high postage costs make letter-writing inappropriate.

Advantages of letter-writing campaigns

The main advantages of letter-writing campaigns are that:

N they are simple to organize;

N they provide an easy way for people to take action and to feel involved;

N campaign messages can be targeted at different audiences in the home country as well as internationally;

N they take advantage of the way government bureaucracies often work;

N they are flexible;

N they are low cost in many societies;

N they are personal;

N they can boost the morale of victims and those working for them;

N they educate those writing the letters;

N they reinforce AI's image as a mass movement.

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You may want a high-impact letter to be public, as it can be a good way of generating more publicity for the campaign. Before deciding to go public, you should judge whether the publicity for the 'open' letter will be more effective than sending a letter privately.

"You continuously tried to help me during years of imprisonment."

Hua Huang, a former prisoner of conscience who spent 21 years in jail in Taiwan, was sent letters of support by AI members

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If you include a draft letter, members are likely to simply copy this and you will lose the advantages of generating individual letters.

Sadth O'Neill, Deputy Lord Major of Dublin, Ireland, signing a giant postcard at AI Open Day in Dublin in 1994, appealing for the release of three female prisoners of conscience in North Korea.

Prepared letters

A photocopied letter should be carefully proofread and include:

N the added name and address of the government official;

N the added salutation (for example, "Your Excellency");

N the complete text of the letter with enough information for the sender to be confident of the facts;

- N a statement such as "Amnesty International, a worldwide human rights organization, considers (NAME) to be a prisoner of conscience";
- N the added closing (for example, "Yours respectfully");
- N space for a signature;
- N no date;
- N margins on the top and bottom large enough for the letter to be photocopied onto headed paper.

Postcard design

The front of AI campaign postcards have included:

- N a quote from the UN Secretary-General linking human rights and peace, in regional languages, and a dove;
- N a photograph of a prisoner of conscience;
- N a photograph or drawing of items that belonged to the "disappeared";
- N a photograph of AI membership action;
- N a poem;
- N the prisoner's name in different typefaces and languages.

This campaign postcard, addressed to the President of South Korea, calls for the release of prisoners of conscience Kim Sun-Myung and Ahn Hak-sop.

Some AI Sections have attracted new members and supporters by writing to people who have signed AI petitions.

Mother and child sign a street petition organized by the Mexican Section

© AI

An enormous street petition unravelled in the streets of Brussels

© AI

CAMPAIGNING TECHNIQUES SPEAKING TOURS

A survivor of human rights violations telling their story in their own words is one of the most powerful ways of getting AI's message across. So too can the testimony of a human rights defender working on the frontline, or of a UN human rights official mandated to work without sufficient resources. Speaking tours can offer such people a platform and in many other way open up good campaigning opportunities. This section looks at:

- N What a speaking tour can achieve / 122
- N Choosing a speaker / 122
- N Organizing a speaking tour / 122
 - The invitation / 122
 - Confirming the tour / 123
 - Briefing the speaker / 123
 - Media training / 123
 - The program / 123
 - Staying in contact / 125
- N Getting the most from a speaking tour / 125
 - Media coverage / 125
 - Lobbying / 126
 - Motivating members / 127
 - Fundraising / 127
 - Outreach / 128
 - Building AI / 128

IS staff member Hilary Fisher (left) with Munga Gathogo (centre) and Judy Muthoni Kamau (right), two members of the Kenyan Release Political Prisoners Group who spoke at the IS in October 1997.

© ai

What a speaking tour can achieve

The first step in organizing a speaking tour is to make sure you are clear about the purpose of the tour and what concrete objectives you hope to achieve. A speaking tour can contribute to specific campaigning and organizational objectives in areas such as:

- M Media coverage
- M Lobbying
- M Motivating AI members
- M Fundraising
- M Outreach
- M Building AI

Choosing a speaker

Speaking tours can involve anyone, but this section concentrates on speakers who are international guests and assumes that you will be responsible for deciding, organizing and coordinating their program.

Being clear about the purpose and priorities for the proposed tour will help you decide who you should invite. You can consult researchers and campaigners at the IS for their recommendations about possible speakers and ask country specialists in your Section and other NGOs for their suggestions.

A survivor of human rights violations, or a relative of a victim, may be most effective in attracting media attention or getting public support. However, they may have little expertise in the policy areas important to your lobbying or experience of in-depth media interviews. Being aware of these issues can help to make sure that you get the right person for the job you wish to do.

Sections have organized speaking tours with:

- N survivors of human rights violations;
- N relatives of victims of human rights violations;
- N human rights defenders;
- N other activists in the broader human rights movement;
- N leading figures in AI;
- N experts in a relevant field, e.g. international law.

If the main purpose of the tour is to obtain media coverage, then you would probably need to:

- N pay particular attention to any language issues, for example some media organizations can be very reluctant to use interpreters;
- N target parts of the news media that will be particularly interested in the issue or speaker;
- N decide what audience you are trying to reach.

If lobbying is the most important aspect of the visit then language is less likely to be important (providing interpreters can be arranged). However, you will want to be confident that your speaker will contribute to your lobbying goals by making persuasive supporting arguments or statements, and carries some weight with those you want to influence, either through their personal reputation or their status in an organization.

Organizing a speaking tour

The invitation

Your letter of invitation should include the following:

- M the purpose of the visit;
- M an outline of the proposed program – how long you want the speaker to stay, who they will meet, whether any media interviews are planned, etc;
- M what you are proposing to pay for – for example, travel, daily expenses, accommodation.

Confirming the tour

Once a potential speaker has accepted your invitation, you should send a follow-up letter thanking them and giving more information. This should include:

N details of the proposed program including, if appropriate, profiles of the people they will meet; for how long they will be expected to speak on different occasions; what you hope the tour will achieve; details of any media coverage or interviews that have been arranged; and useful background information on the country, political system, etc;

N practical information -- for example, what the weather is likely to be like; who will meet the speaker at the airport or station; and contingency telephone numbers (you should also ask whether the speaker has any special needs or people they want to meet while in your country);

N a request for a brief autobiography of the speaker, explaining the sort of information you would like (see box below), and a photograph. These details will be important when seeking appointments, for interesting the media, preparing publicity materials and arranging the program.

Briefing the speaker

If the schedule allows, it is a good idea to keep the first day of the visit free for the speaker to rest, settle in and become familiar with the issues you want them to address. The first day also offers an opportunity for showing the speaker around if they have not visited your country or city before, answering any questions they may have about the program, making them feel welcome and establishing a working relationship with them.

You can also use this time to get a sense of how to provide the speaker with the information they need. Is it best to provide a basic overview and then more detailed briefings on a daily basis? Will written or verbal briefings be more useful to them?

The speaker should also be confident that they can raise any problems or concerns about the program or the meetings with you.

Briefings during the visit are a matter of judgment. Sometimes a taxi-ride or car journey to the next interview or meeting can be a good opportunity to discuss with the speaker about how the last event went; to suggest a "sound-bite" or concise phrase that might make a point easier to convey; or to provide a bit more information on the main person who will also speak at the next meeting.

It can also be useful to have a debriefing session at the end of each day to go over any problems that have arisen, talk about how the day went and to provide an opportunity to unwind.

Media training

At the beginning of the visit it is often useful to organize some media training for your speaker so that the major themes and key points can be conveyed in "media-friendly" terms. Time can also be spent discussing and preparing for difficult questions that may arise.

You should check whether the speaker has any experience of dealing with the media so that you can take this into account in the training. Ideally this training would involve a sympathetic professional journalist, but it can also be done through a simple role-playing exercise (see Chapter 9).

The program

In devising a program for any speaking tour it should be remembered that public speaking can be exhausting. Speaking to a wide range of audiences, being involved in meetings and doing media interviews over a short period of time is particularly tiring. The speaker may also be worn down by their journey, the strange diet, adapting to being with strangers, or by language difficulties.

Therefore, it is best to avoid combining late night interviews with early morning engagements. If the visit is scheduled to last for four days or longer, try and ensure that you build in one complete day for rest. Try to create gaps in the program to allow for a period of relaxation. If the program includes a public meeting or address, then make sure the speaker has enough clear time beforehand to think through what they want to say.

It is also important to think about what the speaker is getting out of the tour. Part of AI's purpose might be to demonstrate solidarity and/or give the individual an international profile, which can help to protect them.

Sections should discuss with any speaker whether there are activities which might pose them an additional security risk when they return home. If the speaker is giving their time to AI, it is also important to establish whether you can introduce non-AI contacts who may be important to them, such as funding agencies.

Staying in contact

It can be easy to forget that during a busy program you (or someone from AI) will be with the visitor much of the time and away from your desk or telephone at a time when journalists may be wanting to fix or rearrange interviews, government ministers may be seeking a meeting, and friends and relatives of the visitor may be trying to get in touch.

It is important, therefore, that there is a link person available at your regular telephone number (or at the contact number given in your leaflets and publicity materials) who has a copy of your schedule and who is familiar enough with the program to answer basic queries. A mobile telephone can also go a long way to overcoming communication problems. Alternatively, a system of calling in to "base" to pick up messages and provide updates is advisable.

Getting the most from a speaking tour

Media coverage

Draft a brief outline of your media strategy to explain to others in AI what you hope the visit will achieve in relation to the media. This strategy should include the main points or messages you wish to get across to the media, which media outlets you will be targeting, and the materials you may need to carry out your plan.

gQUESTIONS

g If you can only get one central message across, what is it in one sentence?

g What is the second most important message, again in one sentence?

g What is your most important audience? Is it politicians, other decision-makers, women, people with a particular interest in foreign affairs, the general public?

In many societies the media is closely targeted to very defined audiences. There can also be considerable competition between media outlets, so you may have to choose some outlets that automatically rule out others. Size is not everything -- programs or newspapers with small audiences can be the most influential, or the most sympathetic.

g Why should the media be interested in your visitor?

The answer to this question is likely to be different for each visitor, for different parts of the media and for each country. One way of trying to answer the question is to try and make a list of up to 10 reasons why you think they should be interested -- remembering the key points that you want to get across during the visit. Then imagine you are a journalist or producer hearing these reasons and judging them by the factors that they have to weigh up in deciding what they will cover. These include value judgments on news worthiness, audience interest, competition for space, whether the person is a good communicator with media experience, etc. Finally, cut your list down to the five best reasons so that you can be confident of your case when approaching journalists.

g What materials should you produce?

The answer to this will vary enormously, depending on who your visitor is (for example, how well known they are), how the media works in your country; and the nature of your relationship with the media. However, journalists normally need some biographical details and background

information on the person in order to prepare questions and perhaps write the introduction to any piece on them.

A short media briefing pack can help set the agenda. Sections of a media pack that work well are likely to be reproduced in journalists' articles and questions.

In addition to the media pack you may also need to prepare a series of news releases before and during the visit:

N one to notify the media that a visitor is coming, why they should be interested and whom they can contact to arrange interviews;

N one to notify the media of any particular events at which the visitor is speaking -- media or other conferences, public meetings, etc;

N one to highlight newsworthy comments made by the visitor at a particular event;

N one to summarize the results of the visit, highlighting particular issues, etc.

Lobbying

Arranging for a visiting speaker to meet AI's key supporters in the government or other political parties can be an important way of acknowledging and consolidating support for AI. It is important to work out the lobbying objectives of any speaking tour well in advance.

gQUESTIONS

g Who would it be useful for the visitor to meet?

g What would you like the meetings to achieve?

g Can the visitor's status open doors for AI that would otherwise be closed and how can the doors be kept open after the visitor leaves?

g What roles should the visitor and AI hosts take in the meeting?

g Who is responsible for following up any action agreed at meetings?

Motivating members

The possibility of meeting with or hearing the views of people on the frontline of the struggle for human rights can work as a powerful motivator for AI members and build their commitment to AI's work. Organizing a social function or dinner, a members' forum or a lunch for staff and volunteers are some options.

However, visiting speakers can react very differently to these occasions. Some enjoy them greatly while others find them difficult and exhausting. People who have spent long periods in prison, for example, can find handling crowds very trying. It is important to be sensitive to the visitor's needs. If you do hold such a function, you should ensure that the visitor's attention and time are not dominated by one person, that they have time to eat or that they can leave early.

It is rarely possible for any visitor to meet with all the membership so an interview to be included in the members' newsletter can help fulfil the same function.

Fundraising

The costs of speaking tours can quickly mount up, so it is useful to exploit the income-generating possibilities they offer as well (see Chapter 5 for more details on fundraising).

N Fundraising dinners

If your visitor is likely to be of great interest to a particular audience you could issue invitations for a dinner at which she or he will be the guest speaker and charge a price that will leave you with enough profits after costs to make organizing the dinner worthwhile.

N Public meetings

Charge entry to public meetings which your visitor is addressing if you feel this will not deter too many people from attending. Hold a collection from the audience after an appeal from the chair of the meeting.

N Direct mail appeal letters

The visitor may be willing to put their name to an appeal to your supporters explaining how important it is that AI has the resources to continue its work. Or they may be willing to provide some quotes endorsing the importance of AI's work from their own personal experience.

N Public appeals

The visitor might have the opportunity to highlight forthcoming AI fundraising events, or to suggest giving money in media interviews, etc.

Outreach

A visitor may have a particular appeal or relevance to specific sectors of the community that offer opportunities for building AI's outreach work. It may be useful, for example, to invite a military official active in AI in another country to come and talk on the relevance of the military to human rights as one stage towards establishing or strengthening an outreach structure for this sector.

Different outreach sectors are quite often served by their own media and publicity channels which may be interested in covering the visit.

Building AI

Visits can absorb a lot of time and money, and their impact can be very short term. They can even be counter-productive if they leave organizers exhausted and possibly poorer. It makes sense to think carefully about how internal organizational objectives can be integrated into the strategy for any visit. Plan for the extra work that may be generated.

c TIPS

There are various ways in which you can try to maintain the momentum the visit has given to your campaign, or outreach, media or lobbying work.

c Take photographs, make videos, get quotes that can be used in subsequent communications.

c Keep a record of who helped with the visit -- for example by providing free accommodation -- and make sure they are thanked.

c Keep a record of who attended the different functions and events and invite them to join AI if they are not already members.

c Keep a record of useful contacts in the wider community who could be approached for support at another time -- for example, representatives of other NGOs and journalists.

c Make sure that commitments made in meetings for follow-up action are fulfilled.

c Keep in regular contact with the speaker afterwards.

“I wish to voice the demand for the release of political prisoners in both Indonesia and East Timor.”

Former prisoner of conscience Tri Argus Susanto Siswowardjo. He visited the IS and AIUK in September 1997 after serving two thirds of a two-year sentence. His speech at AIUK indicated his intention to continue campaigning against human rights violations in Indonesia.

Becky Hess, AIUK’s UA coordinator, holds a copy of the UA issued on Tri’s behalf.

© AI

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Make sure that the media briefing pack does not break the embargo on news you may want to use to attract media coverage during the tour.

“As someone who has had first hand experience as a prisoner, I see that Amnesty International has a fundamental position in the defence of human rights”.

Diolinda Alves de Souza, a former prisoner of conscience.

She was jailed in 1996 for her connection with land reform activities in Brazil. She campaigned in Europe in August 1997 against the conviction of her husband; her campaign took the form of a speaking tour. She holds the Urgent Action issued on behalf of her husband.

© AI

A media briefing pack for a speaking tour

A good media pack helps journalists by providing them with relevant information in an accessible form. Journalists frequently work to tight deadlines and therefore appreciate it if relevant information is brought to their attention and clearly presented. It also enables AI to focus the attention of journalists on the issues and messages it is most anxious to get across.

A media pack should be as short as possible – a series of single pages each covering a particular area – to allow easy copying and faxing. Each sheet of paper should provide at least one contact name and telephone number, and the offer of further information. The core components of a media pack for a speaking tour are:

N Biographical details about the speaker

Keep it down to the best bits. It should be no longer than a single page and give information such as:

- M when they were born;
- M their trade or profession;
- M their particular areas of expertise;
- M any organizations they are involved with;
- M their experience of human rights violations;
- M where they have spoken/travelled to before;
- M any other meetings they have taken part in;
- M any peace or human rights prizes they have been awarded;
- M any relevant quotes about them by eminent people or the press.

N The purpose and program of the visit

This is the opportunity to highlight the issues you would like the journalists to concentrate on. Why is the speaker visiting this country now? Who will they be meeting? What does the visit hope to achieve?

N Background to AI's campaigns

This is the opportunity to provide journalists with the background details that you hope will inform their coverage and provide the basis for their questions. It should include the key issues of AI's current campaigns, more background information on the human rights violations the speaker is addressing, what campaigning activities AI is undertaking, and what AI is calling for.

N A photograph

This should preferably be a portrait (head and shoulders) of good enough quality for printing. A good photograph can help to persuade television producers that your guest will interest their viewers.

Hannah Koroma, a member of the Sierra Leonean Section, spoke vividly about how she suffered genital mutilation as a child to the AI conference on female genital mutilation held in Ghana in 1996

© AI.

Salima Ghezali, editor of the Algerian newspaper La Nation, was guest speaker at AIUK's 1996 annual conference on women and human rights. Prior to her address at the conference, the Algerian authorities had seized an edition of La Nation which reported human rights abuses being perpetrated during the country's civil war.

© AI

"I believe Amnesty has made a fundamental contribution in placing human rights as a strategic concern of societies. Ideologies may come and go, but Amnesty has put concern for the fate of the individual at the centre of the political agenda."

Professor Luiz Rossi, the subject of AI's first Urgent Action in 1960, speaking at the IS in January 1996.

CAMPAIGNING TECHNIQUES PUBLIC EVENTS AND PROTESTS

Public activities aimed at informing, motivating and mobilizing the wider public have been vital elements in AI's campaigning throughout the organization's history. They offer an opportunity not only to inform many people but also to demonstrate concern and build commitment for change. The process of organizing and holding public activities also offers fresh opportunities for outreach, publicity and media work. This section looks at:

- N Public meetings / 130
- N Organizing a public meeting / 130
 - Timing / 130
 - Venue / 130
 - Publicity / 131
 - Speakers' platform / 131
 - Chairing / 132
 - Action / 132
- N Vigils, demonstrations and protests / 132
- N Organizing a public protest / 133
- N Alternative summits / 134
- N Responding to current events / 134

Members of the Dutch Section bring public attention to the plight of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi using striking masks and simple placards, July 1994. In 1995 she was released after having been detained for almost six years under house arrest.

© ai

Public meetings

A good public meeting is one where people leave feeling uplifted, motivated and committed to your campaign. It normally involves a lot of work and, often, money. A bad public meeting can leave those who attended demoralized and downhearted, and may well have the same effect on you and the other organizers. So, before committing yourself to holding a public meeting, it is worth answering some key questions.

gQUESTIONS

g What do you want the public meeting to achieve?

Is the main aim to inform people about a particular campaign? Is it to show the authorities that there is a lot of public concern on a particular issue? Is it to recruit members to AI?

g Who is your target audience?

How far will people travel to a public meeting? Do you want to attract an audience in a particular geographical area? Is there a lot of community interest in the issue to be addressed at the meeting?

g Do you have speakers who will attract an audience?

This is particularly important if the meeting is not about a high-profile issue which will create public interest automatically.

Organizing a public meeting

To hold a successful public meeting it is important that you pay particular attention to key organizational issues such as:

M timing

M venue

M publicity

M speakers

M chairing

M follow-up action

Timing

Allow enough time to organize everything properly -- from booking the hall and speakers, to arranging the publicity.

Check that the date of the meeting does not clash with a competing event aimed at your target audience, such as sporting events, other meetings or holidays.

Pick the best time for your audience -- make it as easy as possible for them to attend.

Choose the best time in your campaign. Is there a stage when you will want a fresh focus for publicity and media work? Is it best to hold the meeting shortly before a debate is to occur or a decision is to be taken on the issues covered by the campaign?

Venue

Many questions need to be addressed before picking a venue:

gQUESTIONS

g Is the venue the right size for your expected audience?

g Is the venue easily accessible to your target audience?

If the meeting is to be held in the evening, are the approaches well lit so that people feel safe arriving and leaving? Is there access for disabled people? Is it on a major transport route? Is there car parking space?

g Does the venue have good acoustics?

Will a microphone and loudspeakers be necessary? Are these available in the hall? Can the lighting be adjusted? Has all the necessary equipment been checked? Does someone know how to get things fixed quickly if they go wrong?

g Does the venue have the facilities you need?

Are there chairs and are they movable? Are refreshment facilities available? Are there facilities for meeting socially after the official meeting? Is there a room available so that organizers and speakers can meet beforehand?

Other factors about the venue are also important:

N Venue's message

Venues can send different messages. A public meeting in the parliament building may send a message about the level of support your campaign enjoys in the parliament and be the best way of targeting this audience too. Similarly, a public meeting in a community hall can be a good way of indicating the concern of the community.

N Heating/cooling and ventilation

People's surroundings can affect their attention span. Rooms that are too warm or lacking in fresh air can send people to sleep (or home). An audience getting cold will probably begin to think more about how to get warm than what the speaker is saying.

N Decoration

Check to see where you can hang banners. An attractive backdrop on the stage will complement the meeting – the message on banners will reinforce the message of the meeting. Think about where photographers and television news crews will take pictures from. Will your banners be in the shot? Put posters on the surrounding walls so that people can look at something as they wait for the meeting to get started.

Publicity

The success of a public meeting depends above all on the audience, and the audience you want to attract has to know about the meeting to attend it. Good advance publicity is essential. Target the publicity at the audience you are hoping to attract, using posters, leaflets, announcements in the local media, etc. Persuade sympathetic organizations to publicize the meeting.

Media reports after the meeting should not be forgotten. Can you get reports of it in any newspapers -- perhaps with a picture of the main speaker? Can you arrange radio interviews? Public meetings in the evening are difficult for the daily news media to cover -- they are generally too late for television news and newspaper deadlines, and by the next day they are old news.

Speakers' platform

The number and range of speakers are also important to the mood and feel of public meetings. Normally the main speaker should be the last to speak. This is so that the audience leaves on an emotional high and has good memories of the event. It also ensures that any call for action you make at the end of the meeting -- such as requests for donations or invitations to join AI or to take part in campaign activities -- gets the best response possible.

All audiences have a limited attention span -- do not overstretch it by having too many speakers speaking for too long. Make sure each speaker knows what issues they should address and how long they should speak for.

Be sensitive to the composition of the speakers' platform and how it will appear to your target audience. For example, it is generally better to have a mix of women and men on the platform.

The diversity of speakers on your platform (providing they are speaking in support of your campaign) can be a good way of showing the level of support you enjoy and a good way of

building relationships with different organizations. The names of the speakers will appear in the publicity about your meeting publicity and will become associated with the campaign.

Partly for this reason it is important that speakers' platforms do not appear politically biased and that they do not suggest that AI supports organizations that may compromise its independence and, therefore, its effectiveness. For example, some governments may seek to use the presence on an AI platform of an exile or solidarity organization from their country to attack AI's motives, undermine its credibility and deflect attention from AI's human rights concerns. A politically balanced speakers' platform can help protect AI from such criticism.

Chairing

A good chairperson is essential to a good meeting. They ensure that:

- N speakers stick to their time;
- N the audience knows the structure and format of the meeting and any practical details;
- N the audience can participate in the meeting through questions;
- N individual members of the audience are not able to dominate or disrupt the meeting;
- N the meeting stays on track and achieves its purpose, for example by ending with a strong call for action.

Action

An action component is an important part of most meetings. AI does not just want to inform people, it wants to persuade people to become involved in changing the world.

c TIPS

- c Put leaflets, petition and any other papers on people's chairs before the meeting. Leaflets should include simple activities that people can do.
- c Ask for donations to cover the cost of the meeting and contribute to campaign costs on the way in, and pass collection buckets around during the meeting or as people are leaving.
- c Have a stall in the meeting room with information about the campaign and AI, membership forms, petitions, letters to sign and send off, AI merchandise, etc.
- c Get the different speakers, and in particular the last speaker and the chair, to emphasize how important the audience is to the campaign and to effect the change AI is seeking. Have a list of things for people to do. Ask them to join AI now.

Vigils, demonstrations and protests

Street protests, such as vigils and demonstrations, are an important campaigning technique at both national and group level. Sometimes they are spontaneous reactions to world events. More often they are planned parts of a campaign. When planning any form of public protest it is important to be clear about what you are trying to achieve so that you can make the protest as effective as possible.

gQUESTIONS

g What is the main message of the vigil?

Do you want to put pressure on your government or on the authorities in the target country? Is it primarily a public act of solidarity or of remembrance?

g Is the location of the vigil important for getting the message across?

If you want to reach as many people as possible, then a busy street or town centre is the best choice. You may want to choose a location which has a symbolic importance, such as an embassy or tourist office.

g Is timing a significant factor?

A good time for media coverage may be a bad time for getting people to attend as they will be at work. You may want to choose a prisoner's birthday or a country's national day to increase the impact of the protest.

g Do you want other organizations or individuals to attend?

This might increase the size and impact of the protest, but could also mean that AI will become associated in the public mind with these organizations. It is important to weigh up the effect this may have on AI's effectiveness.

Organizing a public protest

The checklist below may help you organize a successful public protest:

jCHECKLIST

ORGANIZING A PUBLIC PROTEST

j Distribute leaflets, posters, etc. to get as many people there as possible. Remember to include the time, date and location of the protest .

j Contact the media and ask them to put an announcement in a relevant part of the newspaper or issue a news release and offer to provide a spokesperson to explain why the protest is being held.

j Delegate responsible AI members to look out for potential problems. If appropriate you can give them armbands or badges so that their role is clear to both the participants and the authorities. This is particularly important if you are worried about other organizations that may attend or about the reaction of the authorities, and if you do not want any publicity to focus on the arrest of people taking part.

c TIPS

c Big banners are noticed. Ask a few people to hold them or tie them up where they can be seen. Public protests do not necessarily need a lot of people to make an impact, but the fewer the people the more important strong visual images become.

c A number of simple banners or placards can also be noticed. The more people holding them, the more striking the image. Use a few themes or messages repeatedly as they work better than many different ones, which can look confusing. Keep the images simple and the text to a minimum.

c Symbolic representations of the issue being highlighted -- such as a cage to evoke repression and imprisonment -- can be a graphic way of highlighting AI's message and provide a good image for the media. Ask people, possibly somebody famous, to spend a little while inside the cage.

c Masks can make a striking image. Simple, featureless cardboard masks can be used to symbolize the fate of the "disappeared". A photocopied photograph of a person can be put onto masks to emphasize the individual case the vigil is highlighting.

c Candles held by protesters at night can create an evocative image and emphasize AI's symbol. Push the candles through small circles of cardboard to stop the hot wax dropping on people's hands or put them in glass jars to prevent them being blown out.

c Silhouettes can provide a striking way of highlighting the plight of the "disappeared" and their families. Life-size outlines of people can be drawn on stiff cardboard and then cut out and painted black. Details of a particular case can be written onto the body. You can stand the silhouettes against walls, ask individuals to hold them or lay them down on the pavement or street

in front of your protest. Think about how they could make the most effective image for the camera.

- c Set up a small photographic or poster exhibition to attract the interest of passers-by.
- c Music and “noise” attract attention, keep up the spirits of those taking part in the protest and help get the message across. You can distribute song or slogan sheets to those taking part; use a megaphone; or get a single drummer, a band, an orchestra or a choir involved. Music can reach the heart and soul in ways that words alone cannot.
- c Rather than have people simply standing still, get them moving around. Have some of the participants dress up as victims and perpetrators to represent the violations being highlighted.

Alternative summits

Alternative summits have been used to great effect by many organizations. One example was the Bangkok NGO forum which took place in the lead-up to the Vienna UN World Conference on Human Rights in 1993. At the forum NGOs were able to speak out for human rights and express the aspirations of ordinary people, countering the arguments of some governments at the UN Conference who were seeking to portray universal human rights values as alien to Asian cultures. The presence of the world media who had come for the UN Conference also meant that NGOs were able to get widespread coverage for their views. The human rights work of the participating NGOs was strengthened through the process of meeting and working together at the forum. Increasingly, NGOs are organizing alternative forums at meetings of international organizations, or at intergovernmental meetings, to lobby the official meetings and to set out their human rights agenda.

This tactic may also be useful for making sure that human rights are on the agenda of other meetings and summits. If you know in advance that a government leader is scheduled to visit your country it may be possible to arrange for a visit by a leading human rights figure at the same time, or shortly before or after the official visit, as a way of emphasizing the need to prioritize human rights considerations.

Responding to current events

Public actions can be most successful when they are seen as a response to current events. One example is to stage an event to coincide with visits of heads of state or government ministers to the country.

Decide what you would like to achieve from the visit. Would a face-to-face meeting be possible or advisable? Do you want the media to focus primarily on a country's human rights record or on your government's failure to take up human rights issues? Or is it more important to bring pressure to bear on a particular case? You will need to judge whether more will be achieved quietly through lobbying or more visibly through public action.

Some visits take place in a fanfare of publicity, while others are more discreet. Holding a public protest outside the hotel where an official or government leader is staying can be effective in gaining media coverage -- particularly if they have declined to meet AI. Prepare a letter outlining AI's concerns that you can hand in -- if you are not allowed to hand over the letter, then this is likely to be seen as unjust.

Try and get a copy of the itinerary of the visit. Is it possible to make sure that there is a public AI presence on each occasion? Make AI's message simple: "AI wants to talk", "Free ... Now!", "Will ... condemn the torture of protesters in the country?".

At each place try and pass copies of AI's concerns to others attending -- or provide them with a letter asking them to raise a particular case or concern.

Would it be more effective to organize the meeting with a partner? Cooperation with another organization might dilute your purposes, but it might also be a way of reaching a broader audience (see also Chapter 10).

Size matters

N Thirty people in a small room – this feels like a full and enthusiastic audience. A full meeting creates an atmosphere of excitement. It makes people feel they are part of a campaign with momentum.

N Thirty people in a hall that holds 500 – this looks tiny and miserable. The 30 who attend will feel that they are part of a minority and they may wonder whether it is worth carrying on. No matter how exciting the speech, it is hard to build an impression that an empty hall can change the world!

The only difference in these two events is the size of the venue.

The law

In many societies all or some public events and protests are subject to legal requirements and restrictions. Some may relate to health and safety issues (for example, fire regulations), others may concern the amount of notice you need to give to the authorities, or obtaining police permission, etc. It is generally worth finding out as much as possible about any legal requirements before deciding what you will do. Places to find this information will vary but check with other organizations, lawyers, and government and local authorities.

A mask worn during a protest outside the Chinese Embassy in Poland during AI's campaign on China

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Be careful if you put an estimate on the number of people you think may take part in a protest. This can backfire and can make an otherwise successful event appear a failure.

People's Forum

Bacre Waly Ndiaye, UN Special Rapporteur on summary or arbitrary extrajudicial executions, visited Australia as a guest of "A People's Forum", organized by the Australian Section. Representatives of different ethnic communities and the relatives of victims gave testimony of their experience of human rights violations. Although it had no formal status the event was well covered by the media and provided organizations and individuals with a much better knowledge of the UN human rights mechanisms and how they work in practice. It also raised public awareness of the scale of human rights violations worldwide.

CAMPAIGNING TECHNIQUES

CONTACT WITH EMBASSIES

Embassies are both the real and symbolic representatives of other governments in your country. As such, they provide AI with a range of campaigning opportunities. Meetings with embassy officials allow AI to convey its concerns directly to governments, to obtain information on the human rights situation in the country, and to establish a dialogue between AI and government representatives. Embassies can provide a focal point for symbolic actions and for demonstrating concern. This section looks at:

- N Embassy visits / 136
 - Preparing the visit / 136
 - Arranging the visit / 136
 - The AI delegation / 137
 - The meeting / 138
 - Follow-up / 140
- N Day-to-day relations with embassies / 141
- N Organizing contacts with embassies / 142
- N Embassy protests / 142

Guards stand outside the Chinese Embassy in Warsaw, Poland, where candles and masks were left by protesters during AI's campaign against human rights violations in China. AI members held the protest during an official Chinese delegation's visit to Poland in order to highlight human rights violations by Chinese security forces in the Tibet Autonomous Region. Participants wore masks decorated to resemble traditional Tibetan masks.

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Embassy visits

Embassies act as listening posts for what is happening in the host country in order to defend the interests of the home country. In general the ambassador will not be in a position to make decisions independently and will have to report back to their ministry of foreign affairs about meetings. Of course, an embassy can have considerable influence through the way it reports to its ministry of foreign affairs or the way it requests further instructions.

Most countries do not have an embassy in every country with which they have diplomatic relations. Often arrangements are made whereby a representative will be responsible for diplomatic relations with neighbouring countries. If there is an ambassador accredited to a country but based in another country, good communication between AI Sections in the two countries is important so that visits can be coordinated and information shared. Letters can be sent without prior consultation between the Sections, although if major initiatives are planned it would be advisable to consult.

Names and addresses of ambassadors may be found in telephone directories or in directories published annually by most foreign affairs ministries.

Preparing the visit

Preparation is the key to a successful embassy visit. If the visit is part of a campaign, the campaign material should provide the information needed for the visit. AI delegates need to be well informed about AI's concerns and clear about what the visit is intended to achieve. It is also useful to consider in advance suitable responses to the ambassador's possible reactions to the issues the delegation will raise.

Embassy visits should be coordinated, both within the Section and in relation to possible activities by the IS. In some Sections there will also be a need for coordination between adoption groups and professional groups or other groups with specialist functions. This coordination should be done by the Section office or a special coordinator for embassy visits, perhaps a board member.

If the embassy visit is not part of a campaign or suggested by the IS, it is a good idea to consult the IS before asking for a meeting. The IS should be able to give you up-to-date information on the country and perhaps suggest specific issues which it would be useful to raise during the visit.

Arranging the visit

The first step is to request a meeting with the ambassador. It is essential to follow diplomatic style in communications with an embassy. Letters should be courteously worded, well presented and include the appropriate forms of address (for example, the ambassador should be addressed as "Your Excellency"). Departures from this style may be counterproductive and the ambassador may feel offended. You should make your request in a letter:

- N giving a brief presentation of AI and enclosing a copy of the AI Statute;
- N summarizing the concerns you wish to raise with the ambassador;
- N suggesting that a meeting be arranged and giving a proposed date for the meeting;
- N listing the names of those who will be included in the AI delegation and any positions they have in the Section;
- N explaining that someone from the Section office will call the embassy to confirm arrangements for the meeting.

As the ambassador is the most senior representative of his or her government, the request for the meeting should be signed by the most senior representative of the Section, for example, the chairperson or director.

If no reply is received within two weeks, the person responsible for making the appointment should call the embassy to ask if the letter has been received and if a meeting can be arranged. It is possible that the embassy has not replied because the ambassador is not prepared to attend a meeting, but it is important that the embassy is not given the impression that the Section has lost interest just because there has not been an immediate positive response. It may be necessary to call again every one or two weeks.

If there is still no response from the embassy, a second letter should be sent explaining the importance the Section attaches to the meeting. This letter could also request an explanation as to why the embassy is not prepared to arrange a meeting.

If the embassy will still not agree to a meeting, the information and concerns which were to be raised could be explained in a letter. The documents or memoranda prepared by the Section should be enclosed and specific questions asked relating to that information and AI's concerns. If the embassy visit was part of a campaign, the Section could consider the possibility of appearing at the embassy without prior appointment to present a petition or an AI report (see below).

An embassy may offer a meeting with a lower-level official. Some Sections accept such invitations but send along a lower-level AI official to press for a meeting between the AI Section director/chair and the ambassador so that they can discuss the substance of AI's concerns. Care should be taken not to fall into the trap of dealing only with officials whose function is public relations.

The AI delegation

The composition of the AI delegation which will visit the embassy should be decided before you ask for the meeting. The AI delegation should be made up of at least two, but usually no more than three, people.

Delegates should know about AI's mandate and policies and specific AI concerns in the country. They should also know about the general political situation in the country.

Some AI Sections offer training to prospective embassy delegates, but even a simple role-playing exercise can help to build confidence by anticipating possible questions.

In some cases it might be appropriate to include someone in the delegation who is not a member of AI, such as a member of parliament, scholar or writer known for his or her concern about human rights or who has a specific interest in the country. It is usually not a good idea to include a journalist in the delegation as this can affect the ambassador's attitude towards the delegation. The non-AI delegate should be someone who is seen as objective and impartial. It is also essential that he or she is familiar with AI's mandate.

The AI delegates should meet at least once before the meeting with the ambassador in order to:

- N make themselves familiar with the issues to be raised;
- N decide how the information will be presented and who should present each concern;
- N appoint a "head of delegation" who will be responsible for introducing the delegation to the ambassador and introducing AI in general.

If time allows, groups working on cases from the country concerned can be informed about the visit in advance and encouraged to present short summaries of their cases together with questions which they would like raised with the ambassador. This information can then be compiled in a memorandum. If there is no time to consult groups, this information should be available in the Section office. In either case, it is essential to follow the instructions in the Action Files and only submit external information.

Information on other AI concerns could also be prepared in the form of a short document or memorandum. In most cases this information will be found in the campaign or action material circulated to Sections by the IS. Only external material should be used. Recommendations in UAs and other campaign materials should not be used. Material from Amnesty International News may be used.

If the meeting is scheduled to take place towards the end of a campaign you may want to assemble a dossier of all the media coverage of the campaign as a way of demonstrating the level of concern.

The meeting

A member of the delegation should take notes of the meeting. In some cases, an embassy staff member will also take notes. Tape recorders should not be used as this can be seen as impolite. If

the ambassador tapes the conversation the delegation can ask for a copy of the tape, although you should still rely on your own notes.

N Introducing yourselves and AI

The head of the delegation should start by thanking the ambassador for offering the opportunity to present AI's concerns and introducing the members of the AI delegation.

Next, a short presentation of AI should be made. This should include a general explanation of what AI is -- its mandate and overall policies on impartiality, violence, acceptance of funds and independence -- and its working methods (see the Amnesty International Handbook). You might also want to include a very brief outline of the structure of the movement, for example, the number of members and groups in the Section and the relationship between the international movement and the Sections.

AI's consultative status or official relations with the UN (Economic and Social Council – ECOSOC, and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – UNESCO), the Council of Europe, the Organization of American States and the Organization of African Unity should be mentioned. If applicable it may also be useful to mention your Section's relationship with your own minister of foreign affairs or parliament.

A copy of the latest Amnesty International Report, the latest report on the ambassador's country or the latest issue of Amnesty International News should be presented. Offer to arrange for Amnesty International News to be sent on a complimentary basis. It may be useful to give examples of international publicity about the report or publicity within the Section's country.

N Presenting the issues

After these introductory remarks, the delegation should present the specific issues and concerns it wants to raise and hand over any documents which have been prepared. You should explain the function of the IS along the following lines:

"Our information has been prepared by the International Secretariat in London, which has an expert staff which collects and verifies reports on human rights violations from all over the world. If you wish to comment on this information, we will be glad to relay your comments to the International Secretariat."

You should mention that although you are aware that the ambassador may not be able to make decisions or comments without consulting the authorities in the home country, you expect the ambassador to relay the concerns to the home government.

You should also indicate that AI is interested in a dialogue with the ambassador and that it hopes to get a response to the questions raised, especially information on individual cases and specific concerns. It is important therefore that you try to formulate specific questions and include them in the documents given to the ambassador. In most cases the ambassador will not have any information about the individual cases you are raising and he or she should not be expected to present instant information or verification.

The ambassador will probably say that the information will be requested and you should try to get explicit confirmation of this. It should also be borne in mind that although an ambassador has considerable means of getting information from the ministry of foreign affairs, how quickly the ambassador receives the information and how much information they get will depend on whether the ministry considers the concerns raised to be important and whether it is prepared to forward requests for information to other authorities in the home country. The mere fact that the request is made via an ambassador may, however, help in getting a response.

N Dealing with difficult questions

An ambassador may try to avoid dealing with a matter directly or may be under instructions to simply criticize AI. You should try and anticipate and be prepared for the ambassador's possible reactions (see the Amnesty International Handbook for more advice).

Below are some examples:

M If the ambassador says AI's information is political propaganda, request a written confirmation from the ambassador's government saying that AI's information is without basis and giving specific instances of where it is inaccurate. Say that if AI's information is incorrect, it will be publicly corrected. Explain that one of the reasons for requesting the meeting is to ask for information from the ambassador's government.

M If the ambassador says he or she can do nothing, reply that AI is not asking for action outside the ambassador's normal diplomatic function. In that capacity, however, he or she is asked to report back to the government and seek answers to questions raised by the delegation.

M If the ambassador asks what right AI has to interfere with the internal affairs of another country, reply that the protection of human rights is an international responsibility, clearly stated in the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. This was reaffirmed by the final declaration of governments at the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993. Cite any international treaties signed by the ambassador's country, particularly the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. (For a list of countries' ratifications see the most recent copy of Amnesty International Report.) Mention that by granting AI consultative status with ECOSOC, it was accepted that organizations like AI have a legitimate role to play in the protection of human rights.

M If the ambassador asks why AI is only concerned with his or her country and not with another, explain AI's position of impartiality and emphasize that AI is working to promote and protect human rights in every country. People in the ambassador's country are surely no less deserving of concern for their human rights than anyone else.

Stress that, although AI finds it necessary to focus on individual countries to make the international community aware of specific human rights violations, this does not imply that AI takes a position against any particular country. AI does not oppose any government – it opposes specific human rights violations wherever they occur. Refer to recent country reports and campaigns.

M If the ambassador asks why AI is not concerned with a specific other country, refer to AI's concerns in that country and mention any recent reports published on the country (delegates should have been briefed on those countries regularly criticized by the ambassador's country). This should only be done in response to a question from the ambassador.

M If the ambassador asks how AI can know about the situation in the country without having been there, mention any recent AI visits to the country or ask whether the ambassador is agreeing to a visit from AI. If the ambassador is actually agreeing this, the delegation should make it clear that the offer will be conveyed to the IS.

M A subject that is frequently raised is AI's position on human rights abuses by armed opposition groups. You should make yourself familiar with AI's position on this and with any action AI has taken or statements it has made on abuses by armed political groups in the ambassador's country.

M The delegation should be familiar with the present political situation in the ambassador's home country and its recent history. But be careful not to become involved in political debate about the country. AI makes no judgment as to the political causes of human rights violations.

M The delegation should also be familiar with the relevant human rights instruments, such as the UDHR, the ICCPR and the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. These should be referred to as necessary in the course of the meeting.

At the end of the meeting, the head of the delegation should give a brief summary of the meeting focusing on any requests or agreements made. The delegation should inform the ambassador that it will report back to the IS. Thank the ambassador for the concern he or she has shown by giving

time for the meeting, and express the hope that the ambassador will report back to his or her government on future representations by the Section or local groups.

Follow-up

You should send a letter to the ambassador immediately after the meeting thanking him or her for meeting the AI delegation, summarizing the main points of the meeting and confirming any requests or agreements made, including any further meetings which have been agreed. Enclose any publications which you promised to send.

If no reply has been received after a month or so, another letter could be sent recalling the meeting and requests or agreements made and expressing the hope that the ambassador will soon be able to present the information. The Section could send further reminders at regular intervals and if there are further developments in the human rights situation in the country, they could be summarized in these letters.

You should send a report to the IS researcher responsible for the country immediately after the visit. The report should include:

- N the date and place of the meeting;
- N the participants from the embassy and Section (names and functions);
- N the reason for the meeting (part of campaign or action, requested by AI or embassy, follow-up to previous meetings, etc);
- N any problems in arranging the meeting (reluctance of embassy);
- N a summary of the meeting, including individual cases raised by the delegation (copies of papers prepared for the meeting should be enclosed), and the ambassador's response;
- N any agreements made with the ambassador;
- N any promises made by the ambassador;
- N the follow-up planned by the Section;
- N requests to the IS for ideas for follow-up.

You should send copies of any replies you receive from the ambassador to the IS researcher on the country.

Local groups working on cases from the country should be informed about the visit. This can be done by sending them a copy of the follow-up letter to the ambassador or a copy of the report to the IS. If the ambassador has promised to look into cases drawn to his or her attention, local groups should be encouraged to send copies of their letters to the authorities to the ambassador.

The Section board or other relevant coordinators should also be informed about the visit by copying them in on follow-up letters or the report to the IS. Copies of all letters and reports of the meeting should be filed at the Section office.

Publicity

It is no secret that AI seeks meetings with embassies to convey its concerns and to try to get information. It is, however, often useful to keep these meetings confidential and not to publicize them. This can help to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence which will make the dialogue easier and encourage the ambassador to get the information AI is seeking.

If an embassy repeatedly refuses a meeting, the Section could consider publicizing this and expressing regret at the embassy's position. It is a good idea to consult the IS before doing this.

If the embassy publicizes a meeting with AI, the Section should also feel free to publicize the visit in the Section newsletter or in a press release. If the embassy's publicity contains misleading or inaccurate information, this should be corrected by the Section. The embassy should be informed, for example by sending a press release, press cuttings or the Section newsletter.

If ambassadors refuse to meet AI, the following techniques may help to persuade them to agree to a meeting.

- N ask others, such as members of parliament, to act as intermediaries or to raise the issue with the ambassador;

- N raise the refusal in approaches to your own government;
- N find out the ambassador's itinerary and either arrange for the refusal to be raised at meetings or functions by someone who will be there, or organize AI members to be outside the meeting and raise the question of refusal as the ambassador is arriving or leaving;
- N establish who the ambassador meets on a more regular basis and ask them to take up the issue;
- N use publicity and the media -- if asked by a journalist what the government's position is, you can explain that it is difficult to know as the ambassador has so far refused to meet AI and discuss its concerns;
- N find out what organizations exist to promote relations between your country and the target society and ask for their support.

Day-to-day relations with embassies

Visits cannot be frequent events -- most Sections do not have the resources for this and embassies are not likely to encourage frequent visits. However, Sections should try to make regular contact with the embassy part of its routine work. If you are not able to arrange meetings, try other ways of conveying AI's concerns to the ambassador.

Remember to send a copy of all AI reports concerning the country to the embassy to arrive on the day of the release or on the embargo date. The government will have received a copy before then, and it is good practice for the embassy to be informed. You can send an accompanying letter explaining that AI is publishing the report and raising the specific concerns highlighted in the report. It will enable journalists and others to approach the embassy for comment.

Local groups and coordination groups can use embassies as channels for questions relating to their cases. Groups can send copies of their letters to the authorities to the embassy -- this can prompt the ambassador to report back to his or her government about receiving the letters. Members can also send individual letters to the ambassador, asking specific questions on specific cases and asking him or her to forward those questions to the authorities in his or her country.

Sections can send copies of Amnesty International News or the Amnesty International Report to the embassy; these are published in Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

Sometimes an ambassador or embassy official may write to the national press about an AI report or statement. If such letters present inaccurate information about AI or its concerns in the country, the Section should try to respond by sending a letter to the newspaper explaining what AI is and what its concerns in the country are.

Embassies sometimes invite AI representatives to attend official receptions or other functions. Sections should consider carefully whether there are any advantages or disadvantages in attending. When immediate action is particularly important, for example on UAs, you may consider asking a friendly journalist to make inquiries about the case in a professional capacity rather than on behalf of AI. Ambassadors are likely to be particularly sensitive to the publicity their country receives and may make particular efforts to get an answer or to inform their government that the media is interested in the case.

Some embassies have diplomatic staff or offices with a specific human rights brief. Meetings and regular contacts with these offices can be useful. Individuals may be willing to provide helpful advice to AI on an informal basis or to facilitate getting information. However, governments and embassies are becoming increasingly sophisticated in dealing with criticisms of their human rights record and these offices are often more concerned with public relations than with protecting human rights. Avoid being drawn into long and distracting discussions that do not address AI's main concerns and are designed to prevent AI from speaking out publicly.

Organizing contacts with embassies

It is useful to have one person or group coordinating embassy contacts. It can be confusing for embassies to receive requests from various levels of the same Section and can lead to them refusing them all. It is also important that the Section is always aware of all the approaches being

made to embassies and any outcome to assist in the planning of future visits. Groups should be asked to inform the Section office of all correspondence or contacts with embassies. Notes should be made of all contacts and these could be filed together with reports of previous meetings and copies of correspondence.

The fact that contacts with embassies are coordinated should not discourage local groups or co-groups from conveying AI's concerns or asking for information. The coordination should be used to make the contacts more effective and efficient. Local groups and co-groups should be aware of arrangements within the Section for coordinating embassy contacts, including the names of those responsible and the procedures the Section has decided to follow when arranging meetings.

Embassy protests

Embassies can be an important focus for protests and vigils. It is easy for a wider public and the media to see the relevance of protests that take place outside the embassy of the country concerned.

You can arrange for a delegation to deliver the Amnesty International Report to the embassy or to a series of embassies. Ask a celebrity to be in the delegation to help guarantee publicity (make sure they are well briefed if you want them to be interviewed).

If human rights violations in a particular country are in the headlines, organize a protest outside the embassy to make the most of the potential publicity.

A Peruvian diplomat reads AI's 1995 report on Peru

It can be important to try to research the background of the ambassador and other embassy officials. Are they career diplomats or government appointments? Do they have known interests? However, you should not, in general, raise their personal background.

Members of the Belgian Section (francophone) outside the US Embassy during AI's campaign against the death penalty in 1987

© AI

CAMPAIGNING TECHNIQUES CELEBRITY SUPPORT

Getting celebrities to support AI can be useful both as part of specific campaigns and of more general campaigning and membership development. Celebrities can help influence public opinion on specific issues and also enhance AI's image as an impartial organization which is supported by people from all walks of life and with a wide spectrum of political views.

This section looks at:

- N How celebrity support can help AI / 144
- N How to make the most of celebrity support / 145

“Activism is often my muse.”

Alice Walker, *Anything We Love Can Be Saved, A Writer's Activism*, Womens Press

Alice Walker lent her support to AI's first human awareness conference on female genital mutilation in 1996 in northern Ghana. Here she meets AI delegates from Togo, Benin and Nigeria.

© AI

How celebrity support can help AI

Public awareness campaigns in many societies have used celebrities identified as "role models" among their target audience. For example, in a number of countries, campaigns against racism have featured sports stars and musicians making strong statements to increase awareness of and support for anti-racism among the young people who identify with them.

Public support from celebrities can also help to define the image of organizations and campaigns. If AI is seen as a politically aligned organization in your country then the public support of celebrities identified with a wide spectrum of political opinions can help to counter this image.

Similarly if a campaign is tackling issues which are particularly controversial in a society and there is concern that the campaign may not attract the wide support it needs to be successful, then the endorsement of celebrities can help to overcome barriers and make the issues being raised more acceptable.

Celebrity support can be used more directly to attract public support. AI Sections have enlisted the help of celebrities in a variety of ways:

N getting celebrities to sign (and write) direct-mail appeal letters to existing and potential supporters asking for donations;

N asking them to appear in promotional activities and campaigning appeals for television and radio;

N asking them to use their network of contacts to get support for AI.

The participation of celebrities in campaigning activities and media conferences can create media interest in events which might otherwise attract less publicity. AI Sections have used famous writers, well-known judges and politicians to launch reports. They have involved pop stars, politicians, actors and artists in photo opportunities such as candle-lit vigils.

In many societies fame brings with it financial rewards and gives added value to anything associated with the person, from their socks to their signature! AI Sections have received:

N direct gifts of works of art from painters;

N the performances of musicians donated for fundraising concerts etc;

N items belonging to celebrities donated for "celebrity auctions" or sale;

N direct gifts of money.

How to make the most of celebrity support

Below are some ideas that might prove useful:

c TIPS

c If you are launching a report be careful that your choice of celebrity will not trivialize the issue or undermine the message.

c If you want to get coverage on a particular television network, winning the support of a celebrity from that network might be helpful.

c Ideally the celebrity should have some connection to the issue so that they can have a good answer for the first question a journalist will ask -- "Why are you involved in this campaign?"

c Where possible make direct contact with the celebrity concerned. Many celebrities have agents who filter requests for support. This can be an extra hurdle that is difficult to overcome.

Celebrities receive many requests for support from organizations. The clearer you are about what you want from them, the more likely you are to receive a positive response. Providing the right level of information and organizational support from the outset will help ensure a positive result and encourage the celebrity to build up a relationship with AI and to work with you in future.

c TIPS

c Be clear about what you want done, when and why.

c Be clear about what support you are able to provide.

- c Be clear whether or not a fee or expenses will be paid -- for many pop concerts the expenses bill can be high.
- c Supply as much background information as necessary.
- c Make sure that the celebrity's contribution will be worthwhile and will be seen by them to be worthwhile.
- c Make sure someone from AI is available to provide detailed knowledge on AI, campaign issues, policy, etc.
- c Make sure you acknowledge the celebrity's contribution appropriately, for example, with a thank-you letter from the chairperson or director of the Section.

AI's Secretary General, Pierre Sané, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, at the launch in South Africa of AI's campaign on Nigeria, November 1996

© AI

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Some celebrities may want to use AI's name or resources to further their career, or they may demand a level of support that will not be reflected in income or support for AI. Remember that you are responsible for deciding what sort of assistance AI would like – not the celebrity. How any event or action will further AI's work must remain paramount.

Viv Richards, captain of the West Indian cricket team, with members of the Ghanaian Section during AI week, March 1990

© AI

“The scale of human rights violations is monumental and we should be addressing it.”

Noam Chomsky, linguist at the Massachusetts Technological Institute, USA, gave a keynote address at an AI conference on the protection of human rights defenders in Latin America. The conference was held in Colombia, May 1996.

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CHAPTER 8 PREPARING CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Campaigning materials are the basic tools for informing people, building awareness and getting action during campaigns. This chapter looks at the content, design, production and format of some of these materials, focusing on products such as leaflets, briefing papers, posters and postcards. Other publicity materials, such as video news releases, direct-mail appeals, advertising and media releases, are covered in Chapters 5 and 9.

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“It is not enough to aim, you must hit.”
Italian proverb

Choosing the materials

As in all other communications, the most important stage is to clarify the purpose before deciding the means for carrying it out. Communications must be matched as closely as possible to campaigning and development objectives.

Stating the purpose of a communication in a simple sentence should help you to be precise about the targeted audience. This will influence the form of communication you use.

Clarifying the resources available can help to focus discussions on purpose. You will rarely be able to produce all the materials of the quality you would like.

The following questions may help you decide which is the best mix of materials for any particular campaign.

gQUESTIONS

g What audience are you trying to reach?

Is it the largest number of people, or people going to a particular venue, or a particular outreach sector?

g What information do you want to convey?

Do you want to advertise an event or demonstration, or provide details of a campaign, or tell people how to join AI?

g What action do you want?

Do you want people to come to an event, write a letter of protest or make a donation?

g What methods of distribution are available?

What display places are available for posters or exhibitions? Who will distribute leaflets? Will there be events or other opportunities to distribute leaflets?

g How long does the material have to last?

Is it a membership leaflet that may have to last for a year, or a leaflet promoting a demonstration that may need to be distributed within a week and have no use afterwards?

g How much money do you have? If you have to choose between leaflets and posters, which is better suited to the campaign objectives? If you produce one-colour rather than two-colour leaflets, will this allow you to produce posters as well?

Content

The content of campaigning and promotional material changes all the time. It is, however, useful to bear in mind the AIDA formula:

A M attract attention

In many societies people are flooded with information at the same time as they are getting busier and busier. Unless your message can attract attention in the first place, it will have no opportunity to do anything.

I M raise interest

Your audience has to be able to relate to and be interested in your message or the issue.

D M encourage a feeling of desire

However grim the substance of AI's information, a communication has to persuade the reader to want to do something.

A M prompt action

The material must convert the desire to do something into action -- sending a letter, making a donation, joining AI.

People have to connect with the content. It may be true that most AI supporters are interested in the world beyond their own community, but the same does not necessarily apply to the wider community to which AI is appealing.

Human rights violations in Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom, for example, can become more real to people if they know that the killings have taken place in a society that has the same number of inhabitants as their city. They can relate something they do not know about to something they do know about. You can give them a tool to construct their own mental images.

If the popular image in your society of the country on which you are campaigning is as a centre of civilization or a popular tourist destination, then use this existing knowledge to introduce the human rights reality. Think about the image that your target audience currently has of a country or issue, and then the image that you would like them to see. How can your materials move it from one to the other?

Your choices will be affected by many factors, such as how much space or time you have to tell your story.

Before drafting, write down the key points you want to get across, find a natural order for them so that one leads on to the next.

If you want people to act, your material must establish a need or problem, make the reader feel involved, and give them the belief that they have the power to do something about it.

In all materials, be concise. Use short words and sentences.

Writing and editing

If you are asking someone to write the text of a leaflet or an article for a newsletter, you need to provide them with a very clear brief. This should state:

- N the subject and angle of the piece;
- N any essential points you want covered;
- N details about the target audience, such as their level of knowledge of the subject;
- N the style of the publication or other factors special to your campaign (provide samples);
- N how long it should be (number of words);
- N when you need it by (add spare time into your schedule to allow for problems).

It can help to note these things down even if writing the material yourself.

Correcting mistakes is much cheaper before a piece of work goes to the printer than afterwards. Editing is also important because AI has a reputation for checking facts and being accurate. This can be easily undermined if care is not taken in editing a text that will go to the public or members. Governments have used mistakes by AI to attack the organization and deflect attention from their human rights record.

Editors therefore need to check for accuracy of facts and policy, as well as for grammar and style. They should add sub-headings and titles, and make sure the text is clear and easy to read.

If work has been commissioned, consult the contributor on changes. If their contribution is not to be used, let them know and explain why before publication.

Design

Design plays a central role in attracting attention, aiding comprehension and defining image. It should be determined primarily by purpose and audience. That is one reason why reports and leaflets have a different look.

Styles of print design vary from culture to culture and over time. The following are some principles which might be helpful.

c TIPS

c Choose a typeface for AI's name and logo and use it in all publications. This will help to create a strong "brand image" in the community.

c Headlines should be big, bold and short. Headlines are your best chance to catch someone's attention and interest. 2,000 people “disappeared” might be better than AI condemns Indonesian Government.

c Avoid using too many typefaces as this is disruptive and disturbing to the eye. Use one typeface (or one for the heading and another for the body text) and use bold, italics and CAPITALS to give emphasis or to break up the text.

c Avoid full pages of unbroken text where possible. Break up blocks of text by using bullet points, sub-headings, plain or shaded boxes, horizontal or vertical lines and columns.

c Don't be afraid of areas of white space. Use it to help make the text or photographs stand out.

c Use a drop capital or bold capitals to begin each paragraph.

c Use pictures and illustrations to catch the eye and where they help to tell the story.

c Keep designs clear and simple, not fussy and crowded.

c Colour increases design options, but can add substantially to costs. Full-colour printing is more expensive and may mean using a higher quality and heavier paper, which can in turn increase printing and distribution/postage costs. In addition, photocopies of full-colour materials are often hard to read.

Printing

There are four main ways of having your materials printed:

N Duplicating

The duplicating machine is becoming increasingly obsolescent as technology marches on. Using real ink, it can be a messy process. However, it remains a cheap way to produce a lot of leaflets -- a basic stencil can be cut on a typewriter and the only other costs are ink and paper.

N Photocopying

The easiest and often the cheapest way of producing simple materials in smallish quantities is to photocopy them. Even where the photocopier is single-colour, different colour papers can be used to add impact. Using a poor-quality photocopier because it is cheap can be a false economy, however, if it undermines your message and image.

The quality of printing from laser or bubble-jet printers is now perfectly adequate for reproduction by photocopier. Photographs and other images can be scanned in if the technology exists, and it is increasingly possible to have photographs and other images transferred on to computer disks that can then be laid out on the screen. If this is not possible, you can cut-and-paste -- place different bits of text and pictures on a blank page. Correction tape or fluid can be used to cover up the resulting lines before photocopying.

For large quantities, particularly where folding is involved, commercial printers can be cheaper.

N Quick printers

Quick printers normally use larger and more versatile photocopying machines than are available in offices. They can print and collate large documents and use full colour. They can often complete jobs very quickly as they do not have to go through the same preparation process as traditional printers. Laser-printed copy is of a high enough quality for the printer to work with. Check with them first what you need to provide.

N Commercial printers

If you are unfamiliar with preparing copy for printers, consult other organizations that do a lot of printing. Meet local printers and find out what options are available, how much time different sorts of jobs take, and how much notice you need to give. Clarify in what form (film, disk or hard copy, for example) they would like the job delivered.

If you are using professional designers, they will probably know the requirements of printers and may also be able to suggest good ones to use.

When dealing with printers be very clear about the specifications for each job and get quotes beforehand. Specifications will include number of pages, cover details, quantity, paper size, paper weight, colour and finish/type, and deadlines. They will also include the form in which you will be delivering your work (such as camera-ready artwork) and whether the job is to be folded, stapled or collated. This should be agreed and written down as many things can go wrong and it is important to be able to hold printers to account if mistakes are their fault.

There are a lot of variables that affect cost and quality of the finished product. Many different types of paper, for example, are likely to be available. Know your options and get estimates for each.

Proofread your copy before it is sent to the printers. They will charge you for mistakes you want corrected later.

You must see and approve the final proofs before printing begins. Printers may insist on a formal "signing off" by you (the client) of the proofs so that if you subsequently find an error it is clear that you should pay for a reprint.

In any campaign there can be occasions when a job will be rushed. Even then it is important that the proofreading be thorough. In particular, check times, dates and figures, and that AI's name is included and spelled correctly.

If you have quite large printing requirements, or a steady stream of work, it can be worthwhile choosing one printer, explaining your requirements and trying to come to an agreement for this work.

Leaflets

Formats

In many parts of the world, leaflets are most commonly produced in the following formats:

N A5 (148mm x 210mm) -- single or double sided. This is the smallest and cheapest style of standard leaflet. One side can consist of little more than a headline or the basic time and place of an event or demonstration, while the other can contain the basic details of a campaign or issue (and a membership and/or donation coupon). This can be eye-catching as a handout and is also good for displaying on notice boards. All other things being equal, you can get twice as many for your money as A4 leaflets.

N A4 (210mm x 297mm) -- single or double sided. The main advantage of this over the A5 format is size, allowing for more text and therefore more campaign/issue details. It also acts better as a mini-poster. It can still be used as a handout or placed on counters for picking up.

N A4 -- folded to A5 (4 x A5 panels). Using a single fold can give the impression of a mini-booklet. It provides a good way of breaking up text, which can make it easier on the eye and allows more scope for pictures and illustrations. Single folds are slightly more awkward to hand out than a flat sheet.

N A4 -- double vertical fold (6 x long panels). With the space divided into six panels, the subject matter can be broken up even further. There is more scope for design and for taking the reader through different aspects of an issue as each fold is opened up -- ending with the action section. The format is not very suitable, however, for display on notice boards, but it is popular with many organizations for membership leaflets. It has the advantage of fitting easily into a standard-size envelope.

A paper weight of 80 to 100g is normally adequate for all the above leaflets.

Distribution

Leaflets can be distributed in the following ways:

N Handing them out in the street or other public places. This is likely to be most effective if you pick an area or event where the audience is likely to be interested in the campaign. Handing

out leaflets at events or protests that you have organized can reinforce the message, give people something to take away and think about, and provide the necessary information to take action.

N Campaigning organizations hand out leaflets at other organizations' meetings and demonstrations if they think the people involved are likely to want to know about related issues. It is good practice to ask beforehand if the organizing body has any objections to you doing this.

N Cinemas or theatres showing films or productions related to AI's work can also be good places hand out leaflets.

N Pushing leaflets through doors can be very labour intensive. However, it offers more personal contact and the opportunity to discuss issues in person. This may work best if you want to attract a local audience to an event or function.

N Leave leaflets in places where you hope they will be picked up by the audience you are trying to reach. This could be a shop, the front counter of the AI office, doctors' waiting rooms, etc.

Outreach/Briefing papers

Outreach or briefing papers (A3 sheet with a single fold, printed on both sides) perform the same function as leaflets, but are directed at a different audience.

For people such as trade union officials or representatives of religious or lawyers' organizations, a leaflet cannot include all the necessary information and action points. On the other hand, a full AI report provides too much detail. Briefing papers can give adequate details and are intended to be given to people during or after an AI meeting so that they can:

N refer back to any particular facts you have mentioned;

N refresh their memory on the background to the issue and the action being asked for;

N have easy access to the points that need to be raised and specific details such as addresses to write to.

Briefing papers can be cheap to produce -- one colour on coloured paper can be attractively designed -- and different audiences can be targeted by changing some of the text. To keep costs down, it is possible to print one side with a standard text and the other with a text intended to appeal particularly to trade unionists or lawyers, for example.

Reports

AI's reports are the campaigners most essential tool. They provide evidence of human rights violations, make the case for action to be taken to stop the violations, and often give hope to the victims that people will not ignore their suffering in silence.

Reports, which are researched and written by the IS, are the raw materials for protests, lobbying, media releases and leaflets. It is up to campaigners to ensure that the reports do not stay on shelves gathering dust. The release of a report offers opportunities for winning press coverage, especially if the report is studied beforehand for a possible news angle.

As AI releases many reports, not all will win media coverage. You will therefore have to decide which reports you will devote time and resources to. Sometimes, coverage can be won simply by giving the report to a journalist who specializes in the country or issue.

It is good practice to provide the embassy concerned with a copy of the report at the time of the release. This is a courtesy as well as a way of ensuring that the embassy knows that AI is active in your society.

The report should also be sent to your ministry of foreign affairs with a letter highlighting the recommendations made in the report and any action you would like your government to take.

Academics, institutions, libraries, NGOs working on the country, and other organizations may be interested in the report and be able to take action.

Some Sections produce simple leaflets advertising new reports, which are then widely distributed.

Reports may be too long for some audiences, so you may want to summarize the information in a shorter format, such as a leaflet or briefing paper (see above). If you do this, inform the relevant IS research team as they may be able to provide fresh information and advice. It is important that all such materials carry the Section's name and address. The IS produces shorter campaign documents for major campaigns.

It is sometimes possible to charge people via a subscription system to receive AI reports. In some situations, people feel that something has more value if they have to pay for it, but it is a difficult balance to reach. Some Sections also market AI reports to the general public as a way of raising funds.

Posters

Posters can get you and your campaign noticed because of their size and design, providing they are well displayed. They are best used for:

- N promoting a specific event;
- N reinforcing a key campaign message, slogan or image.

The usefulness of posters depends largely on display opportunities. In many countries there are laws or regulations affecting both the information that needs to be included (even in very small print, such as the name of the printer or tax number) and where posters can be displayed. It is important to be aware of these regulations.

Common display sites for posters include:

- N notice boards in libraries, offices, hospitals, schools, local authority buildings, etc;
- N shop or house windows;
- N walls, fences and lamp posts;
- N cafés and community centres;
- N AI stalls;
- N offices of other NGOs, trade unions, etc;
- N buses, trains and trams;
- N at protests, held by hand.

How the posters are put up may affect their legality or the willingness of people to display them. It may be legal to tape a poster to a lamp post but illegal to use paste. Check with the owner of the site or other organizations that display posters. Do not use tape that damages the surface when removed.

If there are few of these sites in your area, then posters might not be the best way of communicating your message.

The design and content of the poster should reflect its audience and your display opportunities.

A poster advertising a specific event should contain the following elements:

- N who is organizing it and what it is for;
- N what it is – a concert, public meeting, etc;
- N when it is being held – the time, the date and the day;
- N where it is being held– include a map if it is not well known;
- N price of admission if appropriate;
- N a contact number/address.

A poster for a wall along a busy road will need to be big and bold to stand out. A poster intended for office walls may be able to carry more information -- and can be smaller and less bold.

The costs of posters depend on production methods, size and weight of paper, number of colours used, etc. Options for production include handwriting, silkscreen printing, commercial printing and photocopying.

Posters are normally one-sided. Some organizations, as well as AI Sections, have produced double-sided posters. One side has been a striking image, while the other has included campaign information and action requests. Alternatively, one side has been used for the campaign, while the

other has contained general information about AI so that the posters can be used after the campaign is over. Posters displayed in windows may have both sides visible.

It is useful to provide local AI groups with posters that feature AI's name and logo/image but which are otherwise blank so that they can be used to advertise local activities. Also, provide individual members with small posters. This can be done cheaply by making the poster the centre or cover pages of your newsletter if you produce one. Make suggestions on where the members could display the posters.

Placards

Placards are really posters on sticks. They can help to make the message of any protest or vigil immediately apparent to passers by. They can also contribute to an attractive image that might appear in newspapers or on television.

Attach the posters (A2 -- 420mm x 594mm) to slightly larger pieces of card using staples, then attach the card with the posters on to a small piece of wood (1cm x 1cm), about 1m in length.

Banners

Banners are useful as a backdrop at a stall, protest or media conference as well as at demonstrations. The more striking and attractive they are, the more likely the event will appear in newspapers or on television. Commercial firms and sign writers produce banners. Many materials can be used.

Be clear about what the banner will be mainly used for. If it is as a backdrop for media conferences it should have fixing points (strengthened holes for string or pins) to allow it to be easily fixed to walls and tables or suspended, or should be light enough to be held in place by tape. If it is mainly for use during demonstrations, it should be light enough to carry, have pockets for poles and holes in the material to allow the wind to blow through the banner. Paint should be waterproof.

Newsletters

Newsletters are one of the most commonly used and effective techniques for communicating with supporters and others. They can give feedback on campaigning successes, keep people updated on relevant issues and raise awareness on new issues.

Newsletters can be anything from two sides of A4 or A3 folded to create four pages, to the glossy 16- and 20-page publications produced by many Sections.

It is particularly important that all those involved in producing the newsletter are clear about its purpose and main audience. Consider whether you want a letters' page to act as a forum for discussion and try and make sure there is a mix of longer and shorter articles. Remember that people are motivated by good news and success.

Newsletters can also be a lot of work and expensive. Check that they are the most effective way of achieving what you want.

When costing newsletters it is important to know how most newsletters will be distributed. Postage costs (which might rise substantially with the number of pages used) can quickly rise to being as much as or more than the printing costs. Membership newsletter costs can also quickly absorb the bulk of membership fees, which may leave little other money for campaigning.

If newsletters are external they have more campaigning potential for AI. They can be distributed to sympathetic organizations and individuals to maintain their sense of involvement in a campaign.

Photo exhibitions

Photo exhibitions can be a useful campaigning tool both for Sections and local AI groups. An exhibition can help to attract media coverage for the campaign by:

- N being publicly launched by a celebrity;
- N providing good visual images for television and print media;

N attracting contributors -- the arts or events media.

Photo exhibitions can and have been displayed at the following venues (and probably many more):

N community halls;

N town halls;

N department stores;

N art galleries;

N churches and cathedrals;

N libraries, schools and universities;

N AI stalls;

N cinema and theatre foyers.

There is no AI restriction on where an exhibition can be placed. It is a matter of which audience you are trying to reach, what is available and where you can have most impact. The venue chosen might mean that somebody has to be with the display all the time to make sure it is not damaged – as well as to answer questions.

If local AI groups are being supplied with a photo exhibition during their campaign, then give them an advice sheet on how to make the most of it. This should include:

N suggestions on suitable venues;

N suggestions on the sorts of celebrities who could be approached to launch the exhibition -- local politicians, artists, authors or actors living in the community;

N suggestions for having an official opening that could provide a good opportunity for the group to conduct outreach to key parts of the community. Include practical organizational details, such as how far in advance to send out invitations, what refreshments to supply and how to structure the evening;

N suggestions on getting publicity: supply a draft media release for the local media on which they need only add the name of the celebrity, venue, time and local quote; suggest they approach the print media and television to request a feature using the photographs in the exhibition;

N ideas for holding an information and action stall, which would include petitions or draft letters to sign, membership forms and a donation box.

When using a photo exhibition supplied by the IS, consider laminating at least one copy with plastic or getting it framed so that it can be used more than once and will stay in good condition. You can also add your own panels to make it more relevant to your society.

Postcards

AI often uses postcards as a campaign tool -- preprinted messages to be sent to home or foreign governments. Some Sections have also produced postcards to publicize AI and particular campaigns.

In some ways postcards are a "soft-sell". On one side they have an interesting or attractive image -- an image that you think people would like to send to friends and family. On the other side they are like a normal postcard -- lines for an address, a square for the stamp, a blank space for writing a message and, most importantly, a short explanation of the image. It is this explanation that offers the opportunity to explain AI or the particular campaign. The hope is that the person receiving the card will become more aware of the campaign or AI.

The cards can be provided to groups as one of the materials they can sell or distribute from their public stalls or give to individual members as a gift and action tool. In some countries there are now networks in cafes, cinemas and elsewhere for the distribution of free postcards. Otherwise, cards can be left in venues where you think people will use them.

Stickers

Stickers are another well-used publicity or awareness-raising tool. Car stickers have been particularly popular in the USA, although much less so in Europe -- perhaps because car bumpers are smaller!

Small stickers can also be used as seals for envelopes or as new address labels to allow the recycling of envelopes.

If stickers are for cars or for outside display, they have to be hardy. This normally means they are made of some form of PVC or plastic. Stickers for envelopes can be made of paper with either an adhesive or a gum backing. The latter is most often used for replacement address labels. These are mainly blank but have an AI message and logo printed around the edges. Check with your postal authorities for possible restrictions.

People are most likely to use the stickers if they are attractive. Stickers for cars normally allow for little more than two or three words as they must be readable from a distance. Stickers for envelopes may simply have an AI logo. Supply them to AI members and local groups and encourage them to use them as a way of building community recognition of AI's symbol.

Videos and audio tapes

Video and audio tapes are powerful communication tools and can be used for campaigning, actions, educational, training, promotional and documentary purposes.

The Audiovisual Resources at the IS has an archive of over 2,000 video and audio tapes on human rights indexed by region, country and theme. These can be used in various ways (depending on copyright) to support and enhance your campaign with the membership, media and general public. To help get AI issues broadcast you can utilize a variety of audiovisual materials produced by the IS which are related to campaigns and actions. Materials will usually have scripts/voice-overs in Arabic, English, French and Spanish and should be available via your section press officer. Here is an outline of the different types of products:

N Video News Release (VNR) – a documentary-style story on a country or a theme. 3-5 minutes long, voice-over, what we would call a "finished" piece. There is an additional "B" roll at the end of the VNR which contains extra footage related to the piece which a broadcaster can use to make another/longer product.

N Audio News Releases (ANR) – a radio version of the above.

N News Access Tape (NAT) – often called an "unfinished" piece and which can be anything from two to 30 minutes in length. There is no voice over but the images can tell a story related to a theme or country. The point of the NAT is to provide broadcasters with images to cover AI issues. Some broadcasters will not run our "finished" pieces and this is a good compromise.

N Audio News Access Tape (ANAT) – a radio version of the above.

N Feature – a documentary-style "finished" piece, with voice over and which can be five to 10 minutes in length. AI makes these primarily for major campaigns.

N Audio features – a radio version of the above, either with a suggested script or actual voice-over. Remember that each broadcaster is different. Some do not like VNRs produced by NGOs, while others may broadcast what is offered. Audiovisual materials are usually prepared for the launch of a campaign and therefore a "news hook" is already provided. They can, however, be offered as additional footage/audio for documentaries and can be used for educational and campaigning purposes.

c TIPS

c Watch/listen to the audiovisual material. If you do not know what you have access to, you won't know what to promote or how it relates to the campaign or issue you are promoting. As you are watching or listening to the material, think how you can best persuade the broadcaster to at least take a look at what you have.

c Identify which broadcasters you will approach. You may find that the audiovisual material is best suited to a news or feature program. It may fit on a youth show. Remember that there are many types of television and radio stations you can contact. Duplication of audiovisual materials can get expensive so try, where possible, to get the media to pay for copies.

c Respect the embargo but get the story. If you are contacting a newsdesk, speak to the forward-planning department a few days before the launch of your campaign. Let them know what audiovisual materials you have and gauge whether they are interested or too busy to talk right now. You could follow-up with a fax. Television editors take longer to make news stories, so if they are interested, provide them with material a day before the launch but stress the embargo time. Radio stations can turn a story around quite quickly, so getting the material to them on the day is usually fine.

c Follow-up for next time. Always check whether your material was used. This way you can see whether you can trust an editor when they say they will use it, and remain in friendly contact for next time.

Materials from the IS

The IS produces a variety of materials for AI campaigns and actions and distributes them to Sections. Typically, these would include some of the following: an A5 report in book format, a magazine-style briefing, a set of appeal leaflets, a poster display, a set of postcards, a focus article of Amnesty International News. Sections are serviced directly by the IS Marketing and Supply team. Groups in countries without Sections are serviced by the relevant regional development team.

An order form explaining what materials are being produced and at what price is sent out by the IS in the weekly mailing to Sections. Limited quantities of copies of the materials are made available free of charge to smaller Sections. The aim is to receive orders in good time to allow the IS to print and distribute the materials so that they arrive with Sections well ahead of the launch date.

The order form is usually accompanied by a manuscript-request form, so that Sections or groups wishing to translate the texts and produce their own versions of materials can do so. Translations into core languages (Arabic, French and Spanish) are done by the decentralized units: Amnesty International Arabic Publishing (ARABAI); Editions francophones d'Amnesty International (EFAI); and Editorial Amnistía Internacional (EDAI). The units may also produce versions of the materials.

The English edition of the annual Amnesty International Report is distributed from the IS on a similar basis, as are copies of the International Newsletter. Also available are publications, including a number of leaflets in various languages, which give general information about AI and its concerns.

Internet campaigning

The Internet is a gift for campaigners. You can supply information to millions, making your material look as slick as the wealthiest multinational company's on-line publishing effort. The cost is negligible; connecting to a computer on the other side of the world is just as easy and costs the same as connecting to one down the road. The disadvantage is that only in the wealthier countries

will significant numbers of people have access to material produced in this way. It is therefore important, as with other campaigning materials, to have a specific target audience, and a specific purpose in mind before embarking on an Internet campaign. For more detailed information on campaigning using information technology, see Chapter 2.

A well-designed two-colour leaflet produced by the Dutch Section

Brief for publication

The following criteria might be helpful to consider when drafting an article or a leaflet. You can use them to plan your own work, but you might also provide them as guidelines to someone else.

- N Format (e.g. leaflet/article/poster)
- N Length (number of words)
- N Purpose/main message
- N Points/facts that must be included
- N Audience (who you are trying to reach, what you know of them, how and where the material will be distributed)
- N Intended audience action (attend meeting/send donations/join AI/send letter)
- N First draft needed by (date)
- N Final draft needed by (date)

Worksheet for a printing job

A worksheet listing the following criteria can be a helpful record when working with a commercial printer:

- N Job name/title (e.g. Poster for campaign on China)
- N Trim size
- N Paper weight/ type/ finish/ colour
- N Quantity
- N Binding (folded/ stapled/ stitched/ collated/ perfect bound)
- N Form supplied to the printer
- N Date to be supplied
- N Final proofs ready by (date)
- N Signed off by (person/date)
- N Job delivered by (date)
- N Cost quoted/name of firm
- N Contact name at printers

An AI fold-out leaflet aimed at youth

In several countries AI groups established information stalls when Ariel Dorfman's play *Death and the Maiden* was being performed. Leaflets were handed out about human rights violations in Chile, a subject dealt with in the play.

f

While posters are always popular among AI members, many end up on the walls of members' homes or stay in boxes rather than being displayed in public.

cTIP

When supplying local AI groups with leaflets, provide a suggestion sheet about where they may be able to distribute them. Leave a space when printing so that they can include a local contact address and number.

Billboards

The largest posters are those seen on advertising billboards used by commercial enterprises. Some companies let AI have the space for free or a very low rate. Even then the poster still needs to be

specially designed and printed, which can be quite expensive. Posters on billboards can provide a good photo opportunity for a press launch.

Some campaigning organizations specialize in creatively altering commercial billboards to get their message across or because they find the official message offensive. This is usually illegal. The company whose billboards are targeted might take private legal action or those caught altering billboards may face criminal prosecution.

Following the crack-down on pro-democracy protests in China in 1989, the Australian Section produced a glossy and attractive brochure (A4 sheet with a single fold) featuring pictures of some of China's most famous tourist destinations. The text focused on AI's human rights concerns in China. These brochures were distributed through Australian travel agents as the strategy had identified tourists as an important audience to reach.

A newsletter sent by fax to a wide range of people inside Saudi Arabia has been one of the key campaigning tools used by Mohammed al Masari, a Saudi Arabian dissident living in exile. It has reached people eager for information, partly because of restrictions on the flow of information and news inside Saudi Arabia.

Right: A photo exhibition staged by AI groups in Greece to highlight human rights violations in China. Below: AI groups in Ecuador organized a photo exhibition to highlight the human rights situation in Chile.

© ai

In 1995 the South Korean Section took a general AI photo exhibition around different cities, arranging local launches with national AI figures and local politicians. Media channels and posters put up by local supporters and members were used to publicize the exhibition. In each city new members were recruited and in some places new AI groups were established.

Postcards produced by an AI group in Poland (top), and by the Norwegian Section

CHAPTER 9 MEDIA AND PUBLICITY

The media has been central to AI's campaigning from the day the organization was launched through a newspaper article in 1961. Television, radio and print journalism has the power to inform, build awareness, set agendas and bring pressure for change. A good understanding of the media and how it can help AI's work is important for successful campaigning. This chapter concentrates on the practicalities of getting the best out of the media.

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“When Amnesty International adopted me as a prisoner of conscience, the newspapers started talking about me, I got better treatment in prison, and I was given a proper hearing in the courts. There had been a complete blackout on my name and case. That was blasted when Amnesty International took up my case.”

Mukhtar Rana, a teacher and former prisoner of conscience from Pakistan

The role of the media

Most governments care about their public image, at home and abroad. They care because their image may influence whether they are re-elected, whether they can attract foreign investment, including tourism, and whether they attract domestic or international criticism. The media, the maker and shaper of images, is therefore important to AI in its campaigning efforts to change the behaviour of governments.

The media can:

N play a key role in building awareness and shaping public opinion on human rights and related issues;

N shape the framework and nature of debates over important issues affecting human rights, not least the death penalty or human rights in foreign policy;

N generate action from its audience;

N influence government policy, both directly and through its power to influence and mobilize opinion;

N shape public perceptions of AI as a campaigning organization and raise AI's public profile;

N put direct pressure on a government by placing it in the spotlight;

N help build the morale and influence of human rights activists and organizations all over the world;

N protect and enhance AI's reputation;

N investigate and expose human rights issues.

AI's campaigning media work has the chance to influence the image and actions of many governments. Target governments which are violating human rights may care sufficiently about their international image to stop the violations. Domestic governments may be so responsive to media or public opinion that they stop the military, security and police (MSP) transfers that AI is concerned about, or initiate a human rights strategy for the target country.

The media in most countries is diverse and targeted to many specialized audiences. Some government policies on human rights may be influenced by the mass media, other policies may be more susceptible to specialist media. Similarly, different sections of public opinion are affected by particular newspapers, magazines, radio and television.

It is argued that governments seek to insulate their policies from the ups and downs of public opinion, or that pressure groups resort to media and publicity work when they are losing the argument. Media coverage of an issue can make sure organizations get into the policy-making room to put forward more detailed arguments. These positions can reflect the tensions that arise between AI's quiet and public campaigning, and can only be resolved on a case by case basis.

As the media is often the best or only way to communicate AI's message to different audiences, it is important to make sure that clear media objectives are fully integrated into campaigning and development strategies. Determining the specific role of the media in achieving campaigning and development objectives is the first building block in the construction of media strategies.

Constructing a media strategy

Different campaigns demand different media strategies. However, a Section is likely to benefit from a longer-term media strategy. Building good working relationships with the media that allow AI to get its message across when it needs to is likely to be part of such a strategy. Individual campaign strategies should benefit from, and aim to strengthen such relationships.

Two general points can help shape media strategies:

N It is important to identify target audiences and find the specific media that reaches them. For example, AI medical actions may target doctors and medical journals may be the best media to reach them.

N Media strategies should be specific about what action is needed.

As with strategies in campaigning the following steps should be taken:

- M research and analysis;
- M specify objectives (desired change);
- M specify target audience and media;
- M implement action;
- M monitor and evaluate.

Research and analysis

A useful starting point for developing a media strategy is to analyse the current situation of AI and the media in your society. The following questions, not all of which need to be addressed, might help you determine the information that might be useful for such an analysis.

gQUESTIONS

g Which newspapers, magazines, radio and television programs most influence public opinion on issues of concern to AI?

g What are the circulation or audience figures for different newspapers and magazines, and radio and television news and current affairs programs?

g Which newspapers, magazines, radio and television news and current affairs shows are most read, listened to or watched by or likely to influence decision-makers, politicians, government officials, etc.

g Which media is most likely to shape the debates or determine the agenda on issues of importance to AI?

g On what issues of concern to AI is government most likely to be influenced by the media?

g How important is regional/local media to shaping community attitudes or influencing locally based politicians and decision-makers?

g Which journalists in print, radio or television particularly influence public opinion or government?

g Are there specialist publications on foreign affairs? What is the foreign news coverage of the different media? Is it increasing or decreasing?

g Do the different news organizations have their own foreign correspondents? Who are they and in what countries? Which international wire services do they subscribe to?

g Who are the editorial and feature writers on foreign affairs or issues related to AI's campaigning action?

g What is the specialist media in your society? Religious, women's, ethnic, legal, etc?

g What national news agencies exist and which national media subscribe to them?

g Are there organizations that distribute media releases to subscribing media organizations?

g Are human rights issues and AI's concerns regularly covered in the media that AI targets?

g Are human rights seen as hard or soft (human interest) news? Are they seen as mainly foreign or domestic news?

g Is there an up-to-date list of media contacts? Does AI have an easy way of contacting the necessary media, such as a fax broadcast facility or computer fax?

g Does AI have good relationships with individual journalists and editors?

g Does AI have a positive or negative image in the media? Is it seen as a reliable source of information? Is it seen as representing community opinion? Is it seen as a campaigning organization?

g Do print and broadcast media normally refer to AI as a London-based organization, the worldwide human rights organization, or AI as an organization in your country?

g Do foreign correspondents or journalists seek briefings from AI on human rights before travelling?

g Do journalists seek AI's material as background when doing country features or before the visits of foreign heads of state?

g Do local AI groups feel confident in doing media work? Do they need training or support?

g Do you have specialist AI spokespeople trained to do media work on particular countries or issues?

g What will be the important issues for AI over the coming year?

g Are there important dates in the human rights calendar that could be pegs on which to hang a human rights story?

g Do current media or public perceptions of the human rights situation in your country act as a barrier to human rights action on the target country?

g Is the government/military of the target country sensitive to media coverage and public opinion in your country? Are they particularly sensitive about some media? If so, which?

g Which parts of the media are influential in reaching outreach groups most important to your campaign?

g Do any media organizations in your country have correspondents based in the target country? Are they reporting on human rights concerns?

g Is your government's policy towards the target country likely to be influenced by media coverage?

What do you want to achieve?

Establishing the media's role in relation to your society and AI's existing relationships with the media (where you are now) should make it possible to decide on what specific changes should be the objectives (where you would like to be) for AI's media strategy

These objectives could be:

N establishing AI as an authoritative commentator on government foreign policy or international affairs;

N developing positive working relationships with a small number of news and current affairs journalists;

N building AI's public image as an effective, credible campaigning organization that offers everyone the opportunity to act for human rights.

It is important to be as specific as possible about these objectives as this will determine what action you need to take and allow monitoring and evaluation.

Target audience and media

You must decide which media will best reach an audience or a number of different audiences. All media organizations seek to develop an awareness of the audience they are trying to reach. If their audience is declining, they try to reach a wider audience through better marketing, improving their product or changing it to appeal to a different audience. Some publications aim to reach only a small, specialized audience. They include business magazines and serious television current affairs programs.

Media audiences are highly segmented. You may want to reach all segments, but it is likely that some segments are more important for you than others (depending on your campaign objectives). This needs to be reflected in which media techniques you choose and how you use them. For example, you may choose a leading business figure to launch a report because it will guarantee coverage in the business press, even though this may not bring wider media coverage.

Working with the media

AI's relations with the media need to be centralized and coordinated.

The media need to know who to contact within the organization. They need to know that the person represents the views and position of AI – rather than an individual opinion. AI needs to decide what it wants to communicate to the media and to convey that information clearly and consistently.

If different parts of AI are saying different things to different journalists at the same time, it is likely that AI's message will be confused and the organization will lose credibility and effectiveness.

There can be a number of spokespersons but there should be a central point of contact, available to respond to media inquiries during the day and outside regular working hours.

This person should:

N be available on the telephone night and day – journalists often need to telephone to check facts or ask for comments;

N feel comfortable discussing issues over the telephone;

N be able to type and have access to a typewriter or computer and printer to prepare media releases;

N have access to a photocopier and preferably a fax machine to produce and distribute media releases;

N have access to the AI e-mail network to receive the IS news service or have easy access to the weekly mailing;

N feel confident and have the confidence of the organization;

N be familiar with AI's mandate, policies and current concerns;

have the time to develop an awareness of the media, including tight deadlines and constraints on space.

One of the key tasks of a person responsible for media or communications is developing good working relationships with journalists. There are a number of standard techniques (outlined below) for seeking media coverage. All of them will work better if AI members have established good relationships with journalists.

The following are general principles in working with the media:

N Be reliable. If you say you will call back in half an hour, then do so. If you promise an interview with the chairperson, then keep the promise. A reputation for unreliability is a barrier to getting coverage. You must be trusted.

N Be accurate. Know your facts and do not exaggerate. You want to build and reinforce AI's image as an organization of integrity and accuracy.

N Provide service. Provide useful information and good, clear stories. Always provide materials in the working language of the media.

N Do not beg or lecture. Neither tactic works, and both work against a sound long-term relationship based on respect. There is always another story.

Production considerations

It is worth finding out as much as you can about the production process of the different media as this can determine whether your stories win coverage. You have to know their deadlines if you are to meet them.

Friendly journalists can explain their working day to you. They can tell you what day or time of day decisions are made to cover particular stories, who makes those decisions and who can influence them.

The following points are a rough general guide to production schedules:

N Print journalists on daily papers work to tight deadlines. Stories normally have to be finished by late afternoon or early evening. The best contact time is usually late morning – soon after they have started for the day and before they are too busy (late afternoon). If they want an AI response, they will need it within a few hours if it is to be used.

N The stories to be covered in evening television news programs will be decided early in the morning. Decisions will then be made on which news conferences to send television crews to. This can change as stories develop through the day.

N Production time for radio is generally shorter – they may need a comment from AI within the hour – but the closer it gets to “on-air” time the less likely it is that they will want to speak to you unless it is something they agree is urgent.

N The deadlines for weekly magazines or papers may be anything from a few days to six weeks before publication. Sunday magazines and Sunday editions of daily papers start preparing features by the Wednesday with a Friday deadline.

N Deadlines for glossy monthly magazines are likely to be three months before publication. Magazine writers may need more in-depth material, perhaps on several topics or countries.

The people you deal with and the roles they play vary from country to country. The following categories will apply in many places and may be useful.

N Print media

The managing editor (print) is responsible for the paper or program and its content – editors cut stories.

The chief of staff, news editor or assignment editor generally receives media releases and allocates stories to journalists.

The journalist conducts interviews, prepares and writes the story.

The specialist editor or journalist is in charge of or is responsible for a particular section of the paper or program such as politics, foreign affairs, ethnic affairs or education.

Photographers work with journalists. Photographers from different publications will be looking for unique images.

Sub-editors review stories, clean-up copy and write headlines (AI does not generally contact sub-editors).

N TV and radio

The executive producer decides on overall themes, interviews, balance of a story and of the program, and with the producer allocates reporters to

stories.

The producer has the “big picture” in mind. He or she helps to organize logistics, such as locations and additional footage for television. In radio, the producer works with the presenter on the flow, content and direction of the program.

Reporters provide the “on-air” presence. They will often work out how they want to cover and construct their story (with the producer), who they want to interview, etc. Reporters will often have a specialized area or brief for reporting.

The researcher (television) assists the producer and reporter, obtains background information and contributes story ideas to programs.

Producers, reporters and researchers are normally the most important contacts for AI.

The newscaster (television and radio) reads/presents the news. In some countries they also provide editorial comment.

The presenter (radio) is the voice of radio. She or he conducts the interviews and works closely with the producer.

Winning coverage

Every AI story needs to win a competition before the public sees, hears or reads it. It has to compete against:

M other stories provided by companies and press departments – many newsrooms receive hundreds of news releases every day;

M a stream of stories from the international and national news agencies – particularly in the case of foreign news;

M all the other news that happens that day;

M the attitudes of journalists and editors, some of whom believe that human rights stories are not real news.

One of the main jobs of the media officer is to give the story every possible competitive advantage.

Journalists, editors and chiefs of staff will decide whether or not to cover stories on the basis of their own feelings, views and workload, and on their assessment of its news value and interest to their audience. They therefore need to be convinced of the story’s news value and audience interest.

Good media relationships and campaigning aims to influence journalists’ understanding of both news value and audience interest. The following techniques are the most established for communicating with the media:

N the media release

N the media conference

N the media briefing and information pack

N interviews and comment

N the “photo opportunity”

N the letters and comment pages

N the telephone

What technique you use will depend partly on the strength of your story, the resources you have available and logistical issues.

Whatever the technique, you always need to be very clear about what the story is, why it is news, why it will be of interest to the audience you want to reach, and what different angles the story has that can make it attractive. First and foremost, these need to be made clear and accessible to journalists.

The media release

The media release is the standard way of distributing stories to the media. It can fulfil the following functions:

- N give advance notice of an event you are planning;
- N announce the launch of a campaign;
- N outline the organization's response to events;
- N draw attention to a human rights situation;
- N provide background information;
- N draw attention to and give details on a new AI report;
- N make it easier for journalists to file the story and get the facts right.

c TIPS

- c Always put a media release on headed paper. It makes it look official and professional, and immediately shows journalists who it is from.
- c Always put at least one contact name with day and evening contact numbers on the release. Make sure the contact person will be available on these numbers at the specified times.
- c Always type – never handwrite. Use double line spacing to allow journalists to more easily mark and make changes to the copy.
- c Keep it short and simple. Ideally, media releases should be on one side of paper and no more than two.
- c Always put a date on your news release. Make it clear to whom it is addressed (for example, news editor) and when the embargo time is. If it is not embargoed, put “for immediate release”.
- c Make the heading interesting and put it in capitals or bold.
- c Keep paragraphs and sentences short.
- c Put the main facts – and the “5Ws” (see margin) – in the first paragraph if possible.
- c Make the first sentence interesting. If you do not hook the journalist's attention immediately s/he will not read on.
- c Try and include a good quote from an AI spokesperson in the release. Always check this quote with the person concerned before issuing the release.

It is always important to follow up media releases. Whether you post or fax the release you do not know whether it has reached its destination unless you check. There is only one way to make sure, and to find out whether the journalist is interested, and that is to talk to the person. Most of the time this means a telephone call to follow up the release.

Be prepared when you make the call. You may have to sum up your release in a couple of sentences and this is your chance to be persuasive. What is the angle, why is it news, why will audiences be interested?

Note these down in a few short points. A busy assignment editor in a newsroom will have only a few minutes to talk to you and in those minutes she or he will make a snap decision, so be ready!

The media conference

The media conference is an established way of generating coverage. They can be held virtually anywhere, but they generally involve the media making more of an effort as they will have to allocate reporters or television crews to attend. They will want a good reason for making this effort. This means a good story or a story that is enhanced by being presented at a conference, or a story they fear they may regret missing if they do not attend. Their first consideration is likely to be whether they will get anything from the media conference that they could not get from a media release and telephone interview.

Releasing photographs at a media conference can be the “honey” to attract “busy-bee” journalists (but they should be good enough not to disappoint).

A media conference can be a good way to create an atmosphere of a news “event”, and to get AI’s basic story across to all the media at one time. A celebrity launching a report can give life to a story and bring extra coverage.

Normally a media conference is only justified if one or both of the following criteria are satisfied:

- N a genuine or major news story is to be announced;
- N you have a good celebrity – someone the media are interested in.

A media conference usually consists of someone delivering a short address and then answering questions and being available for follow-up interviews.

c TIPS

c A joint press conference can be held with other organizations if you are working on an action together. Other organizations often have broader concerns than AI so you need to make clear to the journalists that each group at the press conference has a different focus.

c Keep the panel small and the speeches short. Journalists will be most interested in questions which enable them to develop their own angle. Two speakers or a maximum of three, given no more than five minutes each if there is more than one, is a general rule.

c Different media have differing needs. Radio and television will want their own interviews and rarely use footage/sound from the main conference.

jCHECKLIST

Preparing a media conference

j Provide sufficient notice

Give a week’s notice if you can, but never less than two days, so the event can be entered into diaries. Send out a media advisory providing details of when it is, where it is, who will be speaking, what the subject or theme is, and who they can contact for further information. Follow up with a telephone call: this makes sure they have received the advisory, is an opportunity to persuade them to attend and provides a rough indication of the expected attendance.

j Timing

In many countries the best times for media conferences seem to be late morning (10.00 to 11.00) or early afternoon (14.30 to 15.00). Start media conferences on time.

j Venue

It must be accessible. Will journalists be driving? Will they need parking? Is it easy to find? Use banners or signs outside to make it easier to find. Check the venue for capacity and lighting, power points (for television crews), for sound (is it shut off from outside noise such as traffic or telephones, will a microphone be needed?), layout (where do you want people to sit, where can you put a backdrop, is there space to have an exhibition, is there a separate room available to do individual media interviews after the media conference?).

j Keep presentations short

Speeches or presentations should last no more than 10 minutes. Long speeches can be distributed to the media as hard copy. Only read out the key parts that you want the media to use directly as quotes. Journalists are busy, easily bored and can be keen to develop their own angle on the story through individual interviews after the conference.

j Distribute a copy of the keynote statement at the start of the conference

This makes it easier for journalists to follow what is being said and makes it more likely that AI's statement will be reported accurately. Put "check against delivery" on the statement as they are never delivered exactly as prepared.

j Avoid having too many speakers

The more speakers, the more messages there are and the less control you have over the message that journalists will take away from the conference.

j Have a chairperson

The chairperson will introduce the speaker, explain arrangements and proceedings (for example, whether there is a possibility for individual interviews afterwards and who to see about it), manage the flow of questions, perhaps answer AI specific questions and bring the conference to a close.

j Welcome people

Have refreshments available. Keep a list of all those attending and ensure that they are provided with the available information (a copy of the report, a media or campaign pack with background information, the speech to be delivered). Someone with an AI badge should welcome visitors, take their names, give directions, and generally create a good impression.

j Follow-up media release

Have this ready in advance, featuring the best and most newsworthy quotes from the speech. This should be distributed to the media who did not attend the conference.

j Cover your own conference

Have a photographer and tape the proceedings. Offer photographs to the media and write up the story for your own publications.

The media pack

Media or briefing packs are usually intended to provide background material to the media in an accessible and useful form. This makes the journalist's job easier and provides AI with an opportunity to focus attention on particular issues. The content of such packs is entirely flexible.

Most of the time journalists covering AI's stories will not be expert on the country or the issue on which you are campaigning. Your campaign may be their first introduction to the subject. They have a short amount of time to put their story together. They are likely to have questions but not necessarily know where they can go to get answers. Unless they are specialists they are unlikely to read the whole AI report.

The more useful information you can give journalists in a ready-to-use format, the more influence you are likely to have on what finally appears in the media.

c TIPS

A media pack for a major campaign

At the launch of a major campaign it can be useful to provide a media pack that breaks down the information in a major AI report into different issues.

Separate sheets, each of which should include the AI logo and a contact name and telephone number, might:

- c Summarize the major findings or issues of the report.
- c Outline some of the individual cases featured in the report.
- c Explain who the victims are and who is responsible for the human rights violations.
- c Provide sample quotes from the report or a simple chronology of the major events.

- c List AI's major recommendations to the government concerned or the home government.
 - c Explain what the campaign hopes to achieve and what will be happening during the campaign.
 - c Produce the speech issued at the campaign launch.
 - c Give anticipated questions and AI's answers in relation to the campaign (these should not include AI's internal information).
 - c Give background on AI.
- A media pack about AI

An information pack for the media on AI in your country might include several sheets covering the following:

- c AI's mission mandate, impartiality and independence, and history.
- c When AI was formed in your country, its membership, local groups, etc.
- c Quotes from people in your society praising AI's work – ordinary people, celebrities, etc.
- c Names, profiles (and photographs) of key staff and members.
- c AI's current campaigns, including details of cases where there has been a successful outcome.

A media pack for a state visit

An information pack prepared and distributed to the media before your head of government/state goes on a foreign visit can help put human rights on the agenda. It might include:

- c One or more sheets on the human rights situation in the country being visited – who are the victims, who is responsible, what laws are of particular concern, what the government has or has not done.
- c AI's recommendations to that government and to the home government on raising particular human rights issues.
- c Human rights organizations or activists in that country that the media could approach (check first with the IS researcher).
- c Key questions to put to both governments on human rights.
- c Where to find further information.

A kit with similar contents can help to raise the profile of human rights for any visit to your country by an overseas government official.

Media briefings

In-depth background briefings for a small number of journalists can help to develop the media's knowledge and understanding of key issues or events and therefore ensure that they are aware of the human rights dimensions. Small forums with a maximum of five or six journalists, perhaps with a guest speaker, encourage in-depth discussion. Lunches with individual journalists or more formal meetings are also helpful. These may or may not result in specific media coverage, or in references to AI, but they will help define the way issues are presented and build AI's credibility and presence. They also help to build relationships with the media.

Interviews

Interviews and providing a quotable comment are perhaps the most usual way for AI to appear in the media – particularly radio and television in which the spoken voice and the picture are so important. The interview is often the desired result of media releases, media conferences and special events. The key to doing good interviews is knowing your subject and good preparation.

c TIPS

Before the interview

c Set the time and place. With a formal interview, agree on the place and the length of time it will take. Avoid open-ended interviews that give a journalist hours of time to wear you down until you say things you do not want to say. But be prepared for the interview to run over time.

c Agree the subject, define the issues. Be specific about the topics to be covered. Make sure you know what is to be covered so you can be ready with the statistics, names of example cases and facts, especially for print journalists. All journalists want their stories to be full and complete and may rely on you for basic facts and figures. They may know little about the subject or not be sure how they want to cover it. A pre-interview chat is your opportunity to define the issues, highlight the points on which you want to concentrate, minimize the importance of others and suggest other people whom it would be useful for the journalist to meet. The earlier in the process you do this the better. Most stories can be told in many different ways. You want it told in the way that is most likely to have a positive human rights result and this is your chance. Be wary if the journalist is hesitant about outlining the interview subject. It is better to be direct with a vague reporter by saying: "I want to know what you're interested in so I can provide you with all the information/statistics."

c Make a list. Prepare the information you want to get across. Before the interview, list the three or four most important points you want to make. The list should be of short key words, not the entire statement written out. No one wants to listen to you read out something, because you will sound wooden and rehearsed.

c Determine the journalist's audience. Remember, reporters are searching for what appeals to their respective audiences.

c Determine the nature of the media outlet. Is it live or pre-recorded? If radio, you will need sound-bites. Is it a discussion?

c Respect deadlines. If you have agreed to call a journalist back in 30 minutes, you must do so. Sometimes they work outside office hours, so if you can fit in a telephone interview in the evening you should do so. And if you offer additional information, make sure you provide it

c Anticipate the questions and practise answers. You are speaking on behalf of AI. A discussion with colleagues or other members can help you clarify the position AI should be taking, and how an interview can best push forward campaigning objectives. A mock or practice interview with a colleague can help to build confidence. Prepare some sound-bite answers in advance.

c Concentrate on important points first. You may have limited time, so focus on speaking about the key issues first.

c Check that you have the latest information. Look through the day's newspapers to see if there is any relevant information that may come up. Has the government issued a statement in response to the report? Has any other information about the country been reported?

c Relax. Journalists want good quotes and a clear direct message – exactly what you want.

During the interview

c Be the expert, stay cool. You know a great deal more about AI's concerns in the human rights field than the journalist, while s/he needs your information to get a story. Therefore, if you are prepared and keep your thoughts clear, you will be in control of the interview. Take the initiative and lead the interview into positive areas. Keep your cool as sometimes journalists may try to surprise or unnerve you. Do not get angry. It is their job. Your job is to answer as best you can.

c Keep your answers concise and short. Remember, the best sound-bite is only eight seconds or 25 words. Out of a 20-minute interview, a journalist may use only 30 seconds. So use simple language and avoid AI jargon. Say "political killings" not "extrajudicial executions", and never use the acronym "EJEs". State important facts first, and remember to stop yourself after you have answered the question. Do not go on and on, trying to clarify what you have already said.

c Speak in complete sentences for broadcast media. Although a radio or television interview can seem to be a conversation, try to remember that the journalist is searching for complete sentences that encapsulate your key messages. So when asked, “What are the human rights concerns in Kenya?” do not respond in a fragment, such as, “Torture, committed with impunity, across the country.” A better response would be: “Amnesty International is concerned that torture is used routinely by police across the country, without the perpetrators being brought to book.” Also note that it is better to speak as AI than as a person. Avoid “I think that...”. As an AI representative, you are talking for AI, so you should say so.

c Do not get side-tracked. Steer the conversation back to your key points. If the question is off the topic, you can respond: “That’s a very important point, but what is really crucial to understanding the situation is that ...” Remember, you can glance down at your key word list to make sure you have made the three main points you wanted to make.

c Do not let a journalist put words in your mouth. If the journalist asks, “So you mean to say that...” you should counter with, “What I said was ...” Never begin the answer to such a question with “yes...” You should decide what you say publicly, not the reporter. Avoid those speculative or hypothetical questions. Journalists often ask “what if?” questions when they want something controversial to be said. You should answer that AI does not speculate about the future.

c To buy time, repeat the question back to the journalist. This can give you a little more time to think about your answer. So, when asked, “What does Amnesty think of an oil embargo on Nigeria?” you can say, “You want to know about the proposed embargo – Amnesty International has no position on embargoes but we do say that world pressure should...”

c Be composed. If you are nervous, try to keep your hands in your lap rather than let them flutter around in nervous tics. If you are attacked by a hostile question, you should not get upset, just answer back firmly: “You are mistaken about... but I am glad you raised that point.” Or, “I’m sorry you feel that way but let me ask you to consider...”

c Try to show the individual cases. Painting a picture of one person who represents the pattern of human rights violations can be more effective than expressing yourself in abstract concepts. For example, instead of saying, “so and so was tortured”, try to create an image of what happens when someone is tortured. You can say, “so-and-so had his toe-nail pulled out by a police interrogator using pliers”.

c Do not be afraid to show some emotion. The journalist’s unspoken, basic question is: “Why should we care?” Your answer should convey the unspoken message that people should be concerned, outraged and should take action. So you can express your outrage. Do not sound out of control, and do not speak in unreasonable terms. But expressing some of the anger that you feel when you speak about “gross human rights violations” makes a good sound-bite and often conveys the message better than a long-winded, dispassionate statement.

For television

c Discuss the questions to be asked first, before the interview. At the very least, you are entitled to ask the interviewer what the first question will be. That is your basic right as an interviewee.

c Wear solid colours (to avoid distracting the viewer).

c Sit upright to appear organized, confident and neat, not slumped back in the chair or perched on the edge.

c In general, look at the interviewer, not the camera.

c Use simple language.

c Do not fidget. Cameras and microphones pick up the slightest movement.

c Ask for a chair that does not swivel, so you do not nervously rock side-to-side while on camera.

c If outside, take off your sunglasses. Otherwise, you will look like you have something to hide.

c Do not react with facial grimaces to questions. Remember: the camera is on you at all times.

For radio

c Again, ask to be told the first question in advance.

c Do not shuffle around: the noise may be picked up.

c Do not wear noisy jewellery.

c Do not interrupt or speak at the same times as others.

Feature articles

News stories are only one outlet for AI's information. Given competition for space, news items on AI reports and campaigns are often very brief. Other options are provided by different sections of newspapers and different programs on radio and television.

N Print

For a major report, negotiate with one or more newspapers to carry a feature article to back up news coverage. It is important to get the report to newspapers in advance of the launch (remembering embargoes) so they have a chance to read and digest its information for a longer feature piece. The news angle might be the launch of AI's campaign on political killings, while the feature article looks in more detail at the problem and how it is emerging as one of the challenges facing the human rights movement. When a country report is released the news may focus on the facts contained in the report while a feature could look at the implications for government policy, relations with the country or an aspect of the campaign.

Feature articles must be negotiated in advance with the editor or the editor of the features page. It is also possible to negotiate with a freelance journalist who will write the story and then negotiate to get it published. Weekend newspapers will often be more willing to agree to feature pieces than dailies which have less space. Offering one newspaper an exclusive feature story can make the suggestion more attractive.

Many newspapers have different sections in an attempt to attract and keep readers with particular interests. These can be good places to try placing stories with different angles.

Newspapers often have an op-ed (opinion editorial) page to allow substantial space for opinion pieces. Writers of these are often a mixture of staff writers and members of the community who have a reputation of expertise or who are seen to represent an important body of opinion – such as AI. There is normally an editor for this page.

N Broadcast media

The broadcast space for AI reports is becoming squeezed. In most countries there is less and less coverage foreign news. It is therefore worth looking at how stories can be made attractive to different parts of the media. Can the story be made domestic news by focusing on the implications for government policy? Can it be made domestic news because of campaign activities and strong visual images? Are there specialist programs? Would celebrity involvement in a campaign bring added media? Look through the schedules for radio and television programs for possibilities. Think of story ideas with human rights angles and suggest them to the media.

Video News Releases

One of the hurdles in getting television coverage is that broadcasters need images to tell a story. Without pictures, they very often will not cover an issue. To help you provide images to television stations, video footage is provided to Sections for major campaigns and actions.

The three main types of video package are: video news release (VNR), news access tape (NAT) and mini-documentaries. These are either "cut pieces" which look like television news stories or simply an edited collection of the best footage AI has on human rights in a country. These video productions usually have footage of human rights violations, interviews with victims or activists and sometimes an interview with an AI spokesperson.

If you want a television station to use the footage, you should usually tell them up to a week in advance that footage is available. Broadcasters will need copies of the footage in broadcast standard, known as BETA SP. Often they will also want a copy of the footage in VHS -- the standard for home video machines -- so that they can watch the footage beforehand.

The IS always provides a transcript and running sheet describing the content of the VNR, any copyright restrictions, and the format of the video. All this information is important to producers and journalists.

Where a VNR is available, it is worth stating this at the bottom of a news release and mentioning it when you call television producers. Alternatively, you can send out a separate media advisory, telling journalists about the VNR.

It is also worth filing all your VNRs, as they can often be used later (subject to copyright restrictions) to provide to journalists for use in other stories they may be doing.

Letters pages

The letters pages of newspapers provide an excellent forum for encouraging discussion of issues and demonstrating public interest and concern. Some AI groups have been known to initiate community debates through one member writing in a controversial letter and then arranging for a response from another group member – other “genuine” members of the community have then joined in.

c TIPS

- c Mark the letter “for publication”.
- c Keep it short – ideally under 200 words but no more than 400.
- c Make it a response to something that has been in the newspaper or the news.
- c Have it signed by someone representing an organization, or by someone respected in society.
- c Provide a contact number so that facts can be checked.

Phone-ins and talkbacks

Some radio stations have programs that invite audience participation. These can provide AI with a good opportunity to demonstrate concern or express interest about an issue. It is normally best for members not to identify themselves as such but rather to speak as a member of the public. Producers and hosts do not like to think they are being influenced. For debates on the death penalty it can be very important to have as many members get through as possible. If you have advance warning of such a discussion, recruit volunteers to call the station and if necessary provide them with a sheet of paper mentioning a series of concise and powerful arguments – each person is likely to be asked only one point.

Pictures

A good picture can guarantee a spot in the newspaper. Television stations are always looking for strong visuals.

c TIPS

- c Make the picture attractive to the media. A celebrity (providing they have not been doing something similar for other organizations) can be enough.
- c Use strong imagery – the candle remains a favourite with photographers, as do cages and bars.

c An eye-catching public event, such as releasing balloons, tree-planting, a dedication ceremony of a building or street, is often popular, as are birthday cakes for a prisoner or to mark an anniversary.

c Make sure there is a backdrop of an AI banner or poster behind a speaker or campaign action so that it appears in the photograph.

c Give the media plenty of notice. Be clear about the location and timing. Send out a media release giving these details and headed “photo opportunity”.

c Be flexible if possible. Offer to rehearse or restage events to fit in with schedules. Make sure you take your own photographs and offer to supply them to newspapers that did not show up (check whether they use colour or black and white prints), along with captions.

c Captions should simply explain the photograph, who is doing what, why, where, and when.

c Be creative!

Trouble-shooting

AI campaigners, members and media officers often have concerns or objections about the tone, style or nature of the reporting on AI, human rights and related issues. These can only be resolved by establishing good relationships that either prevent them occurring or allow for positive and constructive informal discussion when they do occur.

There can also be occasions when errors are made in reporting AI’s concerns or position. These should only be taken up for really serious errors or misrepresentations. Your response should fall into one of the following categories:

N Seek a retraction or apology

If there is a blatantly biased attack on AI or a serious error, contact the editor by letter or telephone, explain the newspaper’s mistake and ask for a retraction or apology to be inserted in the next issue. Do not demand a retraction or apology if you simply did not like the tone, style or content of the article.

N Write a letter

Write to the editor, explaining the incorrect information, and ask them to print your letter on the letters page. This can be important as making no response can leave the impression that AI is unable to defend its position. However, it is worth considering whether having an apology printed will, by repeating the original error, reinforce rather than ameliorate the damage. If the mistake was yours, then a letter can provide evidence of your integrity.

It is good policy to reply to every attack on AI even if there is little chance it will be printed. The editors will get the message.

N A positive comeback

An article critical of AI can provide an opportunity to open a dialogue in the media. An approach to a newspaper which printed a very critical article about AI would be along the lines of:

M The article about AI’s views was very misleading and we feel the writer did not fully understand our position. We would like the opportunity to explain our views and the work we have been doing. Would you accept a short article from us?

M The piece in the newspaper raised interesting questions and opened up the possibility of an informative debate about the issue. Could AI provide a response?

N Ignore it

Do nothing. Some people take the view that people will forget a news item within a week, so it is better not to remind people of a mistake or hostile article. Small errors or an offensive tone should be ignored in terms of official response, particularly in “opinion” or “feature” pieces. Members of the public may of course want to take issue with the views expressed. An uncorrected misrepresentation of AI’s position, however, risks staying on the record as the actual position.

Not getting coverage?

It is unrealistic to expect that AI will always get the coverage that its stories deserve or that you would like. However, if AI is consistently failing to receive media coverage and this is inhibiting development and campaigning, it is worth trying to find out why.

c TIPS

c Is AI's current image a problem? Is it seen as a radical or marginal organization? Is AI seen as an international rather than national organization?

Try to meet the editors to give them a better understanding of AI.

c Are the media unaware of the information that AI can supply?

Supply media with a publications list. Offer a human rights briefing service to journalists going abroad.

c Are human rights not seen as hard news?

Relate your information more to its implications for the home government's position or policy or to trading, historical and cultural links, etc. Relate it more directly to the stories seen as hard news.

c Journalists do not know who to contact.

Send out a media advisory pack to journalists providing names and contact numbers, background on AI and current campaigns, and who does what in the organization.

c Do editors believe that your spokespersons do not have expertise?

Build up media expertise of country coordinators through training (or recruit and train country coordinators) so that you have specialist spokespeople available for interview. Train existing spokespeople (seek professional advice on this).

c There has been a problem in media relations in the past which is still causing problems.

Seek meetings with editors to clarify and resolve problems.

c Stories on particular countries do not receive coverage, perhaps because journalists do not think there is public interest.

Look for other angles. Persuade AI members or members of sympathetic organizations to write letters (as members or simply as readers) to the media asking for more coverage of foreign affairs, or human rights issues, or on particular countries as a way of demonstrating community interest.

Media servicing from
the IS

Virtually all AI's relations with the media are driven by information from the IS and in particular its Media & Audiovisual Program. They are responsible for drafting international releases, setting embargo times and issuing AI's public response to human rights developments worldwide. As a minimum the IS will distribute most of these releases to the international wire services, who then edit and distribute them worldwide.

These releases generally provide a much greater volume of information than any AI Section can handle. It is therefore important to be selective. Where possible, this selectivity should be based on:

N whether or not publicity in your country can influence the human rights situation in the country concerned;

N whether AI needs to build its media profile locally, and be seen to be reacting and campaigning to particular events;

N the resources available locally;

N whether the Section has decided to prioritize work on particular countries;

N whether AI is saying anything new or newsworthy.

Sending out lots of news releases that do not contain new information or do not point to a new angle is more likely to undermine rather than build credibility with the media.

IS news releases should be edited and adapted by AI structures to make them more appealing to your local media and to help establish AI as a relevant campaigning organization in your country.

c TIPS

Adapting news releases FROM

THE IS

c Cut them. IS media releases are frequently more than a page. Try and cut them. If you need to include more information, then prepare a separate sheet of background information.

c Quote a local AI spokesperson. Either use the same quotes as in the international release or write your own that may be more relevant to your situation.

c Give it a domestic focus. What is AI locally doing? For example, has it asked for government action (if your release says that AI has asked for such action, make sure it has!)

c Keep it consistent with AI's message. Make sure your changes do not alter the main message. Check with Section staff or others if you are not sure.

Other information from

the IS

Apart from the individual media releases, country and theme reports, the following sources are useful in campaigning media work.

N AI's facts and figures. The IS regularly produces a document called "Facts and Figures", which is a useful source of information on AI. It details AI's history, how many members there are worldwide, the costs of some of its work, how many cases were worked on in the previous year, how many cases have been closed, etc.

N The annual report. The Amnesty International Report is a useful and authoritative reference book. It includes which countries have signed what human rights treaties, short individual country entries that can quickly give a journalist an overview of AI's concerns in any country, recent details of AI's campaigning, the worldwide incidence of violations within the mandate such as torture, etc.

N Urgent Actions. UAs can contain AI's most recent information on a country and provide a compelling picture of real individuals at risk of human rights violations. They are very easy to fax to journalists. An annual report entry and a UA can be a good combination of materials to supply to interested journalists. UAs can also be used in a similar way to media releases. A journalist who is interested in that particular country will have little problem in converting a UA into a news story. Ask a sympathetic journalist to seek comment from the government concerned or from its embassy in your country. Concern from the media can substantially add to the pressure being mounted on a particular case.

N IS researchers/campaigners. Some media will want to speak to the "expert". Offering an interview with the researcher/campaigner at the IS can help to get coverage, particularly after a mission or if they are on the spot. If your Section has a speaker-phone facility, a mini-briefing over the telephone with the IS researcher could be arranged for a few journalists. You can also ask researchers/campaigners for details of people in the country concerned who would be useful for journalists to interview – particularly if they are going to the country to do a story.

Coordinating the media work of others

In many societies, locally based media is the most read, watched and listened to. It is the most important in shaping community attitudes. It is also central to building AI's reputation as a membership-based organization, offering everybody the opportunity to become involved in human rights campaigning. Encouraging local AI groups to do media work, and providing them with the

skills and resources to do so is therefore an important issue for campaign coordinators, among others.

c TIPS

c Provide a group manual which includes a section on media work. AIUK has produced an excellent guide to local group press work which may be suitable or could be adapted for use in your country. Sample copies are available from AIUK Press Office.

c Provide training sessions in media work. Friendly professional journalists are often pleased to contribute to AI's work in this way. Training could include the following:

M getting to know your media, what exists locally and how journalists work;

M writing media releases – deciding the right angle, including all the important information first;

M practise interviews – television and radio.

c Include media suggestions and materials in group campaign kits.

c Provide groups with a draft media release to publicize campaign events or launch.

c Provide suggestions on stories different local media might be interested in.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of media work can be problematic. It is possible, depending on levels of resources available, to know how much media coverage you have achieved. It is much more difficult to know whether this is having the impact you hoped for.

Media monitoring may be available as a commercial service (local journalists should know if this is the case). Such services can be asked to monitor any part of the media and to supply transcripts and clippings on a range of subjects, such as reports on human rights or AI. Alternatively, AI members can be asked to undertake monitoring.

Some level of media monitoring is necessary for evaluation. One way of judging the value of the media work is to put a price on the coverage you have achieved by estimating the cost of buying equivalent advertising space. Another indicator may be whether journalists, politicians or non-governmental organizations subsequently refer publicly to the issues raised, or use the phrases and terms introduced by AI.

Other indicators may be a noticeable shift in government policy and practice, or in levels of public response, such as a rise in the number of membership inquiries received by the AI office or letters to the press.

For specific events, such as media conferences or major news releases, it is worth setting specific targets. Explicitly state the target amount or type of media coverage you hope to achieve and what media coverage it is realistic to expect. This might be the number of news channels, chat shows or opinion pieces that feature AI or human rights concerns. It may be the number of media organizations you expect to attend your media conference. Being explicit makes it possible to understand why things did or did not work.

Reasons for success may be that the news release arrived on the desk of someone at exactly the right time, or that you were able to persuade a senior enough journalist to cover the story, or that it was a quiet news day, or simply that it was a good story.

A campaigner or media officer can rarely if ever control what stories will be used or not used by the media. There are normally too many factors at play – many of which are outside a campaigner's control. But the more s/he understands these factors the more s/he will be able to influence the extent and nature of coverage.

The person doing the monitoring could call up journalists and – in pleasant way – ask why the event was or was not covered.

For more on evaluation, see Chapter 13.

“The objective is perhaps not so much to create public opinion, as to create an opinion about public opinion.”

W.J.M. MacKenzie

“For many organizations there is a very small group, even just one person, who will make the final decision on the issue that you are interested in. But in order to reach that person, you may need to go through other people and get them to exert pressure on that ultimate target.”

Sue Ward, *Getting the Message Across: Public Relations, Publicity and Working with the Media*, Journeyman Press, 1992

Many governments monitor particular news and media outlets to see what issues are attracting public concern. News clips and transcripts will be circulated to the relevant ministers and departmental officials. Many embassies also monitor the news to keep in touch with host public opinion and attitudes to the country they represent. This coverage may be mentioned in their reports back to their government and may influence the human rights situation. Copying campaign materials to an embassy can ensure they hear the human rights message.

The right story for the right audience

Local journalists are searching for a local angle, such as what the local group is doing or saying. National journalists are searching for a national angle, such as what role the country can play in the international political context. What you say to a reporter from Alagoas State in Brazil may be different from what you tell the national television station, TV Globo. So an in-depth discussion of specific AI recommendations about military court systems in Brazil, based on cases of human rights violations in that state, will satisfy the local reporter, while a review of the state of human rights in Brazil and the leading role Brazil should play in promoting human rights in the region is more important to viewers across the country.

Finding the right angle*

AI reports form the basis of much of AI’s media coverage. From the perspective of the media, the reports often seem to say much the same thing – the human rights situation is bad and AI is calling for action. The example below illustrates how the same story can be presented in a number of ways that will affect whether and how it is reported.

A report on Indonesia finds evidence of numerous specific human rights violations, although the situation was at its worst two years before. Below are five ways of headlining the story:

N “The Human Rights Paradox”: AI issues new report on Indonesia

This is unlikely to interest a busy news desk and will be quickly filed in the bin.

N “Indonesia – killings in Aceh down on previous years”

This is likely to be of more interest, but is not really the story AI wants to convey.

N “Aceh – Fresh evidence of Indonesian terror”

This is more likely to be of interest, but news editors may not have heard of Aceh or may think it is like other stories on Indonesia.

N “AI questions Australian Government over training of Indonesian Special Forces implicated in Aceh killings.”

This report has identified a particular army unit with the violations and there have recently been reports in the Australian media about its contacts with the Australian Government. An AI Section that can put the two together is likely to get substantial coverage. It transforms an international story into a strong domestic story. Local journalists will find it easy to follow up.

N “Yati’s fear for missing mother back home”

AI asks a refugee from Aceh to help publicize its concerns. This has an human interest angle – so-called soft news – and will be of particular interest to the local media where she lives. The

refugee's concerns provide an introduction to the wider story and can help AI to reach a different audience.

* Based on an example cited in the *Campaigning Handbook*, by Mark Lattimer, Directory of Social Change, 1994

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Do not try to make a journalist feel guilty with appeals to idealism. You are likely to damage rather than enhance your relationships with the media. The journalist may not themselves be in control of the process and rather than coming across as passionate and committed you risk being seen as self-righteous and smug. This will only reinforce the damaging perceptions that some cynical people have of AI activists.

Despite technological advances and the power of electronic media, newspapers have retained their reputation and influence as the media of record. They are clipped and filed, and it is to them that academics, researchers and journalists subsequently refer for information. They also continue in many cases to set the news and current affairs agenda of the day for radio and television.

Get to know your media

Spend time listening to the style and format of radio programs. It will help you know how to fit an AI story in so you can talk with the producer in a more knowledgeable way. This familiarity will help you do interviews since you will know the level of detail required, the type of questions and whether listeners can call in. Read newspapers – what sort of stories are printed in which parts of the newspaper? Are there particular journalists covering AI related stories, or who always seem to have their stories in the newspaper?

If a story does not make it to print or television screen it is usually worth asking why, especially if a journalist has written the story, done an interview or attended your media conference. It is a good opportunity to build relationships with journalists – if they have made an effort they are also likely to be disappointed the story did not appear. You might find out that there was something you could have done differently, or learn that a problem with covering AI's stories exists somewhere else in the news organization, or simply that there were bigger stories on the day.

The embargo

The embargo time placed on a release makes clear the date and time at which the information can be made public or used. It is a standard and well-established part of relations with the media. It allows AI to coordinate its publicity, manage the flow of its information and be fair in its dealings with the media. It allows journalists to have advance notice of a news event and to plan their coverage knowing that other news organizations will not be first with the news.

Embargo times have particular importance to AI as an organization that relies for its credibility on the sensitive handling of information. Embargo times allow different parts of AI to plan media and publicity strategies. An embargo break on a report by a journalist in one country can wreck the media plans for the release of the report in another.

Respect for embargoes depends largely on trust. If AI breaks this trust in one country it can have an effect on AI's media relations elsewhere. No journalist who has been waiting to release a story wants to see it appear elsewhere first. It is bad practice for any journalist to break an embargo – it destroys the trust on which the embargo system and good media relations are based.

Embargo times are about controlling the flow of information and can have a big effect on the coverage that can be achieved. An embargo time of midnight allows the story to be printed in the

morning papers – an embargo time of 10am does not and the story will probably be dead the following day. A morning or afternoon embargo time is fine for radio and television.

The embargo time on a release should be placed at the top and marked clearly. It should be precise about date and time.

Media attitudes to embargoes differ from country to country. It is important to find out whether they are usually respected or broken in your country. If embargos are not usually respected, send journalists the information at or just before the embargo time.

AI's policy on embargoes is set out in Policy on release of Amnesty International information to the media (AI Index: ACT 81/01/96).

Journalists are generally taught to use the inverted pyramid style. The most important parts of the story are at the top and they cut from the bottom up.

The “5Ws”

Who is doing it?

What is happening?

Where is it happening?

When is it happening?

Why is it happening?

Pages 1 and 2 of a press release on the failure of the international refugee protection system

Taking opportunities

Good media work is partly a matter of taking opportunities when they arise – for example, by injecting a human rights angle into existing news stories. During state visits, for instance, there will be substantial media attention. Produce a media pack outlining the human rights issues or telephone key journalists to discuss the human rights story. Ask if they have an interview lined up with the visitor. If they have, suggest a couple of questions they might be able to ask, such as whether human rights are being discussed officially or whether particular laws are to be repealed. Offer to send background material, or video footage if you have it.

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The media conference should be used sparingly and carefully. This will help to build up the impression that an AI news conference is likely to be a newsworthy event.

The publications list

One way of maintaining contact with and providing a service to the media is to produce and distribute a monthly one-page list of new AI publications which can be obtained from the IS office. The Dutch Section uses this technique to good effect. You could, alternatively, use the monthly document list produced by the IS.

Advertising

Paying for advertising space guarantees coverage. Because of its cost many organizations and AI Sections use advertising only where it is free or has proven to be a worthwhile fundraising investment (as in the UK and Ireland). AI's campaigning messages are probably more effective when written by independent journalists which carry the authority of objective “news”.

Shaping coverage

In 1992 a committee of the Australian Parliament handed down its first report reviewing the government's record on human rights and foreign policy. The Australian Section contacted key

journalists, explained the significance of the report, identified key issues, distributed a short background paper to journalists and explained that a staff member would be on hand to provide a public response. The result was that the media focused on the issues highlighted by AI and AI was seen on national television and in newspapers as the body providing the major response on the issue.

The questions most often asked of AI

- g What does AI's report say?
- g Who is committing violations?
- g What are they doing?
- g Who are they doing it to?
- g How long has this been happening and how serious is it?
- g Is the situation deteriorating?
- g What are AI's recommendations?
- g Why is the report being released today?
- g Can you give an example case of the abuses AI is talking about?
- g Where does your information come from?
- g Do you think anything will happen as a result of AI's report?
- g Is the situation worse than in other countries in the region?

f

Journalists will sometimes seek to persuade you to go beyond what AI is willing to say — either by suggesting that the discussion will be “off the record”, or by asking for your personal opinion. Nothing is ever “off the record” and you are not talking to them in a personal capacity whatever they may say.

Stay in touch with the researchers and journalists of current affairs shows. Find out what stories they are planning, especially in other countries. Offer to supply background material and try persuading them of the human rights angle.

Using comment

Issuing a media release can be time consuming and may not be the best way of getting AI into the news. A quick telephone call to a journalist to suggest a story angle, or to provide a comment or quote from AI on something in the news can work just as well or better. This is one of the benefits of establishing good relationships with journalists. You will know who to call and when, and they will know when they can contact you for the AI angle.

Dedication ceremony

In December 1995 the Irish Section achieved major coverage for the dedication ceremony of a human rights sculpture in the centre of Dublin.

Using the small ads pages

Many newspapers have pages of classified advertisements offering services, or goods, “lost and found” notices, etc. The cost per word is normally quite low and some local AI groups have placed WANTED or MISSING ads asking for information on a prisoner or “disappearance” as a way of publicizing the case they are working on. They also provide a contact name for their local group.

Almost...

The Campaign to Free Tim Anderson in Australia hired an aeroplane to fly a long banner carrying the campaign message “Tim is Innocent” over the Sydney Harbour Bridge on a key date. The media were informed and at least one television network sent a helicopter up to get good footage of it. Unfortunately, the pilot had failed to get clearance to fly over the bridge at that time and flew over later – long after the media had left. A good attempt that did not quite work.

A letter printed in a newspaper is normally taken as an indication of a much more widespread feeling. They will be monitored by many embassies and the home government.

Symbolic success

The Danish Section took 43 cows into the centre of the capital, Copenhagen, as a symbolic action during the campaign on Colombia. Forty-three people from a village in Colombia had been made to “disappear” in reprisal for the theft of 43 cows. This stunt won wide coverage on television and in newspapers.

Australian soaps

A number of popular television “soap operas” in Australia have featured AI story lines. One showed AI fundraising events, another featured refugees and the human rights violations from which they had escaped.

Top: 1997, a press conference at the IS on the arrest of alleged Bosnian war criminals. From left to right: Lotte Liecht, Human Rights Watch; Nick Howen, IS Legal and International Organizations Program (LIOP); Martin Bell, war correspondent and member of the UK Parliament; Colonel Bob Stewart DSO, former British Army Commander in Bosnia.

Bottom: 1995, Casey Kelso, IS staff member, holds a press conference at the UN World Conference on Women.

Amnesty International UK Press Awards

The annual AIUK Press Awards, first made in 1992, were originally seen as a way of developing closer links with the media and of encouraging different media constituencies to cover human rights issues. As such they have proved spectacularly successful, with competition for them becoming increasingly intense among journalists with each passing year.

The event has also become AIUK’s main annual public relations event and provides an opportunity for excellent contact-building with journalists.

The awards recognize excellence in human rights journalism that has made a significant contribution to the British public’s awareness and understanding of human rights issues – focusing on human rights work covered by AI’s mandate.

The awards ceremony, which in recent years has been held at London’s prestigious Park Lane Hotel, is attended by senior journalists, commissioning editors and foreign news editors, and is hosted by a prominent broadcaster or figure in the media.

Each year’s entries are judged by a specially selected panel, which usually includes AIUK’s Director of Communications and others chosen for their expertise on the media and human rights, such as high-profile journalists and lawyers. Membership of the panel itself is both a form of recognition and an opportunity to develop closer working relationships with important media figures.

There are six categories of award: television documentary; television news; radio; national print; periodicals (including weekend national print magazines and supplements); and photojournalism. A further award is made to the overall winner.

The event itself now generates substantial media coverage. In 1994 and 1995 the winners were announced on prime-time national news, and the presentation by AI Secretary General Pierre Sané of the overall winner award in 1995 was broadcast on BBC television news.

Photographs

Providing photographs for smaller regional or local papers can almost ensure a story, because smaller publications can be starved of interesting photos which are used to fill space and break up text. Make sure the photographs you provide are good quality and interesting. Those supplied by a local group or Section should:

N be black and white, not colour

N large – not standard holiday snap size

N show activities – signing letters, lighting candles, etc

Black and white photographs of people featured in AI's campaigns are often available for campaign launches from the IS and can be offered to groups to help in their media work.

Preparing for a public response

One objective of media work is to generate interest and action from the community. If you are campaigning on a particular issue, or are expecting substantial publicity, then remember to prepare for the response.

People answering the telephones in AI offices should be prepared to answer questions on a particular subject. They should try and get a name and address so that these people can be sent follow-up and membership information.

Prepare simple action sheets that can be sent to anyone who calls to ask what they can do. These can be simple letter-writing guides, including:

N background information;

N points to make in a letter;

N names, addresses of people to send letters to.

Sometimes producers and editors are willing to put AI's address and telephone number at the end of programs or articles related to AI's work. It is always worth asking!

Present the evidence

At the end of each campaign compile a dossier or file of all the publicity that has been achieved at the national and local level and send a copy with a covering letter to the ambassador and the most appropriate government official. It may help to persuade an embassy to meet you if it has not before, and it provides solid evidence of public concern. A similar dossier might usefully be provided to your own minister of foreign affairs.

Monitoring the media

Ask AI members to listen to or watch certain programs and read particular newspapers and magazines. This kind of media monitoring is particularly useful when issuing news releases or holding media conferences.

On a more regular basis you could ask them to look for (and cut out or record) mentions of AI, mentions of human rights or of particular countries, or of political developments in your own country which may be of importance, such as new government appointments. Their time is important, however, and therefore you need to explain why the information is useful and how you will use it. A good filing system is also important.

In many cases a significant proportion of a newspaper's income is made from selling advertising space. On days which are big for advertising (this may be set days of the week, weekends, national

holidays) the newspaper has more pages, more space for copy and therefore may be more likely to run AI's story.

CHAPTER 10 OUTREACH/ACTIVATING SOCIETY

Outreach is about AI reaching out to other groups, organizations and individuals to work together on common concerns and beliefs about human rights. This type of work has always been at the heart of AI's campaigning. It stems from AI's central principle that human rights are the responsibility of all, and from the recognition that no matter how large AI may grow, AI will be most effective if it can persuade others to act in defence of human rights.

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“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere”
Martin Luther King,
Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

What is outreach?

In practice outreach can be:

N single actions, such as an approach to a women's organization on a specific concern in the course of a particular country campaign;

N the building of longer-term relationships with different professional or organizational sectors, such as the legal community or trade unions. This can also offer fundraising and membership opportunities.

AI approaches others because human rights are the responsibility of all. AI has a responsibility to inform others about human rights violations and about how to help protect human rights. This can be achieved by asking people to support AI as an organization, but most importantly by persuading them to act directly.

When we approach other organizations to work with us, we should expect to be asked to support their causes (the principle of mutuality or mutual interests). This is almost a "natural" law that operates in the dynamics of working collaboratively.

AI's principles mean that it believes that winning support from other groups in defence of human rights should not be conditional on AI supporting the claims of those groups. In practice, however, AI Sections do receive requests for reciprocal support. Care should be taken when turning down such requests that we do not leave the impression that pursuing AI's objectives, or protecting its independence or impartiality, are more important than those of the organization asking for our support.

Who can AI reach out to?

Outreach is targeted towards organized sectors of society and influential individuals – professional associations such as doctors and lawyers, and organizations from particular sectors of the community such as women, youth and business.

Outreach is targeted in this way because:

N it reflects how our societies are organized;

N it allows AI to reach the greatest number of people (already organized) with the least expenditure of resources;

N it allows AI to generate specialized activity from those parts of society that may have the most impact on particular human rights situations.

The benefits of outreach

Reaching out to other organizations and individuals can increase AI's effectiveness in two distinct ways:

N internationally, because specific organizations or individuals may have a particular role to play in influencing the human rights situation in certain countries;

N domestically, through developing AI's influence, credibility, specialist expertise, fundraising, membership and campaigning capacity in our own societies.

It can also promote other groups and build their capacity for action.

International

Outreach sectors can exert influence on target countries directly and indirectly because:

N the sector or individual influences those responsible for human rights violations in the target country (they may even already be actively opposing the human rights violations);

N the sector is part of an international body or network believed to be influential, for example, international professional associations;

N the sector is influential in gaining action from others in your society, including your government, on the human rights situation in the target country.

It is largely from an analysis of these factors that decisions should be made about which outreach sectors should be targeted in campaigning strategies on different countries.

Domestic

Outreach can also influence home governments' human rights policies and actions, and can contribute to the development of AI's work by:

N demonstrating the breadth of support for AI's goals in different sectors of society;

N using existing communication channels within different sectors to reach wider or more specialist audiences;

N giving access to specialist knowledge or expertise on countries, issues, organizational and legal matters;

N building human rights awareness and human rights constituencies;

N providing a source of new activists/members/supporters and income.

Deciding outreach priorities

The combination of international and domestic impact should govern decisions on developing outreach work. It is very easy, though, for outreach to develop in an unplanned and haphazard way.

A strategic analysis of your society in relation to the region and the world, and of AI's place in your society, should be the starting point for deciding outreach priorities. However, in order to maximize effectiveness and ensure coherence in AI's work as an international organization, your Section's outreach priorities would also need to reflect the priorities defined at the international level. The following questions may assist in this analysis.

gQUESTIONS

g Is the sector influential in its own society? Does the sector have important contacts with the home government, with other sectors of society or in the media? Does this sector have its own media? Is it able to mobilize large numbers of people? Can it draw on significant resources?

g Does the sector have international influence? Does it have access to international structures or organizations? Does it have links or contacts with counterparts in target countries?

g Does the sector have the capacity to act on AI's concerns? Does the organization have an individual or committee with specific responsibility for human rights? Does it have a mechanism for applying pressure in pursuit of AI's concerns? Can it contribute to AI's country or theme research?

g Is the sector approachable? How easy is it to identify and contact the relevant people? Are they open to AI's message? Will we need to invest a lot of time and resources in preparing approaches? What are their current concerns and how do they relate to AI's? Are there creative ways in which AI can draw the links? Will special materials need to be prepared?

g Is it a sector which we do not reach and mobilize already through our general activities? Do we need to make a special effort to reach this sector? What is the potential for raising funds from organizations and individuals through targeted approaches?

g How will our relationship with this sector affect the credibility and impartiality of AI? Are there advantages or disadvantages to being seen to be associated with this sector? Is there any chance that this sector might misuse its relationship with AI to our disadvantage?

Outreach in practice

There are many different ways to coordinate outreach, some of which require little more than keeping open channels of communication.

Developing contacts in a range of sectors can be a simple way of achieving some of the purposes of outreach without the need to establish administrative systems or commit significant resources.

Often AI's objectives enjoy support in a wide cross-section of society. By approaching different organizations over time, it is possible to learn how they may be able to assist AI and whom to contact. Attending relevant conferences and meetings is one way of developing these contacts.

The quality of outreach work is more important than the quantity. When deciding to approach a sector, a Section must commit sufficient resources to have an impact. Relations with other organizations and individuals can be damaged by the apparent lack of consistency and commitment which can result from inadequate planning of outreach approaches.

c TIPS

- c Identify the right person to contact in the organization.
 - c Find out what they can do, and how they may be able to help.
 - c Be clear about what you want them to do.
 - c Be prepared to explain why you want them to take action.
 - c Only ask them to do what it is possible for them to do.
 - c Be familiar with the current concerns of the organization you are approaching.
 - c Provide enough information to enable them to take the action you wish.
 - c Ask to be copied in on any action taken and on the responses and results.
 - c Be clear about how you wish to follow up any meeting and maintain contact.
 - c Maintain regular contact. Establish clear expectations in both AI and the organization approached on the level of contact, provision of information, etc.
 - c AI's publications are an important tool for outreach. Develop a mailing list of these outreach contacts whom you have prioritized and make sure that they regularly receive AI's publications relevant to their areas of interest.
- Make full use of the keywording system of AI publications to identify the publications that can be used to maintain your outreach contacts.
- c In many Sections, Urgent Actions (UAs) are used to develop contacts with some organizations. They are short, clear and are categorized by gender, occupation and so on in ways that are useful to particular organizations.

Outreach structures

The specialist or professional coordination group

Some Sections build outreach structures because they provide a sustained base for campaigning – a group or network of people who are motivated, have a particular expertise and are ready to work for AI.

It is important, however, to plan these rather than simply allow structures to develop and absorb resources in a way that does not reflect the potential for helping victims and potential victims of human rights violations.

Outreach structures should exist not just to do the work with a particular section of society but also to make sure that outreach is integrated into the campaigning work of the movement. Outreach structures need to be closely involved in planning and implementation of campaigning.

There are a number of variations of this type of specialist group. The group can consist, for example, of AI members from a particular sector such as police personnel, lawyers or doctors, and can sometimes include AI members who have developed a speciality in this area.

The most important functions of these groups are: carrying out actions assigned to them because of their specialist expertise; developing, coordinating and supporting the outreach of other groups and networks (in a similar way to a country co-group); and mobilizing key individuals and organizations from within their sector.

The groups function similarly to an AI group. They meet regularly, plan work, allocate responsibilities and devise and implement strategies for getting others – in this case, others from their “target sector” – to act.

As with a local group, the specialist group will seek to involve and coordinate the activity of other AI members from their sector (and attract new members to their AI group), as well as to harness the potential of the sector as a whole through targeted campaigning and fundraising materials.

This model encourages mutual accountability and a commitment to group work. As it involves people regularly meeting and discussing issues, it can encourage creativity and flexibility in individual campaigns and the development of AI’s work with different sectors.

Below are some models of how Sections organize their outreach specialist structures.

The network

A “network” usually consists of a number of AI members sharing an interest or identity which gives them a particular role to play in taking up human rights issues. This might mean, for example, journalists taking up freedom of expression issues, or lawyers working on unfair trials. The role of the network means more than this, however. Just like the specialist or professional groups, they are expected to build their expertise on the relevant sector and to mobilize others to work on all AI’s concerns.

Unlike a local group, however, a network is considered “loose” because its members do not meet regularly and they have no regular structures. Many AI Sections have such networks. They seek action from them through special newsletters, usually featuring cases of people from these sectors. In some cases these simply ask for the same letter-writing action as is included in other action material. In others there is a request to use their special interest/identity as it may have more influence. Some will ask network members to approach other members of their sector for action.

Servicing these networks is sometimes done by a coordinating committee, sometimes by a volunteer or staff member from a central office. Some Sections seek to cover the costs of newsletters and servicing by charging an extra subscription fee.

Where networks are serviced principally by newsletters it can be very difficult to monitor accurately what action members of the network take. Developments in communications technology may help to overcome some of these problems. Providing individuals with targeted action materials remains relatively cost-intensive, however, both in terms of time and money.

The advisory group

Some Sections have formed a smaller advisory group from either a specialist or professional coordination group or network. The aim is to gain advice on how the sector might contribute to AI’s mission and development and on the best strategies for achieving AI’s goals.

As the term suggests, there is less expectation that the group will undertake the program of work themselves. This may increase the likelihood of AI being able to benefit from the expertise and knowledge of extremely busy people unwilling to make a greater time commitment to AI. This model has been tried by some AI Sections. It can be both a starting point for outreach work to new

sectors, and a way of providing practical advice and assistance to a Section's ongoing outreach program.

An advisory group may, for example, provide advice on key people to approach for support, what it is best to ask from whom, and how best to make that approach.

The local group with a sector brief

Some Sections, particularly smaller ones, delegate the development of outreach work on particular sectors to existing AI groups. This approach has been adopted by the Venezuelan Section, for example.

The most effective and efficient target sector work is that carried out at the local level, utilizing the skills, contacts and affiliations of AI members to spread our message further, to mobilize non-members to take action and to involve other organizations and groups in campaigning for human rights.

Target Sector Review

(AI Index: ACT 70/01/91)

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Whichever approach or structure is adopted, it is important to integrate strategies for AI's development in different sectors with the Section's overall campaigning program.

Engaging in outreach

All parts of AI, from local groups to the International Secretariat, should be engaged in outreach.

Some examples are:

Local groups	M	Organizations at local level:	Local women's organizations, religious organizations, schools
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Section M		Organizations at national level:	National women's organizations legal and medical associations, national trade unions
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IS	M	Organizations at international level :	International trade union bodies, international legal, medical or women's associations
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Outreach is an important means of building a cooperative and collaborative environment for engaging in effective human rights work. It offers an opportunity to build on strengths and improve on weaknesses

Identifying priority sectors

The analysis of your society in relation to its immediate region and the world may, for example, indicate that your society is particularly well placed – through military, cultural, economic or other strategic links – to influence certain other countries. The analysis of AI in relation to your society may suggest that new members are most likely to be found in one sector (for example, medical), or that in order to be more influential in your society you need more support from another sector (for example, religious organizations).

The sectors found to be common to both analyses are likely to emerge as the priority sectors for developing outreach structures. Identifying such sectors enables the easiest integration of the short-term goal of influencing international human rights situations and the long-term goal of building AI's capacity to be influential domestically.

“Dialogue” means give and take, active listening – a circle of communication, not a one-way demanding communication.

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Structures normally make demands on resources — the time of staff or volunteers as well as money for such things as telephone calls, meetings, photocopying, postage, newsletters, etc. For this reason the development of outreach sectors must be planned rather than accidental. Without planning, resources may be unavailable when they are most needed.

Example

AI Netherlands developed the following criteria for including sectors of society in systematic outreach programs, and the aims the Section might have for outreach work with each sector.

Criteria

- N Possible impact on target countries
- N Size
- N “Preventive aspects”
- N Availability of information for “solidarity action”

Aims

- N Action
- N Education
- N Supply specialist knowledge
- N Recruitment

Copies of the now-discontinued Lawyers’ Group Newsletter, formerly produced by AIUK.

OUTREACH

The business community

The role of the business community presents AI with great opportunities and challenges. It is a rapidly developing area of work for AI and for the human rights movement generally. This section looks at:

- N Why the business community is important to AI / 190
- N Why businesses might see human rights as their business / 190
- N Why businesses might not see human rights as their business / 191
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During the UN Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the Body Shop supported the campaigning events of the Irish Section: the flagship outlets in Belfast and Dublin, the Republic of Ireland, displayed CD ROM information about AI's work and that of the Irish NGO, Women's Aid; 14 other branches of the Body Shop decorated their shops with lanterns and AI campaign material. Campaign postcards were suspended from lanterns, shown right.

© ai

Why the business community is important to AI

It is a central principle of AI's work that human rights are the responsibility of all and that there is a role for everybody. This applies to corporations and companies as much as to any other sector of society.

International relations in the post-Cold War world have made AI's work with the business community and on company approaches increasingly important. Ideological blocs are increasingly being replaced by economic blocs – the Americas, Europe, Asia, for example. Trade and business interests are breaking down many of the previous barriers between countries and are increasing contact between societies. International trade, including in services such as education, is growing. Political relations between countries are increasingly shaped by economic interests. In many societies the state is retreating from functions of public life – from the running of prisons to transport services – to be replaced by companies and corporations.

Domestically, the business community can influence many aspects of government policy – including foreign affairs – that are important to AI's work. For example, sections of the business community may oppose a strong government stand on human rights in relation to a particular country if they believe it damages trade interests, especially where there are calls for imposing human rights conditions on trade. This is a challenge to which AI needs to respond effectively.

Internationally, companies and corporations can influence governments in countries where they have major operations or investments. Competition for inward investment and the need for economic development can make governments particularly sensitive to the concerns of business.

Trade can also be the major form of contact between different societies and provide a valuable conduit for human rights information and dialogue. The human exchange that goes with increased economic interaction can stimulate debate and discussion, and a broader understanding about respective culture, society, values and human rights.

Companies can also, in a number of circumstances, be directly implicated in violating human rights – either through products they manufacture, or through their operations in particular countries.

Finally, companies and businesses can also be important sources of funds, material support and expertise for AI.

Why businesses might see human rights as their business

The field of business ethics and codes of conduct is developing rapidly. New arguments are likely to emerge as the debates evolve.

The business community is not a single, united entity. Companies have different and sometimes competing interests. Some are concerned about their public image, while others are not. Some have established policies on corporate responsibility to the wider community, while others have not. Individual managers may have wide discretion for policy and practice and be willing to take risks for human rights, while others may not.

Below are some reasons why companies might be interested in AI's concerns.

N Corporate responsibility and good citizenship. In some countries, a growing number of companies are developing a corporate approach that acknowledges a responsibility not only to owners and employees but to the wider community. They want to be, and be seen to be, good “corporate citizens” pursuing responsible policies. Many reflect this approach by adopting corporate codes of conduct or ethical codes. These may cover issues such as employee rights, the use of forced labour in prisons, child labour, and environmental standards.

N Image. Some corporations spend millions of dollars each year simply promoting their corporate image through advertising. Donations and support to local community groups may also be seen in the context of a company's image. They may not want to see this investment threatened through association with practices or policies in other countries that could reflect badly on them.

N Consumer concern. In a number of societies “consumer power” is now a factor in the planning and decision-making of some companies. This is probably partly a response to “boycott” campaigns. There is at least anecdotal evidence from the United Kingdom, for example, to suggest that consumers include “moral” factors in making purchasing decisions – even when there has been no call to boycott.

N Investor concern. In an increasing number of industrialized societies potential investors can choose investments in companies that conform with certain ethical criteria. These might relate to products (such as excluding companies involved in the tobacco industry), or to practice (such as excluding companies using child labour). In some countries the employee pension funds of major companies and public bodies (for example, New York City, USA) have begun to take ethical issues into account. They can exert considerable influence in some cases to change the policy and practice of companies and to affect investment decisions. Religious organizations may also be substantial investors and have policies in relation to corporate conduct. Shareholder action, where investors have a particular role in raising concerns about company policy and practice, has also become a more common campaigning tactic in some countries.

N Political risk analysis and a stable investment environment. Large companies require international information not only on markets, but also on long-term political and social trends for their investment decisions. Human rights information can be seen in this context. Many companies making long-term commitments involving significant resources can be wary of societies where power is exercised arbitrarily. There is some recognition that human rights violations are inherently destabilizing. Companies can therefore have an interest in promoting the rule of law, the proper functioning of the judiciary, etc.

N Personal concern. As with individuals, companies may take decisions based on moral concern and principle. It is clearly easier to do so when these decisions do not conflict with perceived self-interest. Where companies have codes of ethics, committed individuals may be able to use them effectively and creatively to promote human rights.

Why businesses might not see human rights as their business

N Self-interest. Businesses might be concerned that action on human rights would mean abandoning their political neutrality and constitute interference in the internal affairs of another country. They might also be concerned that it could be against their interest and attract retaliatory action from governments or others.

N Opposition to AI’s aims. Some businesses might not see human rights as part of their core activities or may believe that AI is politically partial. They might also believe that the target government’s policies provide an environment for good economic return or are necessary for stability.

N Commercial interests. Companies may not support action that appears to threaten their commercial interests. However, they may be willing to re-evaluate their long-term interests in the light of human rights information and to look constructively at how they may contribute to AI’s objectives.

Focusing on business

Which companies or business institutions does AI approach? A company means “any entrepreneur, corporate body, institution or agency from the business world”. AI can make approaches to any of these. What AI seeks to gain may vary considerably – from building awareness of AI’s goals or obtaining a corporate donation, to obtaining a general statement of support for human rights, AI itself or even action on a specific case.

Approaches to the business community can be once-only and country specific, but ideally they should be part of a longer-term strategy of developing AI’s campaigning capacity and influence within the community.

The business community in most societies is large and diverse. The parts of it most likely to be of importance to AI's lobbying work and international campaigning are:

- N larger companies, especially those with international investments or trading relationships;
- N the national bodies or associations to which they belong.

Before beginning any individual approach it is best to draw up a long-term strategy that sets out what AI would like to achieve from a program of company approaches. These objectives might include:

- N persuading national business associations to produce a statement in support of human rights/action;
- N persuading national business associations to establish a sub-committee to draw up policy and advise individual member companies on action that can be taken in relation to specific human rights violations;
- N persuading key companies and business people to initiate a dialogue within the business community on the role of the business community in promoting and protecting human rights;
- N persuading individual companies and business people to take official action on AI's concerns.

Being clear about objectives should make it easier to decide who to approach, how to approach them and what to ask for. It can also help determine what organizational structure, if any, you wish to establish to sustain ongoing work.

Developing an outreach strategy

Know who you are dealing with

In order to select appropriate tactics, you need to know the type of company you are dealing with. An inter-Section meeting on company approaches held in February 1996 classified different types of company involvement in human rights concerns as follows:

1. Companies which are human rights advocates.
2. Companies which are inactive on human rights.
3. Companies which are inactive on human rights in the face of serious human rights violations in some of the countries in which they operate.
4. Companies whose products or activities are misused without their knowledge.
5. Companies which knowingly cooperate with those who are committing human rights violations, for instance by supplying equipment used for torture or relying on police units which are known to be likely to commit human rights violations.
6. Companies which are involved in activities which constitute human rights abuses, for example, hiring "death squads" or using forced labour.

Your initial strategy should therefore be to elicit information as to what a company's profile is concerning human rights. Most companies will be in categories 2, 3 and 4 and need to be moved to category 1 if at all possible.

gQUESTIONS

g Are companies in your society major investors in countries where AI has concerns? What proportion of foreign investment in that country do they represent?

g Are companies in your society major exporters to countries where AI has concerns? What proportion of imports do they represent in that society?

g Which companies are major importers of products/raw materials from countries where AI has concerns? What proportion of exports do they represent to that society?

g Do any multinational companies have their headquarters or regional headquarters in your country?

g Are there leading business figures who may be sympathetic to AI or willing to make statements on human rights? What is the best way of approaching them?

g Are there business figures who have influence on government foreign policy?

g Do companies in your society have subsidiaries, franchises, joint-ventures or manufacturing operations in countries where AI has concerns?

g Are companies publicly advocating or promoting the importance of trade with particular countries where AI has concerns?

g Is developing new markets for raw materials or manufactured products in countries where AI has concerns seen as an important element of national policy?

g Are government departments involved in promoting trade with particular countries – financially and through training and materials? Are they discussing or raising human rights with the business sector?

g Is your country seen as a major source of tourism revenue by the countries where AI has concerns?

g Is the business community organized at a national level in umbrella/national organizations, such as a national business council? Do the organizations take positions on trade or foreign policy?

g Are there bilateral trade associations bringing together companies trading with a particular country? Which companies belong to them? Do they have a secretariat that could be approached?

g Are business media seen as influential on business and government policy?

g Have the business community or media made statements on human rights and trade, or on foreign policy?

Understanding business culture

The business community can be an unfamiliar world to AI, with its own sub-culture and methods of working. It can be useful to seek advice from within the business community when developing a long-term strategy. This advice might help to identify:

N who the key business leaders and organizations are;

N what networks exist within the business world;

N whether there is a lack of awareness of AI and human rights generally that needs to be addressed first;

N what are likely to be the most persuasive arguments for this audience;

N what it is reasonable to ask for in the first instance.

Outreach structures

Some AI Sections have established “advisory groups” of business people to provide advice on developing and implementing strategies. Others have established business co-groups to sustain an ongoing strategy.

Regular approaches to the senior management of large or strategically important companies or business associations may require the formation of a knowledgeable and committed group of AI members at the Section level who are themselves professional business managers. Such people usually have access to resources for administrative support, but may require internal human rights education and training in AI structures and policies, as well as servicing with regular AI information from Sections' secretariats. Such a group usually depends on a few active members who should be accountable to the Section director/board and have a contact person at the national secretariat.

Some AI business groups have developed a plan of action based upon systematic approaches to the most important companies involved in countries on which AI has major campaigns. They have also sought the public support of leading figures in the business community (for example, by asking them to act as patrons for a fundraising dinner). Such groups also approach business associations, schools and the media to seek support for human rights education and promotion.

Outreach in practice

The following tips are useful to keep in mind when preparing to approach a company:

N Base approaches on a systematic, well-informed exchange.

N Aim to establish positive dialogue.

N The best method for high-level approaches to business is to arrange meetings.

N Action plans should be based on a two-stage approach – a letter seeking a meeting, followed by a meeting.

N At the beginning of all approaches stress that AI is independent of all political parties, ideologies and governments and bases itself strictly on a human rights mandate derived from internationally agreed human rights standards.

N Delegations approaching companies should inquire about the company's ethical codes/standards, as this might prompt a discussion on human rights.

N Always try to find out the name of the most relevant business manager – normally the chief executive and the assistant. Approaches that are not personally addressed are unlikely to be effective.

N Before making the approach be clear about what you want them to do and the results you expect from their action.

N Only ask them to do things in which they are likely to be effective.

N Be aware of AI information about business people who have been victims of human rights violations (check your Section's list of UAs, Action Files and appeal cases).

N Conduct approaches in a professional manner or not at all.

N Make sure all contacts are coordinated – there should be one contact point between AI and the company.

Sections should decide exactly who to approach on the basis of effectiveness and local conditions. Approaches can include writing letters, arranging meetings and attending company shareholder meetings.

N Writing letters, arranging meetings

If the principal objective is to spread awareness of AI, or of a particular human rights issue, a mass or direct mailing is one option. In an increasing number of countries mailing lists can be rented or bought from "list brokers". There may already be a list for exactly the audience you wish to address. Lists can also be compiled from association directories. Letters should be personalized as much as possible.

This is unlikely to be an effective approach in establishing long-term dialogue or gaining a high-level meeting.

For more targeted approaches where the intention is to ensure awareness, provoke action or establish a longer relationship, combinations of letter, telephone call and personal meetings are most advisable.

Letters seeking a meeting should:

- N not be confrontational, condemnatory or threatening;
- N point out that AI takes no position on embargoes, boycotts and sanctions;
- N use positive statements by other businesses or business leaders on human rights and mention any leading business figures who are willing to be publicly associated with AI – always stress that there are business groups in AI;
- N stress AI's willingness to hear the point of view of the company – this provides the rationale for the proposed meeting;
- N conclude positively by saying that you are looking forward to meeting them; when addressed to national business associations, stress the desire to discuss the wider responsibilities of the business sector.

At first you may only be offered a meeting with the public relations manager or someone at a similar level within the company. Do not refuse this meeting. Use it as an opportunity to seek a higher-level meeting. Make clear in your introduction that you hope to meet the chief executive.

Try to keep the meeting as friendly and informative as possible, and distribute relevant samples of external AI material. All meetings should consist of more than one AI representative. Before beginning any meeting, agree on a procedure to record a mutually agreeable minute. Make sure these are agreed in writing afterwards.

Have ready a series of prompts for discussions. You could, for example, ask:

- N What are the views of the company or association?
- N Has the company a code of ethics?
- N Who is responsible for its implementation?
- N How is it implemented – for example, is it used when training managers?
- N How is it monitored?
- N How are human rights incorporated into the code of ethics?

Link any follow-up to a simple task which both you and the company will do, even if it is only to circulate further relevant information.

When meeting senior company management or national business associations, AI delegations should try to include professional managers who are members of AI and knowledgeable about human rights. Their knowledge of the business culture can be very useful. The Dutch Section have a special presentation pack, including a video, to take to such meetings.

Where companies refuse to meet and discuss the issues with AI, or where you wish to illustrate the extent of human rights concerns, there are a number of other options. These are only likely to be worthwhile if AI has major concerns about the company involved.

N Outreach to other members of the business community

Approach an intermediary, such as a well-known figure from the business community, and ask them to contact the company to request a meeting with AI.

N Publicity

Copy letters expressing concern at the company's refusal to respond to a human rights issue to:

- M the board of directors;
- M major shareholders;
- M ethical investment trusts and organizations;
- M other non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

N Involve AI's membership

Ask AI members to telephone or write to companies. Members of local AI groups who are shareholders in the companies concerned can be asked to write as concerned shareholders. AI groups in the areas where companies have their headquarters or operations can also be asked to

write, as companies can be sensitive to the views of the local community. It is important that very clear guidance be provided by Section campaign coordinators.

N Involve the trade union movement

It is possible to involve AI members in trade unions in the work on company approaches. If it would be useful in order to show a “bi-partisan approach”, a trade unionist could be included in any meeting delegation.

Some companies have a commitment to involve or consult their workforce or to be sensitive to the views of their union representatives. A letter from the relevant trade union leadership supporting AI’s request for action, or outlining support for building awareness of human rights issues, may therefore be effective.

However, care should be taken to ensure that AI retains an independent profile and it may be more effective in first contacts not to involve trade unions.

N Shareholder meetings

The annual general meetings (AGMs) of publicly listed companies present an opportunity for shareholders to put questions of the chief executives or directors on company policy and practice. Meetings are frequently covered by the specialist media. By providing advance notice to the media, you may attract other journalists – particularly if there are photo-friendly public or symbolic actions taking place.

Investor groupings

Religious organizations, employee pension funds and public bodies may have policies on investment and have sufficient levels of investment in companies to be influential. Approach them to discuss what role they might play.

N Publicity

Where there is strong evidence that a company is directly implicated in human rights violations, AI can use demonstrations, symbolic actions and media briefings to draw attention to the company and act to spur change in company policy. Care should be taken in any publicity not to imply responsibility for human rights violations for which we have no evidence.

Researching information on businesses

Research sources will vary enormously from country to country. Advice is likely to be available from other NGOs, sympathetic officials in government departments of trade, journalists, academics or students specializing in business and finance. Below are a few possible sources:

N Public or university libraries

M Business directories

M Who’s Who/Who’s Who in Business and Finance (these are now available on line on DIALOG, the Knowledge Index, and CompuServe)

M Registers of corporations, directors and executives

M Specialist business press

M World Guides and encyclopaedias

N Government sources

M Trade/Industry ministries often keep relevant statistics on patterns of trade and companies involved

M Journals of ministries of foreign affairs and trade often provide news on trade promotions, the winning of major trade contracts, etc.

M Publicly elected officials may be able to ask questions on more specific issues on AI’s behalf

M Government statistics bureau

N Other

M National business associations and chambers of commerce may produce reports with relevant information

M Bilateral business/industry associations (these are sometimes listed in the phone book, and the association is normally happy to provide a list of members)

M Trade unions and labour-funded research bodies

M Religious groups, charitable foundations, ethical investment organizations and pension funds

M Business ethics centres and publications (see Appendix 3)

jCHECKLIST

What you can ask companies

to do

j Accept AI information on countries.

j Distribute information internally.

j Make a general statement in support of human rights or AI's work that AI can use publicly.

j Run human rights briefings before executives take up appointments abroad.

j Raise concerns on individual cases.

j Make official representations to government officials on AI's concerns.

j Include human rights components in ethical/corporate codes. (AI is currently finalizing a checklist on human rights principles for inclusion in company codes of ethics.)

j Allocate staff resources to developing human rights policies in consultation with NGOs domestically and in countries where the company has operations.

j Encourage national business associations to actively explore development of policy in the area of human rights.

j Treat all employees in accordance with international human rights standards.

j Make a commitment that the company will not be complicit in human rights violations and will instruct its employees not to be silent witnesses to human rights violations.

j Promote knowledge and understanding of human rights within the company domestically and internationally.

Levi-Strauss

Levi-Strauss (US-based jeans manufacturer) has established guidelines for whether or not it will do business in particular countries.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights calls upon “every individual and every organ of society” to “strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance...”

“There is no need for timidity in discussing what society should demand from those in commercial life. It is part of a civilized society that people inside and outside business act morally. No more, and no less.”

Financial Times, London, 6 September 1995

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In all company approaches, it must be made clear in writing that AI takes no stand on whether economic relations should be maintained with countries where human rights are violated.

During AI’s campaign on Indonesia in 1993 and 1994, Club Med, the France-based international holiday company, approached AI to ask for information about local human rights activists who might be in a position to speak at one of its resorts in Indonesia.

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Avoid ‘off the record’ exchanges. Approaches to companies should be frank and open rather than secretive or confidential so that discussions can be reported to the AI movement if necessary. Keep the option of making such discussions public at a later stage if judged appropriate. This does not mean that meetings have to be public, but only that a mutually agreed record must be kept of each meeting. (See Guidelines on Company Approaches in AI’s policy manual.)

“It is important that approaches to business be appropriate to this particular audience. The characteristics we have to deal with in the relevant companies are professionalism, lack of time for discursive documents, ignorance/suspicion of AI”.

Sir Geoffrey Chandler, AIUK and former senior company executive

Human Rights Council of Australia

The Human Rights Council of Australia campaigns for the government to encourage business to engage actively in discussion and action on the relationship between business and human rights. In February 1996 it set out 12 recommendations. These included providing businesses with up-to-date human rights information, encouraging discussion with businesses on the relationship between Australian corporate operations abroad and government human rights policies, and exploring regulatory measures where self-regulation fails.

Going Dutch

The Dutch Section began approaching companies about human rights in 1980. They established a business group at Section level. In 1995 the group had about 12 members and was involved in both advising the Section on strategy and conducting outreach work.

The approach of the Dutch Section has always been an “approach of dialogue”: creating human rights awareness and trying to educate and involve companies in AI’s work. A second goal has been to try to influence the Dutch Government and other parts of Dutch society by creating good relationships with the business community. Operating in a small society with tight

interrelationships between sectors of society makes this a worthwhile goal, although it is difficult to evaluate its success.

Over the years there have been meetings with around 20 companies, most of them multinationals. In one or two cases, long-term relationships have been established. The Section also has an educational program in business schools and university business courses. (The material used is available from the Dutch Section.) Successes include the following:

N one or two companies have taken steps to secure the release of prisoners of conscience;
 N occasionally managers of companies have asked for country-specific human rights information;

N AI members have been invited to deliver human rights education during in-company training of expatriates and managers;

N AI members have been invited to discuss implementation of human rights in businesses' "codes of conduct";

N in at least one case AI's approach apparently succeeded in persuading a company to seriously consider the need for a human rights policy.

The Dutch Section believes it is important to realise:

N how time-consuming this kind of work is if you wish to get results: it needs long-term commitment;

N that the Section must be willing to have a dialogue with the company: to approach the company as a possible ally and not as an adversary;

N that a long-term strategy must be worked out for each company, taking care to be consistent in what you are saying and what you are asking for;

N that care must be taken to ensure that a company will not use a good relationship with AI only for their own public relations.

The South Korean Section secured the support of a major department store chain, which provided space for an AI photo-exhibition used to promote AI and recruit members.

AI members include business people, workers, investors and consumers. AI reflects a wide range of community opinion in many societies – one reason why companies should listen to AI.

What's the beef?

A local group of AIUSA working on behalf of an Argentine prisoner persuaded a local supermarket to allow an exhibition on the prisoner and human rights in Argentina to be staged next to the shelving carrying Argentine corned beef. The group took a picture of the display and included it with a letter to the Argentine Embassy in Washington.

Reebok

The US-based sports shoe manufacturer Reebok has committed itself to human rights in its manifesto. In 1986 it sponsored a worldwide rock music tour on behalf of AI. In 1988 it established the Reebok Human Rights Award for human rights activists. It does not, however, systematically focus on countries' overall human rights record when deciding where it conducts business.

The French experience

The French Section has a commission for company approaches. It has secured a number of positive statements affirming human rights work from leading French companies – quotes that it can use in campaigning. The Section has also produced a handbook on company approaches and a training program for French AI groups. They see that they have four functions:

N advising the Section on priorities in this area of work;

N acting as a central information resource – collecting information from the business media and summarizing meetings with businesses;

N organizing national level approaches to businesses and the business media;

N helping and providing advice to local AI groups in this area of work.

They first approach the company through a personal letter to the manager seeking an appointment. They do not mix fundraising and campaigning requests and they provide details of what they would like the company to do. The initial letters to companies are kept short and contain the following:

N the name, position and company of the addressee;

N a short introduction to AI;

N a summary of AI's concerns and its public recommendations;

N a paragraph to show AI's knowledge of the company and why AI is approaching the company;

N a conclusion comprising a polite and formal identification of the sender.

They believe it is important that the person signing the letter is a member of the delegation meeting the company. They try and make sure the meeting is in the following format:

N introduce AI and its reasons for seeking the meeting in general terms;

N detail AI's concerns in the country and how AI believes these are relevant to the company, illustrating knowledge of the company;

N discuss the possibilities for action by the company;

N listen carefully and politely to the company's viewpoint;

N provide examples of what has been done elsewhere by others;

N agree follow-up and confirm by letter.

Multinational/transnational companies or corporations

For such corporations, AI may use multilateral approaches by different Sections. This should always be based upon an approach by the AI Section in the country where the corporation's headquarters are based. Many companies are interested in receiving regular AI information on the countries where they operate, even if they do not always want to be seen to have a close relationship to human rights organizations such as AI. This information can be sent by country co-groups or the Section's secretariat, but may also be available on the "AI Doc" computer system (consult the IS for details).

Be realistic about what companies will do

Business people are usually more willing to commit themselves to taking concrete steps within their own sphere of responsibility – for instance in policies which affect their employees in the areas of discrimination and affirmative action, health and safety, and adherence to international labour standards – than they are in using their "good offices" to try to affect the broader human rights situation.

The general rule should therefore be to begin with modest and reasonable requests, such as "accept our documents", "agree to meet us", etc. The next step should be to request that they take steps within their sphere of responsibility which affect positively the human rights of their employees and suppliers, or to ask them to talk about human rights with other company officials or trade organizations in their own countries. Only lastly should you attempt to enlist them as allies in pressing governments to end the human rights violations which occur in foreign countries where they have business interests.

cTIP

Remember: make it easy. If companies indicate a willingness to distribute material internally, offer to provide them with a draft article.

Action on forced labour

An approach by AIUSA members to a chemical company with subsidiaries in China elicited the following memo to all those employed by the subsidiaries:

“The [company] is fully supportive of human rights and sensitive to the current ethical issues involving doing business with enterprises which use forced labour.

“The [company] will not do business with enterprises using forced labour, including enterprises which source their labour from prisons.

“In implementing this policy, we need to know our customers and suppliers in order to determine if they are buying or selling to any forced labour enterprises. We will avoid even meeting with or corresponding with enterprises which front for prison labour forces.

“We encourage your sharing information among our offices and staff as an aid to implementing this policy.”

Any allegations of company complicity in human rights violations should be sent to the IS for checking before any action is taken. AI can rarely prove a company’s complicity in torture, political imprisonment and the death penalty (except where companies have supplied military, security and police (MSP) transfers which contribute to such violations). Many companies employ their own security force and the conduct of such forces should be closely scrutinized. However, Sections should not make any allegations without these being agreed by the IS. In general, extra care should be taken over publicity which could even imply a company’s complicity – not least because companies and their managers may use libel laws against those who damage their commercial reputation.

Principles of pressure

The Sullivan Principles

The Sullivan Principles in the USA were an attempt to provide an alternative option to disinvestment for US corporations operating in apartheid South Africa. They committed firms with operations in South Africa to pay employees a minimum wage, to use racially non-discriminatory employment practices, and to use their corporate influence to end apartheid. By 1986 over 260 US corporations had signed up to the principles.

The MacBride Principles

The MacBride Principles (named after Sean MacBride, one of AI’s first members) is a US-based campaign to ensure that companies operating in Northern Ireland do not discriminate or contribute to discrimination on the grounds of religion. Firms applying the principles also make reasonable efforts to protect the safety of their Roman Catholic workers – at the workplace and while travelling to and from work. By February 1995, 16 US states and more than 40 city bodies in the US had passed MacBride legislation.

AI’s Secretary General, Pierre Sané, with Anita Roddick, the founder of the UK-based Body Shop

© TIM FISHER

By 1996 some 800 businesses, including major firms such as AT&T, Coopers and Lybrand, and Honeywell had joined a consultancy and clearing house “Business for Social Responsibility”, which includes a program on human rights and business.

During a campaign in the 1980s the Australian Section persuaded the ANZ bank, which had investments in Chile, to allow local AI groups to mount exhibitions on human rights violations in Chile in the bank’s foyer.

AI can approach companies with requests for funds and/or sponsorship within the terms of the fundraising guidelines. However, approaches to companies on human rights questions should never be combined with a request for funds. (Guidelines for Approaching Companies in AI's policy manual.)

OUTREACH**Military and Law Enforcement Officers**

Military, security and police (MSP) personnel are often those most directly responsible for committing human rights violations. Getting them to listen to and take note of AI's concerns is a challenge which requires an understanding of the structures and the culture in which they operate. This section looks at:

- N Developing an outreach strategy / 202
- N Outreach structures / 202
- N Outreach in practice /203
 - Letter-writing / 204
- N Human rights training / 205
- N Outreach work in a target country / 206

UN civilian police in Mozambique receive AI's cards listing 10 basic rules for safeguarding human rights during a course organized by the UN Centre for Human Rights

© Cees de Rover

Developing an outreach strategy

There are a number of ways in which serving and retired military, security and police personnel can assist AI's campaigning work. The main purpose of AI's outreach to such personnel is to promote awareness and observance of international human rights standards among military and police forces (see Chapter 2). Usually this outreach work does not involve asking military and police officers to directly campaign against specific military, security or police (MSP) transfers from their own countries.

Each AI action request (Urgent Actions, major country and theme campaigns, Action Files and other requests) is based upon AI's mandate, an assessment of the needs of the victims and potential victims, who the perpetrators are or might be, an analysis of the most immediately relevant political, legal and other factors governing the situation and how AI might best campaign to assist those victims or potential victims.

The following questions may be useful to pose in order to decide which AI action requests may be most important at any particular time and most relevant to your outreach work with military, police and other law enforcement personnel.

g QUESTIONS

- g Who is responsible for the majority of human rights violations?
- g Who within that country is in a position to influence those responsible?
- g What is the avowed self-perception of the army, security or police command?
- g What kind of economic activity is the military or law enforcement agency involved in?
- g What types of MSP relations exist between your country and those in which the violations are committed?

Outreach structures

AI Sections in countries where police, other law enforcers and military officers are not systematically or persistently involved in human rights violations may set up AI groups made up of members of the military, police or other law enforcement agencies. The relevant AI guidelines stipulate that Section boards should decide whether it is feasible to do this.

In order to function effectively, such groups usually require some administrative, educational and other support from the Section's secretariat.

A "group in formation" is usually built around a coordinator and a core of reliable and energetic volunteers. Professional demands may mean that such volunteers are retired professionals who have time to offer AI and who may have good contacts in the profession.

Devoting adequate time to developing a common understanding of AI among the core members of the group is essential. Internal human rights education can be facilitated by preparing key topics for discussion at each meeting and gradually finding consensus on the group's terms of reference and its main tasks. If other members of the same profession join a network of supporters of the group, it may become a co-group sending out regular information, new actions and feedback.

Outreach in practice

You may find the following tips useful when planning an AI action involving police or other law enforcement or military officers:

c TIPS

- c Consult your relevant Section body/coordinator.

c Read the basic international human rights standards most directly relevant to such professions, and also the relevant humanitarian law (note and respect the role of the International Committee of the Red Cross).

c Choose the most relevant AI action request.

c Seek advice from sympathetic or retired officers in the same profession. Some may have already joined AI as ordinary members. Check your membership records!

c Define who exactly to approach: are they in a relevant government ministry, are they commanding officers in the establishment, officials of a professional or veterans' association, tutors or heads of training institutes, military or prison doctors, military or lawyers with good connections, journalists or religious representatives specializing in work with military, police or prison personnel?

c Prepare the first approach very carefully to avoid misunderstandings, and include basic information on AI's role and structure, AI's independence and impartiality, AI's position on the use of violence, and case material on police/law enforcers/military as victims of human rights violations – not just as perpetrators of such violations.

c Do not be over-ambitious. Concentrate at first on establishing a dialogue to promote basic human rights awareness, and be prepared to listen to the views and understand the experiences of your contacts. Once you have reached some common understanding and agreement on basic principles, you may be ready to propose a letter-writing action in support of cases where military, police or other law enforcers in the same profession are victims. Always draw attention to international human rights standards and relevant humanitarian law.

Letter-writing

Writing to the highest levels of the military, police and prisons is one of the most commonly used AI campaigning techniques. If an AI Section is establishing professional groups composed of military and law enforcement personnel, attention will need to be given to the respective letter-writing roles of the professional group and other AI members for each AI action request (UAs, major country and theme campaigns, Action Files and other actions).

Letter-writing by AI members in the military or police can increase AI's credibility, and build the legitimacy of human rights activism. It is likely that members or former members of the security forces in your country will be more familiar with the "culture" to be found within other security forces and law enforcement agencies.

Military or police figures may know best how to make an appeal that will be listened to and taken note of. Appeals to non-military and non-police government ministers and officials from senior military and law enforcement personnel may also be taken more seriously if such appeals include arguments backed up by professional expertise.

Writing to lower levels of the military or police can fulfil a number of functions. Many violations occur at the mid-command level, which is normally missed by writing only to those in the highest authority and with formal authority. Letters to middle ranks or operational commanders can illustrate that their actions are being monitored, and may therefore act as some deterrent to committing or allowing human rights violations.

In other cases, letters may reach members of the armed forces who are genuinely concerned but have not known what to do. Letters may provide a tool they can use, or a moral incentive to take some action to prevent human rights violations by others.

Human rights training

We must always point out that the training of military and law enforcement personnel is the responsibility of the governmental authorities, and that human rights training cannot be meaningful or effective without the establishment of proper systems of accountability.

Where there is a serious pattern of human rights violations and abuses with impunity (see below), such training may first require a program of legal reform in accordance with international standards, as well as the disbandment of certain types of security force units which are significantly responsible for committing violations. Otherwise human rights training will, at best, be a drop in the ocean and, at worst, a public relations stunt to redeem irresponsible authorities.

Where conditions are favourable, AI Sections which have human rights training expertise relevant to military or particular law enforcement agencies could take steps to act as a catalyst to promote such training.

This may be done by:

N Encouraging and supporting other reputable and independent agencies which have recognized expertise to assist with such training; one vital role of such an agency would be to provide independent monitoring and evaluation of the training.

N Forwarding relevant training and educational materials to military, police and prison training establishments; providing critical comments on curricula.

N Providing expert speakers to give presentations and answer questions on the work of AI and human rights promotion and protection. Such speakers must command authority and respect.

N Providing expert trainers to sit in on training courses to make constructive comments for improvement and to try to ensure openness, particularly concerning questions about the daily practices of officers. Such comments could be made about:

M the best selection and mix of trainees (e.g. whole units, training trainers);

M the sensitivity of teaching methods (e.g. religious or language issues);

M the usefulness of human rights materials (e.g. copies of main human rights texts, audiovisuals);

M the practical relevance of the exercises on particular topics (e.g. role-play by police on crowd control or interrogation); and

M the effectiveness of follow-up (e.g. support for trainers, reunions of trainees, newsletters, evaluation reports).

Outreach work in a target country

If you are in a country where police, other law enforcers and military officers are systematically or persistently involved in human rights violations, any approach by AI to such personnel requires extra care. Careful steps need to be taken to uphold the independence and impartiality of AI. An approach should always begin in writing and seek an official commitment to human rights in writing before any discussions, meetings or telephone calls take place.

Testing the sincerity of any declared commitment is not easy, but you may try by asking officials if they will agree that their government should:

M vigorously investigate, prosecute and bring to justice those responsible for violations and abuses of human rights;

M make it part of the training of the armed forces and law enforcement agencies that anyone ordered to commit such acts has a duty to refuse;

M work towards the establishment of impartial and independent bodies that oversee the protection of human rights and do not impede the free functioning of domestic and international human rights organizations.

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Beware of possible dangers and pitfalls.

The potential role of military, police and other law enforcement personnel in violating human rights, especially in countries with serious human rights problems, means that AI must be careful when working with such personnel to guard its independence and impartiality, and the clarity of its concerns. Sections should consult the IS before making such approaches.

Riot police prepare to shoot into a crowd during a demonstration in Norrebro, Denmark, in May 1993.

© CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

Withdrawal of US training manuals

In 1996 AI helped publicize the revelation that over a period of three decades Spanish-language US army manuals used to train military officers at the School of the Americas contained instructions recommending the use of bribery, blackmail, threats, extortion and torture. The manuals were eventually recalled and retracted, but many had been distributed in Latin America and may still be in circulation.

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In order to clarify your work on MSP relations, refer to Chapter 2.

People from the same sector will commonly have an understanding of the "culture", which gives them an insight into how best to make an appeal that will be listened to.

1. Respect them
2. Treat those in your power humanely
3. Vengeance and taking of hostages are prohibited.
4. Respect their property; do not damage it or steal it.

These pictures are taken from a booklet produced by the ICRC. It is distributed among UN peace-keeping personnel, and attempts to establish basic behavioural principles for troops dealing with civilians.

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AI does not organize or become intimately involved in the organization of human rights training of military and law enforcement personnel. If a government could claim that AI has approved their human rights training, they might feel less accountable for ensuring that their forces are prevented from committing human rights violations.

The professional group of police in AI Netherlands

From modest beginnings, the professional group of police in AI Netherlands had grown to about 120 police officers by 1990. Any policeman or policewoman could join. Representatives of the Dutch Police Union, the General Christian Police and the Association of Higher Police Officials were closely involved in supporting the development of the group. The Circle of Chief Commissioners of the municipal police as well as the Inspector General of the State Police were also enthusiastic supporters.

Members of the police group regularly write and send telegrams to the authorities and to police colleagues in other countries raising AI's concerns and drawing attention to international human

rights standards relating to police conduct. They also work on behalf of police colleagues who are themselves victims of human rights abuses. Each letter is signed by the police officer, giving his rank, and is written in their private capacity. The group regularly publishes articles in police magazines on human rights abuses and policing, and also assists with lessons in police educational institutes in the Netherlands.

“...my impressions from having conducted seminars and workshops on human rights for police in many states in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Central America and Asia [is that] most national training programs do not address human rights as a separate and significant topic, and that the international dimension of human rights protection is not covered to any great extent. Furthermore, there is fairly widespread resistance to the notion of human rights amongst the police and that many police officials feel that they are entitled to violate, or are justified in violating, human rights in the course of their duties.”

Ralph Crawshaw, former Chief Superintendent, Essex Police Constabulary in the UK, now a consultant to the UN, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the International Committee of the Red Cross in law enforcement and human rights.

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Treat military, police or other law enforcement sectors as separate entities.
Each profession has its own role, rules, institutions and traditions.

Police and human rights education in Brazil

In December 1988, the Rio Grande do Sol state legislature enacted a law to include human rights in the training of civil and military police. This initiative happened after members of AI Brazil developed a project to convince members of parliament that such a step was necessary to stem the widespread abuses by police in Brazil. AI Brazil members then began to work with other NGOs to try to encourage the authorities to implement the law. After six years, about half the civil police had received some form of human rights education and there was a visible drop in abuses compared with the 1980s. Civil police worked with AI Brazil members on documents, amateur videos and photographic exhibitions on human rights. Unfortunately, it was more difficult to reach the military police. Nevertheless, the new law was copied in the state of Bahia, and working parties were set up in São Paulo and other areas of Brazil to revise police training. AI subsequently addressed a conference of all senior police officers at the federal level.

In 1996 the Brazil country coordinator of the Canadian Section, together with six individuals and three local groups, set up a support project to help this effort. They arranged finance, accommodation and briefings with the Edmonton Police Service in Canada and for a Brazilian police chief of the state of Sergipe to attend police training courses in Canada on subjects such as interrogation techniques, community patrols and dealing with difficult people. They also organized a workshop with Edmonton police on international human rights standards, including those concerning the rights of the child and to torture. The Brazilian police chief worked to develop human rights training on his return home.

The Spanish Interior Ministry holds a conference on the training of police officers as the basis for the protection of human rights, 1984.

f

AI does not take part in the drafting of human rights training programs for MSP personnel from countries where human rights within AI's mandate are systematically and persistently violated.

This does not prevent AI from helping to clarify that international human rights instruments should routinely be part of the training of all MSP personnel.

OUTREACH

THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL NETWORK

Lawyers have been intimately involved with AI since it began. In several countries lawyers have been among the founder members of Sections and in many places they are influential campaigners for human rights. This section looks at:

- N Why the international legal network is important to AI / 208
- N Why the international legal network might contribute to AI's work / 208
- N Developing an outreach strategy / 208
- N Outreach structures / 209
- N Checklist: What you can ask lawyers to do / 211

Peter Benenson, the British lawyer who launched Amnesty International, rekindles the original candle on the 20th anniversary of the organization in May 1981

© ai

Why the international legal network is important to AI

Lawyers, judges, magistrates, academics, law students and others in the international legal network who are familiar with the theory and practice of law have a vital role to play in AI's work. This is because the profession is:

- N influential in its own country;
- N well-informed and adept at communication;
- N widely respected internationally;
- N linked through its national professional associations;
- N linked internationally through personal and professional contact, professional associations and membership of international associations.

Why the international legal network might contribute to AI's work

Members of the international legal network might contribute to AI's campaigns because of their:

- N personal interest and commitment;
- N professional interest in the role of law in promoting and protecting human rights;
- N professional solidarity with lawyers in other countries who are human rights activists and/or victims of human rights violations.

Many national and international legal organizations campaign on issues very close to AI's mandate through their human rights committees or branches. Whether this work is done by national bar associations and law societies, the International Bar Association or the International Commission of Jurists, the international legal network is generally very receptive to AI's message. The issue for AI is how to use this support to greatest effect and how to organize it on a long-term basis.

Developing an outreach strategy

The following questions may help you determine what is the best strategy to adopt:

gQUESTIONS

g What national associations representing lawyers exist in your country?

g Do these associations have sub-committees or individuals with responsibility for human rights?

g How do these legal organizations take decisions; for example, do they hold monthly or annual meetings?

g Does the international legal network, particularly its member organizations or individuals, influence government or community attitudes on particular issues such as the death penalty?

g Have leading lawyers' or legal organizations made public statements on domestic or international human rights issues in AI's mandate?

g Are particular lawyers' or legal organizations likely to influence your government's ratification of international human rights treaties or government policy in relation to AI's mandate concerns?

g Are there individuals or organizations with links to particular countries in which AI has concerns?

g Are there lawyers' or legal organizations in a target country with influence on human rights issues? Have they made statements or taken a position on these issues?

g How do legal organizations in your country communicate with their members; for example, through what types of publications?
Are there specialist legal media?

g Do the publications accept articles from non-lawyers?

g Are there particular lawyers who write media columns or provide editorial opinion in the general media?

g Are lawyers or legal organizations affiliated to international bodies that may be able to take action, such as sending a letter raising human rights concerns?

Whatever the structure, the overall objective of outreach to the international legal network is to develop a positive working relationship that enables AI to call for action and support as necessary.

Outreach structures

Many AI Sections and some coordinating structures have established lawyers' groups. The extent and nature of campaigning undertaken by these groups varies from Section to Section, and structure to structure, depending on human and financial resources. At the very least, however, lawyers' groups can and should be asked to perform in three fundamental ways:

N As technical advisers to the movement. They can work as legal consultants to intergovernmental organization (IGO) and home government lobbyists, country and campaign coordinators, as well as to non-specialist groups on legal issues underpinning campaigning goals.

N As links between the movement and the wider legal profession. They can reach non-AI colleagues – through local or national law societies, bar associations and academic institutions – to raise awareness and encourage unified and, where appropriate, high-profile campaigning on specific cases or issues. They can also increase membership among legal professionals and create opportunities to raise funds for AI's work.

N As defenders of victims of human rights abuses, including other human rights defenders, and promoters of legal reform. They can make representations in a professional capacity about individual cases or about human rights issues, presenting the legal arguments supported by international law.

AI's global legal network as of September 1997 comprised lawyers' groups in 50 AI Sections/coordinating structures in all five world regions. The network has held inter-Section meetings at intervals of about 18 months since its first meeting in Antwerp in 1990. The 1995 inter-Section meeting in Oslo brought delegates from all but one region of the world. Development goals for the network aim at full regional representation by 1998 and expansion within targeted regions in the South. This process has begun -- illustrated by the delegates from all regions who attended the inter-Section meeting in Amsterdam in October 1997.

Although non-specialist AI groups have lawyers as members, it is common for AI lawyer members to form specialist groups, usually comprising between six and 20 members. If greater numbers of members are available, additional groups are formed. Networks of practitioners and

law students often exist alongside groups or instead of groups. These are serviced either by Section staff or by a steering committee.

Not all specialist action and campaigning has to be carried out through a lawyers' group. Sections/coordinating structures with limited human and financial resources may consider campaigning, regularly or on an ad hoc basis, by individual lawyer members or small clusters of lawyer members (two or three) who would not require significant on-going resourcing by a Section/coordinating structure.

Law students sometimes form all-student groups, working in conjunction with a group of qualified practitioners. A student group can be a good source for the time and energy needed to undertake campaigning and can provide access to practical resources such as photocopiers, reference materials or meeting rooms through their university or college law faculties.

Section coordination of lawyers' groups is done in different ways, depending on resources. Some Sections, for example, take full charge of all coordination through staff coordinators who receive all mailings from the legal network coordinator, assign the work to the group and provide the necessary training and funding. Some share the task, in which case the Section receives all mailings from the IS but services rather than directs the groups and provides only some funding. The model depends on the circumstances of the Section/structure and its members.

The IS continues to develop strategies to increase the campaigning potential of lawyers' groups in the network and encourages Sections to do the same.

jCHECKLIST

What you can ask LAWYERS
to do

j Meet the media

Participation by a leading lawyer in a media event – for example, a press conference to launch a country report in which legal concerns are a major issue – can help you win coverage in the legal as well as the wider media.

j Make a statement

A public statement of support or concern by a respected legal organization or individual lawyer can be specific or general. A specific statement, such as on the need for detainees to have access to lawyers, doctors and relatives, may be useful to highlight the issue in your own and the target country. A general statement, such as one supporting AI's work, can be quoted when needed – whether in seeking contact with government officials or seeking support or action from individual lawyers. A short statement can be signed by all relevant organizations and individuals as a simple and quick way of showing the level of support on an issue.

j Write a letter

An official letter written by a respected legal organization or a prominent member of the legal community to government officials in a target country and copied to the embassy can be a good indication of the level of concern within your community on a human rights issue. A letter from an individual lawyer on official paper looks impressive and immediately makes clear the status of the author. Such letters also illustrate that AI's concerns are shared by the wider community.

j Promote professional solidarity

Ask lawyers or legal organizations in your country to contact their counterparts in a target country and offer their support as co-professionals on human rights issues. This demonstration of concern and professional solidarity may also lead to opportunities for exchange visits and sharing expertise and resources.

j Publicize AI's concerns in the media

A regular AI or human rights column in a legal publication published by your bar association or law society could feature appeal cases, or thematic and country issues, using information from AI external reports and Urgent Actions, with the legal focus emphasized. From time to time, space may be available for longer, feature-length articles by a lawyer, taking up human rights issues from a legal perspective. In the general media, an opinion piece (see Chapter 9) in the newspaper could be written by a leading lawyer sympathetic to AI's concerns (who is permitted to express wider concerns than those in AI's mandate but who must then make it clear that the article is not written on behalf of AI). Copies of articles in the legal or general press on country issues may be sent with a covering letter to the relevant embassy, asking for a comment or response.

j Help raise funds

Ask a respected legal figure to appeal to lawyers for donations to AI as you plan fundraising events of interest to members of the international legal network.

j Encourage legal delegations to visit a target country

A visit by a delegation of legal professionals – for example, a group of bar association lawyers – to a target country is an effective action for an AI lawyers' group to promote. Attending and observing trials of political detainees can be another useful form of action if carried out by experienced lawyers who have some training in trial observation. However, in either case, the country researcher at the IS should be consulted first.

j Organize a petition

Organize a petition among the legal community on the case of a professional colleague in detention or under threat.

j Visit embassies

Offer to join an AI delegation to an embassy when there is a relevant legal component to AI's concerns.

j Increase awareness

Arrange a presentation at a university during the induction period for law students. Sponsor a human rights lawyer to speak at a public meeting.

j Contact others

Contact other professionals or organizations that may have a particular interest in a case.

"I sincerely thank you for your strong condemnation of the illegal and unjust execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists..."

Letter sent to Michael Kingston from the Richmond North lawyers group in Australia from a Nigerian in relation to letters written by the group about the executions of Ogoni activists in Nigeria.

Lawyers are a crucial link in the struggle for human rights. They are persecuted precisely for this reason.

"I am glad my talk inspired you to redouble your efforts to work as lawyers in promoting human rights both in Malawi and throughout the world. You are doing a good work..."

Vera Chirwa, a lawyer and former prisoner of conscience in Malawi, in a letter written to the AI UK's lawyers' network

Human rights and laws linked

Violations of human rights are violations of law. The idea of human rights is more than a philosophical or moral concept, it is a concept embodied in law. Lawyers must be in the forefront of efforts to protect human rights, as human rights and laws are fundamentally linked in two ways:

N The scope and meaning of the term "human rights" is defined by international law.

N Most human rights violations are also violations of national law.

Lawyers holding an independent public inquiry into allegations of an extrajudicial execution in Northern Ireland after the UK Government refused such an inquiry

© frankie quinn

Delegates to the African jurists' colloquium attending the opening of the Institute for Training in Human Rights, Dakar, Senegal, 1979. At the conclusion of the colloquium, delegates adopted a detailed resolution proposing measures for the protection of human rights in Africa.

"The task which still remains to be accomplished is to make this ideal [of human rights] a reality."

Moustapha Seck, President of the Senegal Bar Association (front row, second from right).

OUTREACH
TRADE UNIONS

In many societies trade unions and trade unionists are in the frontline of the human rights struggle, seeking respect for social and economic rights in particular, but often civil and political rights as well. This section looks at:

- N Why trade unions are important to AI / 214
- N Why trade unions might share AI's concerns / 214
- N Developing an outreach strategy / 214
- N Checklist: What you can ask trade unionists to do / 216

'Hand in hand for human rights' –
AI participation in a May Day rally in the Philippines
© ai

Why trade unions are important to AI

Trade unions represent millions of people and can speak on their behalf in defence of human rights. They can also be an important political force influencing government action and public opinion.

Many trade unions have extensive international networks, providing opportunities for dialogue, mutual support and which campaign on issues relevant to AI's campaigning work. They often have an organizational infrastructure that enables them to mobilize others and take action quickly.

Why trade unions might share AI's concerns

N The principle of solidarity is at the heart of both AI and trade unionism.

N Human rights are the basis of workers' rights.

N Trade unionists in many societies are activists for other human rights.

N Trade unionists in many countries are targeted for human rights violations because of their activities.

N AI has acted on behalf of many trade unionists.

N Many trade union officials and rank and file members are committed to human rights.

N Trade unions share AI's concerns at the efforts of some governments to undermine the basis of international solidarity (specifically, the universality of human rights) and to question the validity of specific rights (indivisibility of human rights).

In the Cold War years trade union federations and affiliations reflected wider ideological divisions. Sometimes this led to tensions in outreach to trade unions as AI was seen to be focusing on the rights of the individual, whereas the focus of trade unions is on collective rights. Many of these tensions have now disappeared and AI has a cooperative working relationship with the trade union movement at the international level.

Preparations for the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 found AI and the trade union movement campaigning together against the efforts of governments to undermine the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Developing an outreach strategy

gQUESTIONS

g What is the potential importance of outreach to trade unions for AI as an organization in your society and for its international campaigning?

g How is the trade union movement structured?

g What AI structure is best suited to your needs?

g Does or can the trade union movement in your society influence government policy and in particular its international relations policies?

g Do trade unions influence the position of particular political parties?

g Which trade unions are most influential? Which have the most members?

g What international links does the trade union movement have with other trade unions?

g Do trade unions influence public opinion? How do the trade unions communicate with their membership and others (through newsletter, magazines, radio, etc)?

g Have trade unions previously stated support for AI's objectives?

g Do trade unions have office space, printing facilities or other resources they may be willing to donate to AI?

g Do trade unions have the capacity to send appeals quickly (for example, via fax) to home and foreign governments?

g Can trade unions donate or help to collect funds for AI's work?

g What issues are of most concern to the union movement at present?

g Do the different trade unions, or the trade union federations have officials/ members/a committee who are responsible for international relations or links?

g How do the different unions take decisions on the issues of importance to AI? Is it at an annual meeting, in response to resolutions at executive meetings or the position of key officials, etc?

g Will maintaining regular or occasional contact with key trade union members/officials achieve most of what AI needs?

g Can AI members who are trade union members win their union's support for AI generally and on specific issues?

g Is there enough potential support from the trade union movement or is the trade union movement influential enough to justify establishing a permanent outreach structure?

g Is there enough expertise within AI or should sympathetic trade unionists be recruited to advise AI on its strategy and relations with the trade union movement?

g What resources can AI realistically devote to establishing and maintaining a permanent structure or to servicing AI's trade union members?

jCHECKLIST

What you can ask trade unionists to do

j Join the UA network. Many trade unions have secretarial support and faxes, and appeals on headed paper can have more impact. Perhaps use a single UA on the case of a trade unionist to introduce them to the scheme. Many journalists' unions are asked by their international federation to take action on behalf of journalists featured in UAs. In a number of AI Sections, trade unions agree to act on all or some UAs – sometimes on particular countries, occupations or trade unions.

j Donate a monthly sum of money.

j Run a regular column or advertisement in their publication featuring AI's campaigns and asking for action (time or money).

j Take action in relation to specific campaigns, such as writing to governments at home or abroad in support of AI's calls.

j Pass a resolution on a human rights issue and forward a copy to the embassy of the country.

- j Display AI posters/leaflets in their offices.
- j Include human rights education training in educational programs they run.

Direct action

In 1987 members of the Furniture Timber and Allied Trades Union in the UK campaigned against the export of gallows to Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. Workers at the docks from which the gallows were supposed to be dispatched helped to ensure that two sets of gallows were not exported.

Every year AI seeks to lobby national trade union delegations attending the annual meeting of the International Labour Organisation in Geneva.

AI's aims in relation to trade unions

AI's work with national and international trade unions aims to:

- N maximize impact in protecting and promoting human rights – for labour rights activists and the general population – in countries where human rights are violated;
- N exchange information on human rights violations and the means of combating them;
- N maximize impact at the International Labour Organisation (ILO), initiating appropriate criticism of human rights violations of working people;
- N achieve full ratification of ILO Conventions No. 87 and No. 98, on freedom of association and the right to organize.

We just told them it was fun...

The German Section's trade union co-group was re-formed in September 1995. Within weeks articles about AI and UAs were published in trade union newspapers. By November IG Metall, the largest trade union in the world, hosted a concert which raised nearly US\$100,000 for AI. The group is planning courses for trade unionists on trade union and human rights.

Their recipe for success was simple. In the words of the coordinator:

“We never wrote about structures of the organization, never gave reports about boring meetings and never talked about the difficulties we had. We always repeated that we are only a few members who are interested in trade union work, but we also pointed out that our group grows, that we have success and a lot of fun. I think this was the method to get the success we have today.”

Every year there is an action around International Labour Day (1 May) and a lobbying action before annual meetings of the ILO. AI members who are also active in a trade union could try to develop an outreach structure or an ongoing outreach program to trade unionists, if resources are available.

Swedish initiative

In 1996 a delegation from the Swedish Section met the presidents of both the white and blue collar national trade union federations. All agreed that they shared a similar view of the state of the world, including the increasing danger for human rights and the rights of trade unionists. It was confirmed that a more intense cooperation should be developed, chiefly in the form of networks of activists in the two federations. Since then the Urgent Action network has increased immensely.

International solidarity

Muchtar Pakpahan, the leader of an independent trade union in Indonesia, was sentenced to four years' imprisonment in January 1995 for his trade union activities. AI worked with both national and international trade unions, ensuring press coverage and a huge volume of appeals. In the run-up to the International Labour Conference (ILC) in June that year, Muchtar Pakpahan was released — ostensibly on a legal technicality. Because his release was not confirmed as

permanent, the work on his behalf continued. Delegates to the ILC used AI information which had been sent to them by the Sections in their country and was handed out by the lobbyist at the meeting. The ILC condemned the violations of workers' rights in Indonesia. In October the Indonesian Supreme Court acquitted Muchtar Pakpahan of the charges against him. Despite the rearrest of Muchtar Pakpahan following riots in Jakarta in 1996, international trade union support for him has helped to keep his case in the public eye.

“We think that pressure from unions on the US Government on the issue of the right to form independent trade unions was effective in pressuring Indonesia and led to Muchtar Pakpahan's release.”

AIUSA

**OUTREACH
YOUTH ACTIVISTS**

Optimism, energy and creativity are all qualities associated the world over with youth and students. It is therefore important to build a partnership with youths and students. This section looks at:

- N Why youth activists are important to AI / 218
- N Developing an outreach strategy / 218
- N Outreach in practice / 219
 - Working within the education system / 220
- N Supporting young members / 221
- N Checklist: What you can ask youth and students to do / 222

Children participate in the launch of AI's campaign on China by the Philippine Section, March 1996

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Why youth activists are important to AI

Youth and students, and their organizations, are not necessarily influential in society (yet), or in relation to target societies, but there are many reasons which make outreach to them important.

N Students may have ready access to resources as well as the time to be active.

N The organizational infrastructure for students – such as student federations that link up with regional or national bodies, or the administrative systems of universities or colleges – may be of benefit to human rights campaigning.

N Students may have access to specialist knowledge: students are trained in professional skills and research, and have access to academic materials as well as to specialists in their area of study. They may therefore be in a position to undertake specialist work for AI Sections.

N Youth and students may be more willing to initiate and take part in public and direct forms of campaigning action than other AI members.

N Attitudes and associations formed while young and during student life can be enduring. Youth should therefore be brought into AI's campaigning in a dynamic way, through full involvement in the design of campaigns and in the leadership of the organization.

N There are international youth organizations and networks that can provide a valuable opportunity for dialogue and action on AI's concerns.

N Outreach to young people and adapting AI materials and message to youth culture can enhance AI's credibility with an appeal to a large cross-section of the population.

Developing an outreach strategy

Generally, the most effective way to mobilize young people and students is to empower them to mobilize themselves. Some or all of the questions below may help young people in your Section to develop an outreach strategy for youth.

gQUESTIONS

g What issues are young people in your country most motivated by?

g Which organizations are most effective in mobilizing young people and why?

g What youth organizations exist in your country? Are there national student associations, scouting organizations, youth wings of political parties, or youth bodies attached to religious, social justice or environmental organizations? How many members do they have? Do they have their own media? Do they influence public opinion or government? Do they generate action from their membership? Do they have international affiliations?

g Could AI do a joint outreach project with a youth organization, or just learn about how that organization does its outreach and membership work with students and youth?

g What is likely to be the most effective way of approaching youth and student organizations? Is it through particular individuals?

g What media target youth? What sort of information may they be interested in receiving from AI?

g Will it be necessary to produce specialised materials to reach out to youth, to generate action and to retain support? What resources will be needed to do this?

g Do you have the resources to make contact with youth organizations? Are there influential or large youth organizations near you? Are they planning any big meetings in which AI could be involved?

Outreach in practice

It is important to know how you can best encourage the participation of youth and students. Some of the particular skills and facilities which young people and students have to offer are listed below. Once you have identified these skills, you may need to provide training and support in order to utilize these skills effectively.

N General skills gained from their studies

Students have access to vast amounts of information in their places of education. Their training in research can be utilized by the Section in particular projects, for instance in researching details of home government legislation and human rights.

N Particular skills gained from their courses

M language students may be able to help translate materials and may link up with AI groups in the countries where they spend time improving their languages;

M business students who spend a year working in industry can be encouraged to raise discussions in the workplace on ethics and human rights in the business sector, or to undertake research on attitudes in the business community towards human rights;

M medical students can highlight issues of human rights and the medical profession (such as organ transplants, executions and torture) in their medical schools;

M law students can bring legal analysis to actions or give talks on international human rights law;

M international students can give input on their own cultures and to discussions on the situation in their own country;

M student teachers can design classes on human rights education;

M marketing students can survey attitudes to or awareness of AI or human rights in the community or among specific sectors of the community;

M public relations or communications students may be able to help produce campaigning and media strategies and materials, or to stage events;

M design students may be able to design materials for AI campaigns.

M students may be aware of the debate on military service and conscientious objection: this can be put to use in working on cases of conscientious objectors imprisoned in other countries, or on ill-treatment of young people performing military service.

Working within the education system

Find out about common rules and regulations within the school system that affect how youth groups are formed and run. Are there restrictions on fundraising in schools? Do most schools require the mail for a school club to go to a teacher (regardless of the teacher's role in the group)? Give advice about how youth members can cope with these situations and be effective activists.

N Adapt to the students' timetable

Adapt your calendar of campaigning actions to fit in with the academic year in your country. When major international campaigns fall at an awkward time for youth activities, for instance when a campaign straddles the major school or college holidays thought needs to be given to arranging activities so that effort is sustained or a second push is made after the holidays.

Encourage youth groups to remain active during the main holiday period by sending a mailing at the beginning of the holidays to these groups containing ideas specifically for this period. When groups are disbanding for the holiday period, individual members in the groups can be encouraged to sign up for actions. At the end of the holiday period, these members can be sent a special mailing strongly encouraging them to take out formal individual AI membership.

N Encourage the talents of young people

Young people's energy to undertake imaginative actions and respond quickly to actions requiring an urgent response offers a tremendous advantage over some local groups who work to different schedules and cannot always be available for immediate large-scale action. It is worth considering how student and youth groups can be integrated into the Section's plans for crisis response work.

For sheer volume of appeals and strong publicity, youth groups are often unbeatable. It is worth considering, however, which campaigns would most benefit from the special talents of youth and student members, and which may benefit more from the input of other groups in society.

Decide what sort of issues may be most appealing for young people. Talk to others who work with young people and work out what some of the key motivating issues are in your context. For example, is it important to find cases of youth/children/student victims of human rights violations for youth members to work on?

Supporting young members

Youth and students are a major part of the membership in many Sections. In some they are organized in specific youth and student groups. There are many issues that should be addressed associated with servicing this membership and retaining their support.

Firstly you must establish that you have the resources to keep the young members. Second, you should think about how you will ensure that some of the youth maintain their interest in AI in the future. It should not be taken for granted that the young members of today will remain involved in AI as adults. We need to recognize that youth is a time of exploration, and not assume that the young members of today will be AI's future. However, a positive experience in AI while people are young may lead to further involvement later on.

If youth members do not go on to develop their interest in human rights issues, then skills learned are not built upon and a huge and influential potential membership is lost.

c TIPS

c Try to make a concerted effort to develop young leadership by involving youth in supporting youth work. If young members are excluded from the decision-making process, Sections risk alienating and losing them. Talk to youth and student leaders inside and outside AI about outreach work with young people.

c Look for opportunities to support youth activism in general, not solely youth or student groups. Find ways to help multi-issue youth clubs (such as youth groups associated with a place of worship) to get involved in human rights activism. Many skills are transferrable across issues. Helping youth as activists makes AI a credible activist option for youth and may encourage people to continue in AI as adults.

c Ensure that there is continuity in contacts between AI youth/student groups and the Section. It is often suggested that youth groups are not the most suitable groups to take up cases of Action Files for long-term work. However, they should not be excluded from taking on Action Files if they show commitment and continuity. How can you help to make this happen?

c Involve teachers in youth groups. In the Canadian Section (francophone), each school group has an animateur – a teacher who supervises the group and keeps in contact with the Section office.

c Share Action Files between several groups in the same area. It has been suggested that if continuity cannot be regularly found at the group level, then a structure must be created to "house"

the stability and expertise needed for effective Action File work. This structure could take the form of a coordinating body, perhaps consisting of trained youth field workers, a Section staff member and other interested volunteers. These people could then be the point of contact for the youth groups and the relevant people in the IS. They would be a key resource for assisting participating groups in developing strategies for their Action Files. Such a model would mean that there would be no need for a direct link between the IS and single youth/student groups. The Action Files would be assigned directly to the coordinating body.

c Encourage and support joint activities between local groups and youth groups, such as fundraising, public awareness, demonstrations and outreach work to other sectors.

c Consider holding regional meetings of youth and student groups to establish a network and focus on activist skills and human rights knowledge development. Such meetings can be highly motivating.

c Help improve the image of youth groups inside local groups (and vice versa): show the local groups what the young members have been doing; report their successful activities in the Section newsletter.

c Train local groups in how to deal with new members effectively. Young members joining a local group after leaving their school or college group may find themselves patronized and their experience and energy unrecognized and unused.

c Make sure there is some continuity for graduating student members as they move into the world of paid work. For example, provide them with details of their local group and continue mailings to their home address. AIUSA puts an advertisement in its end-of-year edition of the newsletter, entitled “Don’t graduate from Amnesty International”.

jCHECKLIST

WHAT YOU CAN ASK YOUTH AND STUDENTS TO DO

j Help raise awareness in the community.

j Participate in mass letter-writing, demonstrations, street theatre, lobbying, petitions, public meetings, vigils, symbolic events, etc.

j Help with building contacts with youth in the target country.

j Work with youth and student organizations in the target country.

j Become involved in crisis response activities.

j Twin with groups in other countries.

j Promote and undertake human rights education.

j Stage international dinners, serving food from countries being worked on by groups.

j Organize art competitions with a human rights theme, with the entries being displayed in a public place.

j Organize concerts or dances, to raise money, educate and have fun!
For the Children's Day Action in 1995, youth groups in countries that had ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child researched when their country had reported to the Committee, and whether its report was accurate.

In Grenoble, France, a student journal with a circulation of 4,000 devotes two pages a month to AI.

Youth-friendly materials

Sections should think about modifying their "standard" material to make it more accessible to youth groups. The Canadian Section (English-speaking), for example, creates campaign packages which are used by both local groups and youth and student groups. In addition to this, there is a specialized mailing for the youth program. If specialised mailings for youth are to be planned, then Sections could consider focusing on key months of the year, such as the start of each academic term, and offer advice, such as how to recruit and keep new members.

Scandinavian delegates to the 13th World Festival of Youth and Students in 1989 in Pyongyang, North Korea, protest at the absence of AI delegates, who were unable to attend because the North Korean authorities delayed the issuing of their visas.

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Scouting for success

The Dutch Section made a big impact in the Scouting World Jamboree, held in the Netherlands in 1995. More than 30,000 young people attended the event. One of the major themes was human rights, including a focus on the death penalty. The Dutch Section produced imaginative materials for the jamboree, in cooperation with youth coordinators in other Sections. Their aim was to get a high percentage of the scouts and visitors to the jamboree involved in AI's work on return to their own country.

In Ontario, Canada, the Teachers' Federation has subsidized an Internet account, including a certain number of free hours, for all schools. They approved a proposal for schools to receive Urgent Actions electronically.

Calling on Europe

An action was issued by the IS in October 1995 at the time the Council of Europe was running a Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism and Intolerance. The action called for youth members in European countries to contact the National Campaign Committee of the Council of Europe in their country and ask them to look at AI's report on Romania. While the scope of the Council of Europe's Campaign went beyond AI's mandate, there was some overlap offering campaigning opportunities.

It is estimated that AIUSA student groups wrote more than 480,000 letters during 1995 alone. Students at a design college approached an AI Section offering to contribute a Public Service Announcement for free, as they needed to design an announcement as part of their studies.

Friendship bracelets

To highlight the human rights violations of street children and as part of a fundraising appeal, a Section organized petitions which were sent to schools along with two friendship bracelets made

by street children in Guatemala. Students then organized extra bracelets and sold them, using the opportunity to create awareness, take action and raise funds.

OUTREACH RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Many adherents of different religious beliefs find that their faith gives them a particular motivation for human rights work. AI can provide practical ways of expressing their support for human rights. This section looks at:

- N Why religious groups are important to AI / 224
- N Why religious groups may contribute to AI's work / 225
- N Developing an outreach strategy / 225
- N Who you can approach / 226
- N Understanding different religions / 226
- N Ensuring AI's impartiality / 227
- N Outreach structures / 227
- N Checklist: What you can ask the religious community to do / 228

Ian Martin, former Secretary General of AI, with the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Emilio Castro, April 1991

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Why religious groups are important to AI

Since the formation of AI many individuals, groups and communities from all of the world's major faiths have been deeply involved in AI's work. Many of the victims on whose behalf AI has campaigned have been imprisoned for the peaceful exercise of their religious beliefs, and people of religious affiliation in other countries have been actively involved in the campaigns on these and other cases.

In many societies religious faiths are central to the values of the wider society. Religions often have a central role to play in the promotion of tolerance or intolerance, which in turn influence the rights on which AI campaigns. People in positions of religious authority may:

- N influence the opinions and actions of the religion's adherents;
- N represent that opinion;
- N help shape wider community opinion;
- N influence those in secular authority.

This was highlighted during the 1994 and 1995 UN World Conferences in Cairo (on population) and Beijing (on women), where official representatives of the Roman Catholic Church and Muslim bodies had a strong influence over certain governments in debates on issues of relevance to AI.

Outreach to different religions and their organizations is important for many other reasons.

N Many of the world's religions have established international networks that provide channels for contact and dialogue between people of different societies. People travel and work in different places, hold conferences and meetings that bring people together and provide opportunities for pursuing human rights issues. In some cases this may include passing on information to AI about human rights violations.

N Religious bodies often establish means of communications, including journals, newsletters and radio and television channels. These provide opportunities for getting AI's message across and persuading people to act for human rights and to join AI. Examples you might like to take up are:

M diocesan newsletters in the Christian churches, which reach a large number of people. Find out how to get an introductory article about AI into such publications;

M if there is a religious correspondent on your local radio station, see if you could have a "spot" highlighting a recent campaigning activity by AI.

N Many religions in different societies play a key role in the provision of education, which may or may not incorporate a human rights education component. Education has the potential of promoting toleration and the values of human rights. In this way religion has an important role in preventing human rights violations. Religious affiliated schools have significant practical involvement in some AI Sections.

Why religious groups may contribute to AI's work

Belief in the sanctity of human life is reflected in many religious traditions. Issues of justice and peace are also at the heart of some traditions. Many religions have organizations that strive at a grassroots level for civil, political, economic and social rights within communities.

Some religions have a practical, social component. They therefore welcome involvement and work with AI on behalf of people of all faiths who are victims of human rights abuses.

Developing an outreach strategy

The questions below, not all of which need be addressed, may help you determine an outreach strategy:

gQUESTIONS

g What are the important religious organizations in your society?

g What is the relationship between these religious organizations or leaders and the government or state?

g What is the role of religious organizations or leaders in shaping public opinion or the opinion or position of specific sectors of society?

g What religious media exist in your society?

g What international links do these religious organizations/ leaders have?

g What is the involvement of religion in the educational system?

g Does the campaign/country strategy or other information suggest that particular religious organizations or leaders in the target country may be able to influence the human rights situation of concern to AI?

g Are there connections between the religious communities or leaders in your country and those in the target country?

g Does the country/campaign strategy suggest that action from a particular religious leader or organization in your country may carry some weight with the government in the target country?

g Are religious NGOs in your country employing people working in the target country or which have a particular interest in the target country (for instance, Roman Catholic organizations in Europe working in Indonesia/East Timor)? If so, could you organize sharing of information or joint meetings with them? What potential do they have to act on AI's concerns?

g Is there willingness among religious groups in your country to campaign on behalf of their fellow-believers and others in the target country? Do you know of any visits planned by religious leaders that could be useful to campaigning?

g Are religious people the victims of repression in the target country on which you are campaigning? If so, could this provide an opportunity for outreach to members of that religious community in other countries to raise the profile of AI's work?

g Would appeals from religious communities in your country give the campaign a more diverse image and help to convince the target country that AI's concerns are not based on any single cultural or religious perspective?

g Do you know of a major meeting of a religious organization during the course of an AI campaign at which it may be possible to encourage some discussion or a statement on human rights concerns?

Who you can approach

Depending on the campaign/action, you may be trying to mobilize some or all of the following in your religious outreach work:

N officials, leaders and members or followers of various religious faiths at the national and local levels;

N national and local churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, gurdwaras and other worship centres;

N national and local publications of the various religious faiths;
 N academic institutions, individual scholars and experts in theology;
 N human rights groups or advocates among the various religious faiths;
 national religious organizations.

Understanding different religions

N Make sure that you learn some background information about the structure and basic tenets of the religious body you are planning to approach.

N Make sure you know something of the attitudes to human rights, peace and justice issues in the religious group you are approaching.

N Ensure that the information you provide is balanced. If you are approaching, for example, a Sikh community for the first time, take cases of Sikhs who have been victims of human rights violations. However, one of the aims of religious outreach is to involve religious groups in campaigning against human rights violations in general, not just against one sector of the population. It is therefore advisable that at your first meeting you give a broad overview of AI's work on people of all faiths or none.

N Find out about the major festivals of the faith and be sensitive about asking people to take action around these dates.

Ensuring AI's impartiality

The following questions may help you avoid misrepresenting AI's position:*

g QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

g Is AI affiliated to any particular religious tradition?

No. AI members include believers from many different faiths. The movement takes no position on any religion, nor does it present its appeals to governments in terms of the teachings of any religious tradition.

g Do the principles of human rights which are inherent in AI's mandate originate from particular religious traditions?

No. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), on which AI is based, has been affirmed by governments of all political ideologies and religious affiliations. The UDHR reflects the values shared by many different faiths, traditions and cultures.

g How do some governments connect human rights violations with religious teachings?

Some governments justify human rights violations – for example, the use of the death penalty – by referring to particular interpretations of religious teachings. However, each of the major faiths includes certain teachings that some people regard as the basis for their opposition to human rights violations, including the death penalty. This means that a member of any faith can, on the basis of the teachings of that faith, be a member of AI. Because AI does not make religious arguments in its appeals, it does not quote these teachings.

g During AI meetings, is it appropriate for a group to include prayers or other forms of religious expression?

No. The principle of inclusiveness of all people who support the AI mandate must be respected. It would therefore be inappropriate for a group to include prayers during an AI meeting. Those

members who are interested in sharing religious expression can do so outside the context of a formal AI meeting.

g In AI meetings at which there are guests who are members of religious communities, how do we allow for the religious expression of these communities?

Working together effectively with people of diverse cultures necessitates respecting and to some degree understanding those cultures. It must be clear to the co-organizers of meetings that AI is not a religious or political organization. However, there should be a certain freedom for the guests to present their perspective in a way which is true to their interpretation of their own traditions. At the same time it needs to be clear that any religious expression belongs to the invited guest, not to AI.

g Can AI provide speakers in religious services?

Yes, provided that AI's principles of independence and impartiality and the fact that AI is not a religious organization are made clear during the presentation.

g Can religious arguments be used in AI letter-writing?

No. Arguments used in letters in the name of AI should be based on international human rights agreements and the country's own constitution. It is unwise to confuse the picture by quoting religious arguments.

Outreach structures

There are a variety of structures formed in different sections with regards to religious outreach. The primary aim of forming an outreach structure should not be to take up only the cases of human rights violations against people with the same identity. If this is the case, the structure can end up as a network searching for cases within a narrow subject area and ignoring other cases.

jCHECKLIST

What you can ask the religious community to do

j Introduce specific cases into their regular activities, such as in their acts of worship, perhaps by inviting AI members to speak at these services.

j Feature concerns/cases in national or local publications produced by their community asking for supporting action.

j Issue a statement or send an open or private letter addressed to the target government, or to others in the target country or to the home government, condemning the violations of human rights and urging them to take concrete steps.

j Encourage others to take action to protect human rights.

j Contact their co-religionists in the target country to foster discussion and to support the human rights community there.

j Raise funds for human rights work, make a donation to AI.

f

Outreach to religious organizations needs to be done with sensitivity. In some cases it is controversial within AI's membership; in other cases it can simply be impractical or unsafe.

AI is a secular organization. This is an affront to many in different religious faiths. Laws and practices that violate human rights have sometimes been justified by reference to different religious texts and by particular religious leaders and followers. In campaigning against these practices it is important that AI is never seen as being for or against any religion. It is best to argue against the violations that result from religious laws by referring to the universal values enshrined and agreed in the UDHR.

Nein Pagoda in Myanmar, with Buddhist monks in the foreground. Pagodas were often the meeting place of demonstrators during 1988 protests against one-party rule.

Meeting the Cardinal

During AI's 1994 campaign on Colombia the Australian Section learned that a Roman Catholic delegation would shortly be attending an international meeting at the Vatican at which the Cardinal from Colombia would also be present. The strategy had identified the Roman Catholic Church as having an important role to play in supporting the legitimacy of human rights activism. Following AI's approach, these concerns were raised directly by the Australian delegation with the Colombian Cardinal.

Candle Day

In Australia the involvement of many Roman Catholic schools has been central to the success of AI's most important annual fundraising event, "Candle Day". Each year thousands of school children take to the streets to sell badges for AI, raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for human rights work.

Teachers often help to promote AI, and local AI groups provide speakers. Some of the Roman Catholic religious orders advertise for volunteers to help out in the AI offices.

International standards on freedom of religion

N UN Declaration on the Elimination

of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 36/55 on 25 November 1981

N European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Article 9

N International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 18

N Universal Declaration on Human Rights, Article 18

f

People who are active in a religious community may be interested in human rights issues but have too many commitments already to become actively involved with AI. Be sensitive about this. During your first contact, do not ask too much. Giving a talk at a regular meeting or worship event may be the most practical way of making contact with members of the faith.

Religious groups and congregations might have links with other outreach sectors. Here, a Roman Catholic priest says mass for the safety of the work force

during a strike occupation in a warehouse in Guatemala, 1984.

* The Canadian Section (English-speaking) has produced a very helpful set of guidelines, *Guidelines for Religious Activities and Outreach in AICS (ES)*, from which this series of questions is taken.

f

Be aware that people in the group you are approaching may have personal experience of human rights violations of the sort you are describing. The Baha'i community, for example, have been severely persecuted in Iran and Iraq because of their religious faith. This may mean they are particularly open to AI's campaigning. It may also mean that they do not want to be involved for security and personal reasons.

OUTREACH THE MEDICAL SECTOR

Health professionals are often concerned about human rights issues and many human rights violations have a direct bearing on medical ethics and practice. This section looks at:

- N Why the medical sector is important to AI / 230
- N Why health professionals might be interested in AI's work / 230
- N Outreach structures / 230
- N Setting up a health professionals' network / 231
- N Support received by network groups / 231
- N Checklist: What you can ask health professionals to do / 233

The Irish Section stages an anti-death penalty demonstration during a visit to Ireland by US President Bill Clinton. Many health professionals are involved in campaigning work against the death penalty and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

© ai

Why the medical sector is important to AI

There are a multitude of reasons why outreach to health professionals is important to AI's campaigning. Many of the human rights violations that fall within AI's mandate have a health perspective. Often, there is a cross-over between the ethics of the medical sector and human rights standards. Health professionals are usually influential members of society – both at home and in target countries. In most countries they have national associations to represent them, which are usually part of international medical associations.

Why health professionals might be interested in AI's work

Among the reasons why health professionals might help AI's campaigning are:

N Health professionals, particularly physicians, are involved in administering the death penalty in some countries. In others, they supervise punitive mutilation and corporal punishment. In some, physicians have been implicated in certifying fitness for torture and even in applying torture.

N Prisoners are often held in cruel, inhuman or degrading conditions without adequate access to medical care. They are also the victim of a variety of breaches of medical ethics, such as lack of confidentiality, disregard for the need for informed consent and lack of respect for personal autonomy.

N Health professionals are themselves not immune to human rights violations. As prominent members of their communities, often with political views that they express peacefully, they frequently find themselves the victims of abuses. Medical neutrality is often violated in situations of conflict. Health professionals fulfilling their humanitarian obligations with impartiality find themselves targeted by one or both sides to a dispute.

Outreach structures

The most common model in AI Sections for outreach to the medical sector is a health professionals' group. Such groups consist of doctors, dentists, nurses, physiotherapists, psychologists, medical students and others who work together within the AI mandate to oppose violations of human rights. Currently, the AI health professionals network has groups in more than 30 countries.

The advantages of such groups are:

N Health professionals have a special understanding of the health implications of human rights violations. Many of them want to join a group that works on human rights from the health perspective.

N Within a professional environment, a health professional with a concern for human rights may feel isolated and uncertain about the way to act on that concern. A network group provides contact with other interested health professionals who are already working for human rights.

N The voices of health professionals carry special credibility when it comes to the medical side of human rights. AI needs that credibility to campaign against violations.

N Health professionals provide expertise within the AI movement. The contacts generated by a network group, for instance, may enable treatment to be arranged for a released prisoner who has been tortured.

N Members of AI network groups are in a unique position to educate the health professions about human rights.

There are also several reasons why a health professional would want to be part of an AI health professionals network group:

M The support and information provided by AI enable health professionals to focus their efforts where they are most needed, so that they maximize the impact of the time they devote to human rights.

M Network groups provide contact with colleagues who share human rights concerns and they allow health professionals to speak with a collective voice when individual voices may not be heard.

Setting up a health professionals' network

Identify other health professionals who are enthusiastic and interested in working in a network group. Once active, a group will probably find it easier to make contact with other health professionals who want to work for human rights.

Choose a coordinator – a member who is prepared to act as a central organizer for the group and who will do secretarial tasks. The coordinator will be the point of contact with the AI Section and with the medical office at the IS. Information coming from the medical office to the coordinator forms the basis of much of the group's activity.

There is no blueprint. Some groups are very large and organized on a national basis. Others are local and all the members know each other. In several countries there are local branches that fit into a national network.

Some groups meet regularly, anything between once a month and once a year. Other groups never meet, communicating by letter, phone, fax and e-mail.

The internal working arrangements of each group are decided by its members in conjunction with the AI Section. There may be a single coordinator or a steering committee. Functions within the group are allocated in various ways. These arrangements will depend on the local realities faced by the Section and group.

A network group may start off with three people who meet face-to-face and a fourth member 200 kilometres away who stays in contact by letter and telephone. Five years later it might consist of three sub-groups with a central organizing committee that is elected annually. Network groups change as they grow and conditions change.

Different conditions demand different styles. What really matters is for each group to work out the best way to work effectively on the issues that matter to it.

Support received by network groups

N Medical office. The medical office at the IS provides information and support to AI health professional network groups worldwide.

N Medical Actions. Prompt access to reliable information is the life-blood of effective human rights work. The medical office provides a steady flow of information on health-related human rights violations in the form of Medical Actions, which are sent to the coordinators of AI network groups around the world. They are then passed on to the individual group members. Medical Actions raise the alarm over specific cases of refusal of medical care to prisoners, of health professionals who have suffered human rights violations, and of wider issues of medical ethics in the context of human rights. They give detailed information and suggest campaigning strategies to be used by network groups, including letter-writing appeals, that have been planned to maximize the impact of AI's protest. Medical Actions provide the foundation for much of the human rights work performed by network groups.

N Campaigns. Network groups contribute to general AI country campaigns by exposing the health aspects of human rights violations in the country or of the issue in question. They can also conduct outreach to other members of the medical profession domestically, where called for in national strategies.

N Newsletter. The medical office publishes a newsletter which is sent to all groups and other interested health professionals and institutions. The newsletter contains information about the activities of the AI health professionals network, as well as articles of human rights interest from the general and medical press. It also carries notices of forthcoming relevant meetings and publications.

N Other publications. Other publications are produced by the medical office in response to perceived needs in health-related human rights. Recent publications include a bibliography of human rights literature, an international survey of rehabilitation centres for victims of human rights violations, and a compendium of the major international ethical codes and declarations relevant to health professionals.

N General support network. The medical office provides advice to network groups on other matters that they may take up, such as planning meetings on human rights for health professionals. When the entire network is campaigning on a health-related human rights theme, the medical office provides support in the form of planning, information resources and coordination.

N AI Sections. Network groups coordinate their work with the AI Section in their country. The Section ensures that network group activity fits in with other AI work and helps network groups maximize their impact. The Section offers practical advice and supplies the full range of reports and policy documents produced by the IS. In addition, it may help groups with administrative facilities, such as office space, telephone, fax and photocopiers.

N Network groups. Contacts with other AI health professionals network groups may be a valuable source of support in terms of advice and experience.

jCHECKLIST

What you can ask health professionals to do

j Send letters

Letters can be politically neutral appeals to governments, prison officials, police and national associations, or letters of support to prisoners themselves.

Letters sent by medical networks carry extra weight when the subject of an appeal is a fellow health professional or a person deprived of medical care, or when the writers protest against a human rights violation that is also a breach of medical ethics. The Medical Actions sent out by the medical office at the IS identify specific cases and give the addresses to which appeals should be sent for maximum effect. Much of the most effective work done by AI health professionals network groups is achieved by this simple means.

j Arrange for publicity – in medical journals, through mailings to doctors, through displaying AI posters and leaflets in waiting rooms, etc.

j Approach national associations – ask them to take positions and raise particular cases and issues with the home government, other governments and professional counterparts in other countries.

j Publish a letter or article

These can be about a case featured in a Medical Action for publication in the general or medical press.

j Make a medical ethics presentation

Such presentations should have a human rights theme and could be made at a professional meeting.

j Conduct a survey

Carry out a survey of awareness of a human rights issue, such as the death penalty, among professional colleagues, and use the results to campaign for greater human rights education.

j Contact the IS

If a medical professional is travelling professionally to a meeting or to work in a country where human rights violations are happening, ask them to contact the IS to see if there is anything it can do.

j Organize a petition

This could be done on the case of a professional colleague in detention or under threat.

j Join a delegation

Offer to join an AI delegation to an embassy when there is a medical component to AI's concerns.

j Circulate a newsletter

This could be distributed to network group members and to medical libraries and professional bodies.

j Investigate medical treatment

Seek information in your country about possibilities for medical treatment for victims of human rights violations.

j Educate professional colleagues

Ask them to offer their services to organizations that care for victims of human rights violations.

j Urge your government to contribute to the UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture

j Monitor the press

Watch out for important press articles on human rights and send a copy to your Section or the IS.

j Film shows

Organize a screening of a film highlighting medical human rights concerns, such as the AI video "Doctors and Torture".

j Volunteer

Volunteer your professional services to refugee organizations working with victims of human rights violations.

j Raise medical human rights issues

Raise such issues at the general meeting of your national association and seek resolutions in favour of the protection of human rights.

j Organize a human rights group within your national professional association.

j Sponsor a human rights speaker at a public meeting.

j Share material

Share medical human rights campaigning material with other AI network groups.

j Inform the IS

Inform the medical office at the IS of issues on which you think the network should be campaigning.

j Collect information

Collect information and campaign consistently on a medical human rights issue, such as physician participation in corporal punishment.

j Raise funds

Organize a fundraising day at your workplace.

The Pakistan Section began as a group of doctors, before spreading out and attracting a broader membership from society.

In May 1995, representatives of the AI health professionals' network met in London to discuss the role of doctors, nurses and other health workers in AI's campaign for human rights. Participants attended from 21 countries.

cTIP

If medical concerns are a major issue, invite a leading health professional to launch an AI report at a press conference, or to be on the panel.

Human Rights and the Health Professions is produced at the IS for the health professionals' network

OUTREACH WORKING ON WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS

AI's desire to reach out to the women's sector is motivated by its fundamental belief in the protection and promotion of human rights of both men and women, and in the important role women perform in pursuing this aim. Outreach to women has a distinctive dimension because of AI's commitment to raise the profile of women's human rights in its work in research, campaigning, on human rights education and awareness. AI's effectiveness in winning the support of women for all AI's concerns is closely linked to how AI can realize its commitment to support the struggles of women against gender-based human rights violations and integrating their human rights issues into all aspects of our work. This section looks at:

- N Why outreach to women is important to AI / 236
- N Developing a women's outreach strategy / 237
- N Outreach in practice / 238
- N Checklist: What you can ask women's organizations to do / 240

Dr Habiba Hasan calls for the release of

Ma Thida, a prisoner of conscience from Myanmar, at an event staged during the UN Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995.

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Why outreach to women is important to AI

Half the world's population are women. They have established a myriad of organizations to defend and promote their rights, and constitute a mass worldwide force that AI must reach to be effective.

1995 signalled the beginning of the new UN Decade for Women. It marked another turning point in the lives and struggles of women all over the world as thousands of activists came to Beijing for the Fourth UN World Conference on Women.

1995 was also significant for AI's work on women's human rights. We launched an international theme campaign to highlight the issue of women's human rights in the lead up to the Beijing Conference. This was a great success in many respects, including the expansion of contacts between AI Sections and women's groups in their countries. The same year AI, through the International Council Meeting (ICM), committed itself to making women's human rights a top priority as the organization works towards the new millennium.

AI's outreach work to prominent women and women's groups and organizations is important for many reasons.

N Contact with women's organizations increases AI's awareness and sensitivity about issues relating to women's human rights.

N Many national women's organizations are part of international networks or affiliates of international bodies, providing opportunities for international action, including dialogue.

N Women's NGOs and prominent women are increasingly influential and effective in the international human rights arena.

N Many women's organizations and individuals are in a position to increase awareness of AI's concerns and generate action on them, including financial support for AI.

N Many women's organizations are a vital and influential part of local communities and national societies.

N AI needs to contact women's organizations to engage in dialogue for us to build a greater understanding of how AI can be most effective in promoting and protecting the human rights of women and men. AI could contribute to women's organization's use of the human rights language in their own work.

Outreach to the women's sector is not limited to women's organizations. Sections should identify other NGOs which although not exclusively focused on women may nevertheless have major concerns on women's issues or involve a substantial number of women members. Some of these groups may have a women's desk, women's chapter or women's committees within their organizational structure. These organizations and their women membership can be approached if they meet your Section's priorities and criteria for outreach.

It should be recognized that the documentation of and campaigning against gender-based violations against women were pioneered by women themselves in many countries. When approaching these women and women's organizations who specialize in these issues, care should be taken that we are not seen as imposing our particular knowledge and experience in human rights. What should be enhanced is the atmosphere of dialogue and learning from each other.

The following are some questions you may want to use when planning your outreach to women's groups.

Developing a women's outreach strategy

The questions below may help you develop a women's outreach strategy:

gQUESTIONS

g Who are the influential women and women's organizations in your country? What impact could they have on the work of AI in your country? Which do you believe to have important

contacts with the home government, other sectors of society or the media? Do these organizations have their own media? Are they able to mobilize large numbers of people? Do they have mailing lists of their supporters?

g What national women's media exist that may be interested in AI's concerns? What is the circulation of the different publications?

g If you have country coordination groups or country specialists in your Section, are they already in touch with women's organizations that have contacts in the target country?

g Which women's organizations have international influence? Do they have access to international structures or organizations? Do they have links or contacts with counterparts in target countries?

g Do women's organizations have the capacity to take up and act on AI's concerns or to promote human rights in general? Does the organization have an individual or a committee with specific responsibility for human rights? Can they contribute to AI's country or theme research?

g What is the best way to approach relevant individuals and organizations? Are they likely to already know or be open to AI's message? What are their current concerns and how do they relate to AI's? Are there creative ways in which AI can draw the links? Will it be necessary to invest a lot of time in making approaches?

g What is the potential for raising funds from organizations and individuals through targeted approaches?

g What resources will outreach require? Will special materials need to be prepared? Will organizations need regular contact? Will they need to receive AI materials regularly? Is AI able to dedicate these resources?

g During campaigns on specific countries, do women's organizations in the target country have an influence on AI's concerns?

g How can AI offer practical or moral support to women's NGOs campaigning against human rights violations? Are there women activists who could be invited to speak in your country as part of the campaign?

Outreach in practice

Before undertaking outreach to women, it is important to have a basic knowledge and understanding of the role and status of women in your society and the situation of women's organizations in the country.

Women's organizations in your society are likely to have many different concerns and perspectives. Being familiar with these concerns can make outreach more effective and this will mean that you can:

N more accurately ask for support that they will be able to deliver;

N know what they are most likely to want to know about AI's work;

N acknowledge the significance of their work.

Do your homework and go prepared. Educate yourself about AI's concerns on women's human rights and be up to date with AI's reports and actions on women's human rights. Many AI Sections have found during women's outreach work that indifference to AI by women's NGOs is

mainly caused by their lack of awareness about AI or their lack of understanding of the full range of women's human rights. In addition, familiarize yourself with the organizations you wish to work with. Obtain information about them from a library, attend their meetings, contact them for an informal "get together". Outreach to women's NGOs provides an excellent opportunity for dialogue on human rights and women's rights.

Avoid being defensive about "AI's narrow focus on women's human rights". AI's work to protect women from governments' violations is well known, even if limited. Remember that many women have been imprisoned, tortured, raped, abducted, made to "disappear", killed or executed by government agents because they have been campaigning on broader women's rights. AI supports and contributes to the protection and promotion of women's right to advocate equality and an end to violence against women.

Sections have found that highlighting the cases of women that AI is working on, or the way in which women are affected by the violations against which AI campaigns, has been important in establishing AI's relevance to women's concerns.

In many countries, lack of access by women to protection by law is often linked to a wider pattern of discrimination and lack of compliance with international human rights standards that affect all citizens. Such a link should be explored with the people and groups from whom you are trying to seek support. This also helps raise the interest of women to act on behalf of other victims of human rights violations.

AI can also work with women's NGOs to put women's human rights at the centre of the international human rights agenda, including the various international human rights mechanisms of the UN and other intergovernmental bodies. We can work together to:

N promote public awareness of the importance of women's rights as guaranteed in the UDHR and other international human rights treaties and standards;

N campaign for the ratification of various international human rights conventions and other standards that are relevant to the protection of women's human rights;

N lobby home governments to follow up on their commitment to the UN Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.*

N work around International Women's Day (8 March). The day is used by the international movement and by many AI Sections as an excellent opportunity to focus action on women's human rights.

Outreach to women's groups requires clear planning. It needs an assessment of women's issues and the women's movement in your country, and of your own capacity and resources. This allows you to prioritize your target contacts.

c TIPS

c Make sure where possible that cases and the human rights situation of women are properly reflected in all AI's public actions and media appearances. "I'm worried that people will think we need to have a specific campaign on women to actually talk about women" was a comment from Nalyni Mohammed, coordinator of the 1995 "Human Rights are Women's Right" campaign in Australia.

c Work with women's media. Prepare advertisements featuring women's cases and calling for support. These can be given to newspapers and magazines if they offer free placement as a form of support. Commercial magazines targeting the women's market may be interested in feature articles focused on women. These can be based on AI cases or human rights situations, women activists or girls and women involved in campaigning for AI.

c Invest time in working with youth and students. Start with the women's studies programs in universities and women's colleges and offer their libraries AI materials on women's human rights. Offer them a speaker to address classes. Explore whether you could hold some of your activities, especially during the International Women's Day action, on the campus. If you have AI

groups in these universities and colleges, ask them to involve women's clubs and associations in AI actions on women's cases.

c When featuring women as victims of human rights violations in your campaigning materials, especially in publicity and fundraising, always take into account the sensitivity in language and images that women's groups in many countries would expect from a human rights organization such as AI. Make sure your women's network or committee, if they exist, are consulted. You can also ask your contacts in the women's organizations or in the women's media for advice.

Sections should promote AI's worldwide website, which has a section on women's human rights, during campaigning and outreach activities (see Chapter 2). The UN Division for the Advancement of Women also maintains its own website where UN documents on women can be accessed. Numerous women's organizations have their own pages on the Internet where AI Sections can contribute on subjects related to women's human rights.

jCHECKLIST

what you can ask women's organizations to do

j Put AI on their mailing lists.

j Join the Urgent Action Network.

j Run articles or advertisements featuring AI's campaigns, highlighting women's cases and concerns, and asking for action.

j Support specific campaigns, such as by writing to governments in support of AI's calls.

j Display AI materials in their offices.

Act as a resource or provide expert advice to AI members to promote their own awareness on gender and human rights issues.

f

It is particularly important when approaching women's organizations that you give the impression that AI is part of a community of human rights organizations, and that we believe each member of that community is doing important and valuable human rights work.

Violence against women: how to approach the issue

Many women's organizations are working on abuses against women perpetrated by private individuals. They may be frustrated by the fact that AI does not, as an organization, act on these violations. Human rights education activities around the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and on the Beijing Platform for Action provide them and AI with the opportunity to work together to inform the community that violence both by private individuals and by government agents is a human rights violation. Such activities allow them and AI to get the word out and to show how all of us can act to stop these abuses.

cTIP

The experience of AI's outreach to women suggests that it is generally more effective and adds to AI's credibility if it is undertaken by women activists. However, do not give this work only to women in your Section. The work on women's human rights is for everyone!

Peru: a moving experience

The Peruvian Section launched the 1995 campaign on women's human rights with other women's NGOs attending. One NGO invited a Peruvian woman who had suffered human rights violations. She unexpectedly spoke about the effectiveness of AI's international campaigning on her behalf. Her account of her experience and of AI's support was very moving and touched everybody in the audience.

Pakistan: the benefits of cooperation

AI groups in Karachi collaborated with 19 major women's NGOs to launch AI's campaign on women in 1995. Their hard work and persistent dialogue with these groups eventually paid off. The 16-point joint NGO recommendations to the Pakistan Government on the Beijing Platform for Action contained most of AI's recommendations and was publicized at a joint press conference at the Karachi Press Club.

Future priority themes for the UN

Commission on the Status of Women

The following themes are useful to know if you or other NGOs are planning to go to the Commission on the Status of Women or wish to provide input into government discussions and preparations for the Commission.

1998

- N Violence against women
- N Women and armed conflict
- N Human rights of women
- N The girl child

1999

- N Women and health
- N Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- N Initiation of the comprehensive review and appraisal of the implementation of the UN Beijing Platform for Action

2000

N Comprehensive quinquennial review and appraisal of the implementation of the Platform for Action

N Emerging issues

Ghana: a groundbreaking conference

The Ghanaian Section held a groundbreaking national conference for women's NGOs in their country on the issue of female genital mutilation. It aimed to raise awareness about the abuse and to discuss how the issue can be addressed jointly by them at a national level.

“When women are denied democracy and human rights in private, their human rights in the public sphere also suffer, since what occurs in ‘private’ shapes their ability to participate fully in the public arena.”

Charlotte Bunch, *Transforming Human Rights from a Feminist Perspective in Women's Rights, Human Rights*, Routledge, 1995

Nepal: achieving a first

The Nepalese Section organized its first all-women's group in the foremost women's teachers' college in Kathmandu. From here, many AI activities on women's human rights originated and many women subsequently joined AI.

Working together, sharing resources

In March 1997 the Irish Section in association with the Irish Council of Civil Liberties and Irish women's NGOs organized a Working Conference on Women's Rights as Human Rights in Dublin. The conference was attended by 400 people from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The focus was on the follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action. After the conference, the Irish Section women's coordinator put together a list of all the conference participants – the first of its kind in Ireland. The need for such a list was raised at almost every workshop at the conference whenever issues of networking, resources, solidarity between groups and the sharing of information were addressed.

*Most of AI's recommendations on women's human rights to the UN Fourth World Conference on Women were adopted in the final draft of the Beijing Platform for Action. AI produced *Women's Rights are Human Rights: Commitments made by Governments in the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action and action advice* (AI Index: IOR 41/06/96 and 41/05/96, respectively) as a follow-up to our work in this area.

Left: May 1997, activists make a commitment to eradicate female genital mutilation at a conference organized by the Tanzanian Section.

Below: Members of AI in Cape Town, South Africa, at an International Women's Day stall in March 1996.

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See Appendix 2 for addresses of regional structures undertaking follow-up action to the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing.

OUTREACH WORKING ON CHILDREN'S HUMAN RIGHTS

To work for human rights of children today is an investment for future generations. Children suffer the full range of human rights violations. But they also have a special vulnerability, especially when they or their close relatives are targeted for abuses. The protection required by a child's particular vulnerability led AI to resolve in 1980 that it would work on the special problems concerning children falling within the mandate. This section looks at:

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 - Campaigning on themes and countries / 243
- N Identifying outreach targets / 243
- N Outreach in practice / 244
- N An integrated approach / 245
- N Fundraising / 246

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights being distributed at a human rights rally in Istanbul, Turkey

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Developing an outreach strategy

When doing outreach to groups working on children's rights, it is useful to expand your targets beyond those NGOs or individuals specializing in children's issues. Interest about children's rights is widespread in many parts of the world today.

Campaigning for children's rights always generates a high degree of participation by members and the public at large. Groups and networks focusing on children's rights also continue to grow.

At the time of writing there were more than 25 AI Sections with working groups for children or children's human rights networks. An International Working Group for Children (IWGC) has been established and met for the first time in March 1997. It is hoped that the IWGC will eventually represent each world region. It works in close partnership with the IS.

There is a vast field of work for AI to undertake, including its campaigning to oppose human rights violations against children, and promoting the full range of children's rights through human rights education and human rights awareness. Your campaigning and outreach strategy on children's human rights should give equal importance to activities to promote other aspects of children's rights, enabling your Section to develop a wide range of contacts with individuals and different types of NGOs.

The following are some suggested activities or aspects that may be considered when working with other NGOs and individuals for children's human rights.

Work on your own country

N Be familiar with the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

N Examine whether your country's legislation and mechanisms with regards to protecting the rights of children are consistent with its obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

N The Country Reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and in particular the reports from the CRC evaluating each Country Report are valuable sources of information when checking the discrepancies between government policies and the provisions of the Convention -- be it in your own country or when focusing on other countries.

N Undertake human rights education and awareness directed at children and at the different sectors of your society about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international human rights instruments and standards.

N Support the activities of other NGOs by sharing your information, expertise and materials on human rights and the international human rights standards. (Refer to AI's guidelines on cooperation with other NGOs produced by the IS.)

N Support other NGOs when lobbying your home government at the UN and other IGO bodies on issues based on a common agenda on human rights.

Campaigning on themes and countries

N Involve your outreach contacts in UAs and campaigns on themes or countries where common interests on human rights and children are highlighted.

N Ask them to publicize AI and what we do among their own constituencies by featuring our actions and publications in their magazines, journals and gatherings.

N Ask them to introduce AI to their own contacts in other organizations.

Identifying outreach targets

AI's campaigning for children's rights is likely to find allies among groups working on issues concerning refugees, development issues, welfare, education, peace, domestic violence, and modern forms of slavery (such as trafficking in people and child labour). Below are some of the key sectors with which you can link. You may be able to add more sectors depending on your local situation.

N Children's rights organizations.

There are many local, national and international NGOs working on different aspects of children's rights, as well as many NGOs which, although not exclusively focused on children, may nevertheless have major concerns on children's rights. Some of these organizations might have a children's desk or committee.

N Youth and students. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child applies to young people up to the age of 18. Those in their adolescent years are as vulnerable as young children to having their human rights violated. Young people in student campuses, religious groups and communities often identify with issues concerning other young people. When they speak on behalf of young victims of human rights, they create a distinct, powerful impact in the minds of the public and on politicians whom you want to target. They can also bring creativity, vibrancy and visibility to your work, inspiring the activist spirit in your Section.

N Teachers and academics. Such people are influential in almost all societies and are your "natural" links to schools and therefore to schoolchildren, and to students in high schools and universities. They can play an important role in teaching human rights. AI's working groups on children in some Sections are working closely with teachers and academics in the development of human rights education curricula and materials. Teachers and academics use AI's campaigning materials and stories of children who suffer violations to teach lessons of human rights to their students.

Outreach in practice

N Working with schoolchildren and teachers

One important aspect of campaigning on children's human rights is outreach to schools. This aims to create awareness among young children in your country about human rights abuses against children elsewhere.

In Denmark, human rights have been included in the school curriculum for some years and this has created a unique opportunity for the Danish Section to keep in touch with children and their teachers. Many teachers approach the Section and the specialist group on children for materials and information for their classes.

Outreach to schools sometimes produces touching and heartening scenes in AI's campaigning through the involvement of children and young people in focusing the attention of the public, including their parents, on the plight of other children.

In Ireland, during the AI Children's Week, children and youth from Dublin schools and colleges marched to the Brazilian Embassy to protest against the Candelaria massacre of street children. School children in Switzerland made flowers which were sent to children and their families who had suffered human rights violations in Brazil with a message that they were being remembered.

N Working with other sectors

Countless individuals and organizations from different sectors and backgrounds have taken part in AI's advocacy for children's rights. The initiatives of African Sections to raise awareness on the harmful effects of the genital mutilation of girl-children have produced many important results in building AI's relationships with women's and human rights NGOs in their countries.

An integrated approach

A good example of an integrated approach in tackling issues concerning children's human rights is shown by looking at why and how states can be held responsible for the harmful effects of female genital mutilation (FGM). This can be done by examining what the various international and

regional human rights standards and instruments say about the issue. Such an approach opens up a number of opportunities to involve other sectors in working with AI on children's human rights. On this particular issue, women's NGOs are involved as they are concerned with the question of FGM from the women's rights perspective. Development agencies are involved because of the need to relate to FGM as a human rights issue, which therefore becomes a development issue. Teachers and academics are involved because of the human rights education and awareness aspects of exposing the issue of FGM.

Fundraising

The popular appeal of images of children always boosts AI's work in many ways, but especially in fundraising. In Denmark, for example, the working group on children is self-financing. Sections who have been successful in this way have realized that care must be taken to ensure that fundraising activities that feature images of children as victims are done in conjunction with actual work on children's rights. The public are generally seen as critical of any organization that seeks to use images of children for fundraising without accompanying evidence that there is actual work being done on behalf of children.

"A child – every child – is another chance to get it right."

Anonymous

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When approaching NGOs working on children's rights, care should be taken that we are not seen as imposing our agenda. An atmosphere of cooperation and learning from each other should be encouraged.

Developing standards for children's human rights

The contribution so far of the broad human rights movement that includes AI in raising the standards of human rights for children is remarkable. In 1959 the UN adopted the Declaration on the Rights of the Child which, although expressing an intention to promote the rights of the child below the age of 18, was not a binding international document. Twenty years later, in 1979, Poland took the initiative and began drafting a convention that would be binding. In 1983 a coalition of 50 NGOs, including AI, began to generate proposals for the working group of experts formed by the UN following the Poland initiative. Some of these proposals found their way into the final text of the new convention, which was approved by the UN Commission on Human Rights.

Today, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most widely accepted international human rights treaty, ratified by 183 of the 185 member states of the UN (the USA has signed but not ratified and Somalia has neither signed nor ratified).

The Convention considers the child a person, and children's essential needs as rights which the adult world – individuals, families, communities and governments – are obliged to respect and fulfil. These "children's human rights" are understood to mean that children are in need of, and have the right to protection.

"Children's lives cannot be put on hold while adult society mulls over its obligations towards them."

World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 1993

"It's important to get to know and develop a sustainable working relationship with the relevant NGOs working on children. Knowing them well and what their programs are could help us in identifying the potential areas of cooperation. In Denmark, we put each other's names on our respective mailing list. We share information on initiatives and activities to profit from each other's support; to save valuable resources by avoiding overlaps and duplications; but at the same time, accepting the value of friendly competition and challenges. A couple of years ago, we participated in an exhibition directed at children (and their parents) where we shared an information stand with Save the Children and Danish Refugee Aid. We displayed and distributed materials for the public from the UNICEF which explained each article of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ones produced by the Danish Centre for Human Rights on Children's Rights and, of course, our own."

Jan Christensen, Coordinator of the Danish Section's working group on children

During the Scout's jamboree celebrations, members of the AI youth group in Mongolia organized a week of activities to highlight AI's human rights work

Campaigning on human rights and child labour: an example

The Nelson Group of the New Zealand Section (AINZ) was allocated the Action File on the case of Iqbal Masih, a young activist against child labour in Pakistan who was murdered in suspicious circumstances in May 1995. A meeting took place between them and the local branch of the Trade Aid office, an NGO which promotes products and trade with developing countries. The meeting prompted the Trade Aid office to consider issuing a public statement that their hand-made rugs were not made by child bonded labour.

Several months later, in November, a multi-sectoral coalition of several NGOs, including the national offices of the Trade Aid Office, Christian World Service, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the Asia Pacific Workers Solidarity Links, was set up. Called the "Set the Children Free Coalition", they launched the "Stop Child Slavery" campaign and invited AINZ to join in. AI's mandate did not prevent the Section from accepting the invitation to join on a limited basis.

The campaign was launched at the parliament building and AINZ issued its own information leaflets and press statement outlining AI's position and human rights concerns. The campaign received the support of Wools of New Zealand, a private company, and the New Zealand Employers' Federation, boosting AINZ' approaches to the business sector. Meanwhile, the Nelson Group continued with the campaigning, producing leaflets and posters about the case that were then distributed by the 35 Trade Aid shops throughout the country. They received considerable positive feedback and an unknown number of letters were sent by the public to the Pakistan authorities.

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In your campaigning and outreach on children's human rights, it is always important to find the link between the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, as the main instrument against which governments' performance are measured, and other international human rights instruments or standards to which governments are equally accountable.

During the 1996 campaign on Turkey, AIUK's local groups, children's rights activists, youth and students were joined by a group of international students in a colourful vigil outside the Turkish Embassy in London. Dressed in their national costumes, the students presented the Embassy with a letter from the AIUK director and a petition signed by over 43,000 people protesting against the ill-treatment and torture of Turkish children in police custody.

In August 1997, AI group 17 in Kathmandu, Nepal, organized a talk program on AI and Children's Rights. The Minister of State for Information and Communications, Rakam Chemjong, took part, together with a number of members of parliament. AI Chairman Charan Prasai said that children's rights today have been left in a shambles, and added that everyone should unite in support of the inherent rights of the child.

© AI

AI Denmark produced this sticker for use by the Danish Working Group for Children

AIUK's youth action network and Children's Human Rights Network took part in a vigil outside the Turkish Embassy in London on International Children's Day, 1996. Participants presented a petition of 43,000 signatures protesting against the ill-treatment and torture of Turkish children in police custody. Taking part were children from the Atlantic College in Wales, dressed in their national costumes (left).

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The Italian Section persuaded the national postal office to run a postmark with the text "International Children's Day – 20 November 1996 – with AI for Children's Rights".

outreach
Cooperation with
the human rights movement

The rapidly expanding worldwide human rights movement offers tremendous potential for mutually beneficial cooperation on human rights issues. This section looks at:

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- N Rationale for cooperation / 248
- N Benefits of cooperation / 249
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- N Making the decisions / 251
- N Evaluating joint activity / 252

Lyndsay McAteer (second from left), women's outreach network coordinator, represents AI New Zealand in a joint event organized with Rape Crisis National Collective and Maori women. Mayor Fran Wilde speaks at the microphone.

© ai

NGOs and the broad human rights movement

Although there is no single definition of a non-governmental organization (NGO), for the purposes of AI's work the term covers trade unions, church and school-based organizations, professional and business organizations, solidarity and pressure groups, arms control/violence monitoring groups, human rights education organizations, funding NGOs, academic institutions with a human rights focus, developmental NGOs, environmental groups, umbrella organizations and a wide range of groups and organizations covering civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. The number of these NGOs has grown tremendously over the past three decades in many parts of the world.

The term "broad human rights movement" includes people who may be in a position to improve the human rights situation but who do not belong to an organization, for example teachers, community leaders, sympathetic doctors, lawyers, judges and others.

Most human rights organizations derive their mandate from international human rights treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) which, together with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) from which they spring, make up the Bill of Human Rights.

Some of the more prominent members of the international human rights movement include:

N the International Commission of Jurists, working in the area of law, legal aid and the administration of justice;

N the International Committee of the Red Cross, national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, working in the area of armed conflict, prisoners of war and humanitarian law;

N the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, working on the right to development and economic rights;

N Oxfam International, a worldwide humanitarian organization;

N Greenpeace, working on environmental rights;

N the World Council of Churches, working on freedom of religion;

N International Pen, working on freedom of the press and freedom of expression;

N Médecins sans Frontières, working internationally in the field of health;

N Survival International, working on indigenous people's rights;

N Anti-Slavery International, working on bonded labour and modern forms of slavery;

N the International Organization of Consumers Unions, working on consumers' rights;

N Food First International Action Network, which has done pioneering work to promote and realize the right to food around the world;

N Coalition on Housing Rights and Evictions, an international organization which promotes and protects the right to housing;

N Human Rights Internet,

forum for the exchange of human rights information set up in 1976, which now communicates with more than 5,000 organizations and individuals (www.hri.ca);

N Human Rights Watch, monitoring human rights violations in the different regions of the world.

However, the vast majority of NGOs work at the national or local level.

Rationale for cooperation

AI's work with NGOs aims to strengthen civil society and empower the human rights constituency, both of which help promote the observance of the principles enshrined in the UDHR.* Intrinsic to this policy is the understanding that all human rights are universal and indivisible.

The specific rights that are the focus of AI actions are inextricably linked to other human rights. The organization recognizes that the full exercise of human rights is essential to the realization of

economic, social, cultural and political development. Although the specific rights on which AI campaigns fall within the range of civil and political rights, the organization promotes awareness of, and adherence to, all the rights embodied in the UDHR and elaborated in standards such as the ICCPR and ICESCR.

The recognition that social, economic, cultural, civil and political rights are indivisible is directly relevant to the way in which AI relates to the human rights movement. NGO coalitions, networks and umbrella structures involving multiple NGOs are likely to cover a broader range of issues than those contained in AI's mandate. Participating in networks that also work to promote the economic, social and cultural rights elaborated in the UDHR can show AI's commitment to these rights, even where this position is limited.

The need for AI to protect its impartiality and independence can be compatible with membership of a broad-based, multi-interest coalition, so long as AI can retain, and be seen to retain, its independent identity and control of the use of its name. Coordination with NGOs rather than competition is the direction for the future.

AI members have made it clear that adapting to the changing patterns of human rights violations worldwide involves greater collaboration with other organizations. By doing so AI can benefit from enormous expertise, local knowledge and ready-made networks of contacts.

In regions where NGOs are relatively new, or are struggling against a hostile environment, moral and campaigning support to NGOs by AI can boost an organization's profile and reputation locally or nationally.

Benefits of cooperation

AI is committed to strengthening, expanding and developing more systematic links with the broad human rights movement in ways that are mutually beneficial. It is trying to develop at different levels of the movement a closer and more interactive relationship with local, national, regional and international human rights NGOs through specific programs of cooperation.

AI benefits from cooperation with other organizations in many ways. Such benefits include expanded exchange of information and contacts; access to larger networks with greater impact on the public; strengthened AI campaigning and lobbying activities; and an enhanced reputation as a partner within the NGO community. NGOs benefit from their relationship with AI in that AI uses information on human rights violations provided by NGOs, leading to an expanded audience for their human rights concerns, and from training in areas of research, campaigning and organizational support.

AI's NGO Policy and Guidelines help in deciding what type and level of cooperation is feasible and will enhance AI's general effectiveness. They provide all parts of AI, including Sections, coordinating structures and the IS, with a common framework for work with the broad human rights movement.

Methods of cooperation

Some activities can be carried out in cooperation with NGOs without the need for any special considerations or authorization. These include providing on request and actively distributing AI external information, and receiving information from other organizations. Section involvement in some of the cooperative activities with NGOs, such as campaigning, development, promotional work, publicity, lobbying, co-sponsorship of conferences, relief work and fundraising, require special consideration and possibly authorization.

The scope for cooperation with NGOs includes major joint initiatives such as co-sponsoring an NGO Forum – the International NGO Forum on China during AI's 1996 campaign on China, for example – or determining a joint strategy to deal with a national crisis such as that in Rwanda. Suggested areas of cooperation are listed in the NGO Policy and Guidelines, as are channels of authorization necessary for various levels of cooperation.

AI can provide access to regional and international networks of NGOs, sources of funding, advice on international law, intergovernmental organizations and UN procedures. Cases of human rights defenders working under threat of violence can be worked on by AI members in a second country. AI can include NGOs in training sessions on subjects such as organizational development, human rights education, lobbying, how to campaign on MEC/MSP issues, use of information technology and documentation techniques. For example, an AI member participated in a week-long workshop meeting in Asia in 1994 which resulted in the publication of a handbook about human rights violations. The sharing of databases and information technology systems could be mutually advantageous too.

Joint publications may be another area of cooperation involving economies of scale, expanded audiences and enhanced credibility for the contributors. Referral of cases which fall outside AI's mandate to other NGOs is another useful area of cooperation.

Cooperation with an NGO must not result in AI being prevented from implementing its own strategy. This must be made clear in advance, otherwise AI might have to withdraw and perhaps contribute to the collapse of cooperation. AI should be consistent in its work with other NGOs. Therefore all safeguards aimed at protecting the organization's independence and impartiality should always be considered.

Generally, if a local AI group wants to participate in a coalition or umbrella group, it is advisable to consult the appropriate people in the Section, or in the absence of a Section, the relevant regional or international program in the IS.

If AI decides not to cooperate with another NGO, the reasons for this should be clearly explained where possible while keeping local sensibilities in mind. AI's decision should not be seen as a judgment of any kind on the NGO concerned. Every effort should be made to ensure that no misunderstanding arises on this point.

In each case cooperation must be evaluated and decided upon by the relevant AI decision-making bodies who are best placed to judge the benefits of cooperation on a country-by-country basis.

Making the decisions

The following questions may help you decide whether or not to collaborate with a particular NGO:

gQUESTIONS

g Will the cooperation benefit AI without damaging its impartiality and independence?

g Is there compatibility between AI's objectives and mandate and that of the organization you propose to work with?

g Is there a degree of personal trust, based on knowledge of the organization's track record, its credibility and public image?

g Will AI's association with an NGO show AI in an unbiased light?
Will the action mobilize a wider public?

g Will AI retain control over the use of its name and logo, and be seen to retain its distinct identity, its impartiality, and political and financial independence?

Evaluating joint activity

The questions below may help you evaluate any initiatives you have taken with other NGOs.*

gQUESTIONS

g Is the cooperation proving to be successful?

- g Is it an effective use of resources?
- g Are targets being reached?

- g Have there been any negative effects so far?

- g Is there a need for any redirection, or further explanation of AI's position?

- g Have opportunities for publicity and membership expansion been fully exploited?

- g Has cooperation been beneficial to both AI and the NGO partner?

- g What lessons have been learned for use in future cooperation?

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The basic guiding principle is that, where possible, AI structures should cooperate with other organizations if such cooperation increases the effectiveness of AI's work and helps strengthen the broad human rights movement. The new flexibility and emphasis on work with NGOs must, however, be considered in conjunction with the basic principles which help to protect AI's effectiveness — its independence, impartiality, integrity and credibility.

* AI's NGO Policy and Guidelines (AI Index: ORG 20/01/96), written at the request of the 1993 ICM, called for improved and expanded cooperation with NGOs.

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AI has many opportunities to stress that economic, social and cultural rights are human rights. It should seek to overcome perceptions that may exist that the human rights it campaigns on are the only human rights, as this can marginalize other human rights organizations.

Strengths of cooperation

Without information sent to AI by hundreds of national NGOs, AI's documentation and campaign work on Action Files and individual prisoner cases would be less efficient. In both country and thematic campaigns, the impact of AI's message is multiplied many times because of the crucial participation and cooperation of NGOs. In fact, AI relies heavily on cooperation from all types of NGOs in order to monitor, document and report human rights violations.

(left and right) The International NGO forum on human rights in China, August 1996. More than 70 people from 18 countries attended the conference hosted by the Philippine Section.

© ai

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If attendance at another organization's meeting is likely to compromise perceptions of AI's impartiality or independence, it should be avoided.

Raising funds from across the world

A journalist in Rwanda was attacked and left for dead for expressing his opinions. AI representatives who were in the country helped the victim and his family to receive medical treatment in Kenya. AI was later faced with high medical fees but other NGOs in Rwanda contributed to the expenses. Another international NGO issued an appeal through the International Freedom of Expression Network on the Internet to raise funds for the victim and referred those interested in the case to AI. Several thousand dollars were eventually raised for the victim.

A broad platform

The Dutch Section and 13 other Dutch NGOs, including the National Council of Churches and trade union umbrellas, are members of a "broad human rights platform". The platform reviews Dutch foreign policy in the field of human rights and discusses proposals aimed at improving the human rights performance of the government, companies, employers' organizations and members of the platform themselves. The platform meets about six times a year with the secretariat rotating between the member organizations. Its role is to facilitate coordination and exchange of information. Joint activities may be discussed in the context of the platform, but are then carried out by one or more organizations in their own name. It may issue joint statements if all its member organizations agree.

*A longer checklist can be found in Appendix B of AI's document, NGO Policy and Guidelines (AI: Index: ORG 20/01/96).

CHAPTER 11 HOME GOVERNMENT LOBBYING

Lobbying of our own governments or home government approaches is an important part of many of AI's campaigns. Lobbying is often associated with quiet words behind closed doors, but this is just one technique. It is usually necessary to use many other campaigning methods to persuade a government to listen seriously to those quiet words and to take the desired action.

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Why approaching

home governments is important

Approaching your own government is important because:

- N governments have power;
- N politicians lead as well as follow public opinion;
- N governments can influence other governments;
- N governments compose and decide the actions of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs);
- N governments can strengthen international standards and mechanisms to protect human rights;
- N governments can change legislation and practice, for example by abolishing the death penalty.

Much of AI's campaigning is about persuasion and building up the pressure for change. Letters from AI's individual members to foreign governments are one way of showing international concern. The raising of the concern by your foreign, defence or trade ministries with their counterparts in other countries is another.

The principal overall objective of AI's home government approaches is to ensure that the protection and promotion of human rights becomes a key component of international relations in a consistent, principled and effective way. This objective needs to be reflected in Section lobbying and campaigning programs.

Home government lobbying is also an essential component of AI's domestically focused campaigning for ratification of human rights treaties, for abolition of the death penalty, and for upholding the rights of asylum-seekers.

Internationally, AI's home government lobbying seeks to persuade governments to integrate human rights objectives into:

- N their relationships with other countries (bilateral relations);
- N their involvement in IGOs (multilateral relations);
- N domestic policies through action on the death penalty, human rights education, etc.

Developing a strategy

The following principal objective of a human rights campaigning program should be standard to all AI Sections: to ensure that the protection and promotion of human rights becomes a key component of the government's international relations.

This objective requires that:

- N the government adopts comprehensive human rights policies encompassing the human rights dimensions of multilateral and bilateral international relations;
- N the Section establishes a home government approaches program to ensure a minimum degree of access to government to solicit support for action on individual cases, countries and issues in concert with other governments.

What this will mean in practice in different Sections will vary considerably. Some might focus only on one or two international issues which are high priority for AI and where the government could play a useful role and where there is some chance of success.

Research and analysis

The starting point for developing strategies is research and analysis of the situation you are in, the problems you are trying to overcome, the opportunities you may be able to take advantage of, and the resources you have available.

This will need to be done in relation to specific campaigns. It also needs to be done on a more general level to provide a longer-term strategic framework for individual lobbying initiatives.

In AI's experience, the most effective approaches to government take place in an environment where it is possible to establish positive long-term relationships with individuals and institutions, even where major disagreements persist.

Governments may be willing to listen to AI for a number of reasons, but for this to happen AI must be seen as a respected and credible organization. Developing an effective home government approaches program may therefore include a review of the way AI is perceived in your society. This respect and credibility can be based on a number of factors:

- N the reflection of AI's mandate in international standards;
- N the reliability of AI's information and relevance of AI's recommendations;
- N the size and activity of AI's membership;
- N the support for AI from across the political spectrum and from many organizations;
- N the consistency and balance of AI's work on many different countries;
- N knowledge and trust of individuals involved.

In developing a long-term government approaches program, and in relation to particular issues where the government may be reluctant to take action, it will be necessary to highlight these factors through public campaigning activities as well as through behind-the-scenes lobbying.

The aim of a home government approaches strategy should be to identify:

- N the role and potential of your government to act on AI's concerns internationally and domestically;
- N the influences in your society on your government's foreign and relevant domestic policy;
- N possible directions for getting human rights more thoroughly integrated into foreign, trade and other policy;
- N how your government works (who AI should be lobbying and how).

gQUESTIONS

g Has your government signed and ratified all basic international human rights treaties? (Amnesty International Report includes most countries' ratifications.)

g Has your government made explicit policy statements and commitments in relation to international human rights issues?

g Is there parliamentary scrutiny or other official monitoring mechanisms on government policy?

g Are there any mechanisms for independent scrutiny of the links between human rights and foreign/trade/defence policy? Who is responsible for these mechanisms? Do they take submissions?

g Are there any formal mechanisms for AI and other human rights organizations to input into policy generally and in relation to specific countries or issues?

g Does your government have particular military, economic or cultural links with other countries that may give it influence? Which are these countries? What are the sources of influence within these countries?

g In which IGO bodies is your government represented? Is it represented on the UN Commission on Human Rights, UN Security Council, the World Bank, regional IGOs?

g Who should AI lobby? Which ministers, departments and interest groups are involved in the formulation of foreign (or other relevant) policy generally and in relation to specific countries or issues? Does AI have good access to these people?

g Who is responsible for foreign policy within political parties?

g Is the media influential on foreign or trade policy? Is the media more influential in relation to some countries or issues than others? Is some media more influential on policy than others? Are some journalists more influential on policy than others?

g How important to foreign policy and practice (generally and on specific countries) is public opinion expressed in opinion polls, letter-writing to particular politicians or officials, letters to the media, street protests, etc?

g Are particular individuals, such as judges, academics, writers or television personalities, likely to have greater influence on policy than other people?

g How is the ministry of foreign affairs organized? Are there specialists on particular countries and themes? Is AI in direct contact with them?

g Is there an institutional policy-making body on human rights in international relations, such as a human rights unit? Is AI in direct contact with them?

g Is there specific legislation on the human rights considerations of military or economic links, or MSP transfers?

g Is there a wider constituency of support for integrating human rights into foreign policy, such as other NGOs?

g Do staff members of the foreign affairs ministry and other relevant government departments receive human rights training?

g Does the government have, or have a commitment to developing, human rights strategies on particular countries?

Specify objectives

The overall objective of an AI lobbying program is to ensure that the protection and promotion of human rights becomes a key component of the government's international relations (and relevant domestic policy). Depending on how far this objective is from being achieved, other shorter-term objectives need to be set based on your analysis of the current situation.

These objectives could be:

N developing public debate about foreign policy and human rights;

N developing contact with elected representatives and political parties on international human rights issues;

N establishment of an annual independent review of government action on human rights;

N access to, and good working relationships with, key officials in the human rights unit of the foreign affairs ministry;

N access to and influence with the minister of foreign affairs, president and/or prime minister;

N agreement of the foreign affairs ministry to take up and act on each case that AI brings to its attention;

N taking the lead role on a particular country/human rights issue in international organizations.

Whatever your objectives, you should seek to make your progress towards achieving them measurable so that you can evaluate your strategy and work.

How to achieve the objectives

Once you are clear on what you want to achieve, the next step is to decide on the best way of achieving it.

N Who do you need to take action? The foreign minister/president, etc?

N Who or what is likely to influence them? Advice from their officials or department? Influence of party colleagues or particular committees or organizations? Independent experts? Editorial and news coverage in the media? Public pressure through letter-writing?

N Who or what might oppose the action you seek? Bureaucratic resistance to new initiatives? Particular officials/departments? Other interests, such as political, economic or military? How can you make this opposition ineffective?

N How important is timing? What are the constraints on timing? Will key individuals/bodies have to be committed to a position by a certain date? Are there deadlines for public submissions before decisions are made?

Action

The implementation of your strategy is likely to include producing the right documentation, preparing for and following up meetings, preparing membership materials, etc. Practical advice on materials, lobbying by letter and meeting follows below.

Monitoring and evaluation

When preparing strategies include ways that you can monitor your progress and evaluate the outcome of the strategy. This means making sure that the objectives set are specific and measurable.

One of the advantages of an overall lobbying program is that it makes it much more likely that you will have early or earlier notice of issues that are relevant to AI. This increases the possibility for influencing outcomes. Another is that relationships and credibility will already be established with those needing lobbying.

Campaigning methods

It is to AI's advantage if no more energy or resources are needed to get government action than a telephone call or a meeting. There are, however, a range of campaigning techniques that will be necessary and effective to use at different times.

AI will normally need to play both the "insider" role (lobbying in the corridors of power), and the "outsider" role (publicly and vocally calling on a government to change its policies and actions). Politicians and civil servants will often imply that public campaigning could be counter-productive. However, the capacity of AI to mobilize public pressure and our commitment to speak out on human rights are the basis of our credibility as lobbyists.

Even where the relationship between AI and the government is constructive and the government is committed to action on human rights, there will inevitably be occasions when they are reluctant to take the necessary action. In these circumstances a telephone call or meeting will not be enough. A range of techniques will then be necessary to push the government to do what it would prefer to avoid.

Which methods are effective will depend on the system of government and how the system works at different times.

All AI structures should get used to influencing their own government's foreign affairs, including in relation to IGOs, early on in their work. Even if a Section is not yet able to develop a structured home government lobbying program, it can still influence its government through these other campaigning techniques that have been described. Influencing your home government, including on IGO issues, should become part of the day-to-day work of all levels of the movement.

Membership action

Governments are generally responsive to pressure from the community. AI must therefore develop a strategy to involve them effectively and provide them with the resources to act.

N Organize letter-writing by AI groups and other members to targeted members of the government or elected representatives on selected issues.

N Make sure AI groups seek meetings with their elected representatives to convey concern as constituents. Target particular influential representatives and members of the government.

N Hold campaigning events such as public meetings and protests in the constituency/home area of elected representatives.

N Ensure AI groups do outreach to persuade others in the community to support AI's position. Ask religious organizations, women's organizations and others to write letters, sign a short statement, distribute petitions, etc.

N Ask AI groups to write to the media.

N Involve the membership in public protests inside or outside important government meetings.

The media

The media may offer opportunities for influencing the government. Many organizations will go to the media if unable to achieve their objectives through meetings and other methods. The media can be useful for setting agendas and redefining issues. It can also be a way of putting pressure on the government to state its position for the public record.

It is easy, however, to overrate the influence of the media. Their attention span is often short, whereas the process of government policy formulation is usually quite lengthy. Many media outlets are primarily interested in conflict as they see this as more interesting to their audience. In these circumstances issues can become oversimplified and positions stereotyped, sometimes in a way that is unhelpful to AI's cause. Having good relationships with journalists can help to overcome this problem.

Media releases, background briefings, feature articles and opinion pieces are all techniques that can be used (for further details, see Chapter 9).

Outreach

Outreach is another technique that can be useful when governments are resistant to acting on AI concerns. Identify those organizations that are most likely to influence the government and persuade them to lobby the government in support of AI's concerns.

Also identify other organizations that may share AI's concerns on issues/countries as well as broader concerns and work with them. Some AI Sections participate as observers on coordinating committees of human rights organizations. These committees can come up with common objectives and strategies in relation to different governments.

Governments will expect AI and other human rights NGOs to argue a certain line. Mobilizing women's organizations, religious groups, trade unions or business leaders can have greater impact because it indicates that the issue is of much broader concern.

Holding governments to account

Transparency and accountability are key overall objectives for AI with regard to foreign policy and human rights. In various countries AI and other human rights activists have campaigned for institutional reforms that would place human rights higher up on the government policy agenda and that would involve NGOs and the wider community more substantially in consultation and scrutiny of policy. Some examples are given below:

N Reviews of bilateral relationships

In some countries the legislature can hold public inquiries into bilateral relations with other countries. Submissions from members of the public and from interested organizations (including AI) can raise human rights, concerns about aspects of the relationship (including MSP transfers), suggest steps for raising or pursuing particular human rights issues through different parts of the bilateral relationship, etc. Such inquiries might be an objective of lobbying, provide a further opportunity for lobbying and in themselves be a way of a government raising the concerns.

N Annual reviews of human rights action

The Australian Parliament has established an annual review of human rights action by the government to which public submissions are invited and for which public hearings are held for concerned NGOs. Some governments also organize one-off reviews of foreign policy, as did the Irish Government in the mid-1990s.

N Parliamentary AI groups

Some Sections have established AI groups among members of parliament as a way of increasing AI's lobbying status and power. It was at the request of such a group in the Australian Federal Parliament that the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs committed itself to act on every UA issued by AI. Inquiries from the AI parliamentary group are often able to get a quicker and more substantive response than standard inquiries.

N Human rights units

In response to lobbying by AI and others, a number of governments have established human rights units within their foreign affairs departments. The role of these units varies but might be:

M to provide advice to foreign ministers on human rights issues and to recommend action on particular countries/issues;

M to provide human rights training and information to diplomatic staff and other foreign affairs personnel;

M to ask diplomats to raise cases or issues and take other action;

M to review and report on a country's human rights situation and to advise on strategies for improvement;

M to advise on the reform and strengthening of international human rights mechanisms.

Apart from specific initiatives, the establishment of such a unit can be an effective strategy for trying to institutionalize human rights within a government bureaucracy -- and of creating an internal lobby for human rights action. In this way longer-term policy may be partly protected from the vicissitudes of political change. Human rights work can also be seen as beneficial to the professional status of individual foreign affairs staff. However, it can also lead to the compartmentalization of human rights into one unit of a department where it may be isolated and ineffectual in influencing broader change.

Practicalities of lobbying

The process of informing and persuading those with power or influence to act to protect and promote human rights involves a number of techniques. You may decide you need to use membership action, the influence of third parties and media publicity, or you might simply have a chat with the foreign minister over a cup of coffee. In the long-term, success also depends on:

N Quality: this involves the use of reliable information, proof of arguments, and realistic proposals for solving the problem.

N Treatment: This means staying open and friendly, keeping emotions low, fulfilling promises, and providing some lasting service.

Ingredients of successful lobbying

- M Clear focus of effort
- M Clear and achievable objectives
- M Credibility of the organization
- M Credible and reliable information and message
- M Access to target groups
- M Current information
- M Subject expertise
- M Professional presentation
- M Resources
- M Timing

Selecting the issues

Whether lobbying is focused on an important event such as the UN Commission on Human Rights or on longer-term objectives, AI is likely to have many more human rights concerns than it is able to raise at one meeting or over a period of time. To be effective it is necessary to choose a small number of issues and focus effort on them. The following criteria can help this selection process:

N IS documents list the main concerns which we can raise with our home government and for particular meetings should list priority countries (these circulars also indicate which Sections in particular should lobby their governments).

N Is your home government in a position to influence human rights situations in other countries and actions by IGOs?

N The long-term lobbying strategy of your Section and the need for consistency and balance. For example, it is advisable not to allow one single, perhaps controversial issue to dominate.

N The Section's expertise. You will probably be more effective if you concentrate on countries/themes on which you have expertise within the Section or through helpful contacts.

Letters

In general, individual letters are not usually a very effective way of lobbying. However, they can open up a dialogue or supplement other lobbying.

N Structure of letter: state what you basically want, try to win them over to your objective, show them how to achieve it, and point out the benefit to them of doing so.

N Information: find out the addressee's exact name, title and how to address them. Refer to their position of influence.

N Make the letter personal: use full names, tell them who you are and sign letters by hand.

N Keep it short: use short sentences and include no more details than necessary.

N Make it inviting to the eye: use an attractive lay out, left-aligned rather than justified, and no more than five lines a paragraph.

N Explain: be careful not to assume knowledge -- use clear language.

N Give lists: summarize to five items using bullet points to attract the eye.

N Use polite tone: offensive remarks will send the letter into the rubbish bin.

N Keep them reading: refer to their assumed interest, address possible fears or reservations and use positive language.

N Ask for activity: appeal to their readiness to help, give recommendations, tell them what you see as the next "step" and announce more information/telephone calls/visits.

N Copy to superior: this might increase the chance of a response.

Telephone contacts

N First contact: announce by letter your planned telephone call, explore name/setting/situation of target person.

N Secretaries: make friends with them, remember their name, ask them for help.

N Prepare yourself: draw up an outline of intended call -- the points you want to make -- your maximum and minimum goals, the intended flow of conversation, possible objections and how to overcome them, and have supporting material to hand if you need it.

N Get their attention: you will have 45 seconds to catch their interest – tell them who you are, engage them by asking questions, design your message accordingly, be open and enthusiastic about what you want.

N Take notes: write down the decisions, useful information for improving your tactics next time, and the best calling hours.

N Talk in warm and polite tones: create a pleasant atmosphere.

N Be positive: do not use negative formulations, making it easier to say “yes” than “no”.

N With difficult contacts: start with a recommendation from someone they know, ask why they are not interested, ask if they know someone who would be.

N Close with some agreement: summarize what they will do, what you will do and the next steps.

N Afterwards: send a letter of thanks and confirmation of outcomes.

Lobbying through meetings

Holding a meeting is one of the central activities of all types of lobbying. A typical meeting with home government representatives lasts no more than one hour. To make this meeting effective, you need to:

M prepare thoroughly before the meeting;

M make sure your goals are clear throughout the meeting;

M not raise too many issues – know the one or two most important messages you want to convey, especially if you have a short meeting;

M take appropriate actions to follow up the meeting.

N Preparing for meetings:

The secret of a good meeting is careful preparation, thinking about what the "worst case scenario" is and how to deal with it, and rehearsal.

jCHECKLIST

PLANNING A MEETING

j Who is responsible for preparing the meeting?

Name this person.

j Find out about the people you are going to meet.

Have they met AI before? On what issue? What was the outcome? Are they AI members? Does an AI member know any of the people personally? If there has already been a meeting, who was there? Read the notes of the meeting. What roles do the people you are meeting have and what is the scope of their authority? What action can they take? Is there anything in their background or do they have any particular interests that may be relevant? If the person is a politician, then obtain his/her political biography. Has he/she been engaged in any special campaigns/actions? Does he/she have contact with other organizations? Has he/she ever spoken publicly about human rights, about refugees and asylum? Has he/she contacts with foreign countries?

j Plan the meeting

What is the meeting for? Is it an introductory meeting with a new minister? The letter asking the person for a meeting should include concrete items you want to discuss and a preferred date. Provide any necessary supporting documents. Set up an AI delegation: Section director, chairperson, member of a co-group?

j Choose a delegation and assign roles

In lobbying it is usually important for AI's delegation to consist of at least two, but not usually more than three members. This allows for:

M notes to be taken for a subsequent formal record and confirmation of outcomes;

M a number of different issues to be raised by the different participants and different expertise to be brought to bear;

M difficult situations to be handled with greater confidence.

It may be, for example, that a senior staff member/volunteer and a country specialist attend the meeting so that there is expertise on AI generally as well as on the specific country/issue. The roles for different delegation members include:

M delegation leader, who introduces the other members of the delegation, acts as chair, outlines proposed structure of talk, acts as general overall spokesperson and sums up at the end of the meeting;

M specialist member, who addresses AI's specific concerns and desired actions;

M AI member, who can talk about AI's position more generally (important to do at the beginning in first meetings) and take notes.

j Prepare the meeting

Be clear on what the objective of the meeting is and what action outcomes you want. Set up detailed list of themes for the meeting and distribute it to the delegation. The delegation should meet before the meeting and prepare together (who says what, who introduces AI generally, who speaks about the concerns, etc). Clarify what documentation you will need to take and to leave with them. Rehearse the meeting. This can help to refine arguments, clarify delegates' roles and help to anticipate questions or problems that may arise.

The effective meeting:

Assuming that you have been able to arrange a meeting at the right time with the right person, the effectiveness of your lobbying depends on presenting your case effectively. To do so, you need to consider both the materials and documentation you use and the way you run the meeting.

jCHECKLIST

EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

j Have a clear, achievable goal.

j Decide who is going to say what.

- j Plan for different kinds of responses.
- j Dress appropriately: showing knowledge of dress codes increases trust.
- j Sit comfortably, be relaxed.
- j Maintain eye contact if appropriate.
- j Keep a positive atmosphere: listen actively and show interest in and understanding of their point of view.
- j State your case precisely.
- j Make your request for help explicit.
- j Keep the discussion on track: summarize progress, dare to interrupt and let yourself be interrupted.
- j Deal confidently with questions.
- j Check what you have agreed before leaving.

Documentation:

Decide the length/detail of materials versus the likelihood of them being read. Decide the best time to send materials. If you send them too far in advance, they will be forgotten, but if they arrive too close to the meeting, there will be no time to study them. Do not assume that anything will be read in advance. Bring a second copy (or sufficient copies) of everything to the meeting.

jCHECKLIST

AFTER THE MEETING

- j Who is responsible for action after the meeting? Name a person.
- j Send a letter thanking the person for the meeting, mentioning the promises he/she made.
- j Make a written report of the meeting for your AI records. Distribute the report to everyone within AI who may be interested.
- j Give feedback to the IS.
- j After a while, call the person again and ask if they have kept their promises.

Structures for lobbying

Most Sections will not make a big distinction between lobbying their own government about domestic issues, about bilateral country issues, or issues in the context of IGO work. Indeed, it is important that there is a good overall coordination of lobbying and integration with campaigning. Within the IS, most lobbying requests will come from the regional programs with regard to specific countries or from the Legal and International Organizations Program (LIOP) in relation to IGO work. The Campaigning and Crisis Response (CCR) program is responsible for the overall coordination of our action calendar and takes the lead with regard to theme campaigns, MSP

work, and work on economic relations and human rights. The Research and Mandate Program (RMP) takes the lead on refugee work.

LIOP is the principal contact point for IGO coordinators and others who coordinate campaigning on IGO issues. Other IS programs also lead initiatives on certain regional IGOs or themes. While IGO coordinators should guide lobbying and other campaigning on IGO issues, Section press officers and campaign coordinators will need to understand the basics of IGO work and work very closely with IGO coordinators. Country coordinators and specialist networks, such as lawyers' groups, should learn about IGO work and be able to lead IGO campaigning in their area of expertise.

At the Section level there are almost as many structural models as there are structures. The outline below is intended to provide only a guide to the functions of such a home government approaches program and the resources it might need in order to function.

Creating a lobbying working group:

- M One or two people at the start.
- M Identify core roles.
- M Identify what administrative support you need.
- M Identify what training is needed.
- M Identify outside resources and expertise.
- M Work with the IS to identify suitable actions (do not try to do everything at first).
- M Ensure regular feedback from IS to Sections and from Sections to IS.

Bilateral action on human rights by governments

Diplomatic protocol, inertia and established practice can restrict the willingness of governments and their officials to take action on behalf of the human rights of individual citizens in other states. In practice these constraints can and have been broken down by political will, individual initiative and imagination. Lobbying and other campaigning by AI can help to provide all these.

Below is a list of some of the things that AI knows governments have done in relation to international action on human rights. You may want to refer to some of these when meeting your government.

Urgent Actions

In response to lobbying, the foreign affairs ministry of at least one government has given a commitment to act on each UA issued by AI. In countries where an embassy exists, embassy staff are requested to make inquiries and make concerns known to the government concerned. Where no embassy exists, other diplomatic channels are used. Any information learned is passed back to the foreign affairs ministry, which then feeds this information back to AI.

Meeting local human rights NGOs and activists

Governments can signal their commitment to human rights by meeting local human rights organizations and activists. This should only be encouraged if there is no risk that it would put the activists in danger. These meetings can be held at the homes or offices of these NGOs/activists or at the embassy.

Formally inviting human rights NGOs and activists to attend official receptions or dinners at the embassy can:

- N help to build the legitimacy of human rights activism;
- N offer some protection to those at risk by demonstrating the international interest in them;
- N ensure that the embassy staff are kept informed about human rights developments, trends and opinions in the country.

Attending meetings and other NGO events

Diplomatic staff can attend meetings and other events to show an interest in the work of human rights NGOs. In some circumstances it can also act as a deterrent against physical attacks or harassment of activists.

Making diplomats responsible

Lobbying can seek to make sure that human rights work is integrated as one responsibility of the work of diplomats. This may mean:

N receiving a briefing from AI and other human rights NGOs before leaving the country to take up a post;

N reporting back to the home government on human rights developments and violations;

N advising on strategies to improve respect for human rights;

N knowing what action is likely to be most effective in individual cases, for example whether particular government ministers are responsible and how they may be influenced;

N dedicating specific embassy staff to human rights.

Special visitors programs

Some governments have a special visitors program where international visitors are invited to the country as the personal (official) guest of the foreign minister. Visitors on these programs can include human rights activists from different countries.

A formal program for such a visit may include meetings with other government officials and human rights organizations that may be in a position to offer material, moral or other forms of support.

Media work associated with these visits may help to increase media and community understanding and action on the human rights situation in the visitor's home country. Such visits can help to give activists an international stature that provides a degree of safety.

Practical and material support

Some governments provide funding or other material support for human rights organizations or bodies in other countries. As a matter of policy AI does not identify specific individuals or organizations that it believes should receive support, but it does lobby home governments to have a human rights strategy that includes the strengthening of human rights movements in other countries.

Aid consortiums

AI lobbies governments to raise human rights issues in the course of discussions on development or economic assistance between provider and receiver governments. Some governments have used their position as a provider of aid or assistance as a lever for human rights change by imposing particular human rights conditions, or simply suspending aid until elections are held, for example.

Legislation on MSP transfers

AI has pressed governments to pass legislation to control military, security and police (MSP) transfers to try and ensure that these transfers do not contribute to human rights violations. The most effective legislation:

N applies to government transfers as well as those of private companies;

N enforces transparency -- such as documentation allowing for independent scrutiny of transfers.

Bilateral representations

In formal diplomatic channels direct government-to-government concerns are made through respective foreign affairs ministries.

Concerns are expressed either through the ambassador in the target country seeking a meeting with the government, or through the foreign minister requesting a meeting with the ambassador stationed in her/his country. According to diplomatic protocol, the latter is normally only done where there is an issue of serious concern in the relationship.

In particularly serious cases, governments can recall their ambassadors temporarily -- and suspend diplomatic relations.

Increasingly, bilateral relationships exist through a range of different government departments or ministries, including trade, culture and defence. These contacts also provide important opportunities for representations to be made.

Effective action

Lobbying home governments to support AI's recommendations is one of the most effective ways AI can generate effective action on behalf of victims of human rights violations.

AI

home government

target government

prisoner of conscience released

f

Send the right messenger to reach the right target with the right message.

Universal lobbying

Lobbying by smaller Sections, very often with less influential governments, is as important as AI's lobbying by larger Sections.

N It is damaging both to AI's mission and to the wider human rights movement if only a few governments are vocal and active on human rights.

N In many international governmental forums, including the UN General Assembly, each state has one vote.

N Small countries often take or support selected key initiatives which they might take on as "their" issue.

N Small states often have at least temporary powers, such as when they host major conferences or chair intergovernmental organizations.

cTIP

In governmental systems where representatives are elected by, and accountable to, constituents or a geographical electorate, action from AI members in these areas is likely to be most effective.

Creating a lobbying strategy

The Situation

Where are we now?

Evaluation

What were
the results?

Objectives

What should
happen?

Actions

Make it happen!

Strategy

How?

Plans

What should be done?

Why have a lobbying strategy?

N It allows best use of limited resources.

N It gives coherence to our work and ensures consistency and impartiality.

N It enables us to identify successes and mistakes.

N It improves our ability to respond flexibly.

Why governments might act on human rights

In preparing a lobbying strategy it can be useful to consider why your government might be willing to act on human rights. The reasons might include the following:

- N personal commitment of particular ministers or officials;
- N the government takes formal commitments to international agreements seriously;
- N government self-interest, as a good human rights record might promote economic or other advancement;
- N the government is sensitive to its international image and wants to be seen as a good citizen of the global community;
- N there are opportunities for playing a role in international organizations;
- N there is pride in national values which accord with international human rights values.

f

It is usually harder to overturn a position that people have committed themselves to than to influence the original decision.

Reviewing objectives

Lobbying, as with other campaigning, operates within certain parameters, such as a government's trade, foreign or regional security policy. Sometimes, AI or others may be able to change these parameters through campaigning. On other occasions, AI will not be able to. In these circumstances AI must review its lobbying objectives to ensure they are realistic given the parameters – or be clear on the reasons for proceeding if they are unrealistic.

"AI representatives could tell many stories of freak events, chance meetings or casual remarks over lunch that had as much impact as a carefully planned lobbying action."

Helena Cook, former director of LIOP at the IS

IGO work is campaigning work. IGO work is not mysterious. Like much of AI's work it aims to change the rhetoric, policies and actions of states. What distinguishes it is that it targets states as members of IGOs. Like other campaigning, IGO work uses a range of techniques to influence governments including grass-roots public campaigning, mass letter writing and media work. The additional layer is the home government lobbying work Sections do and the advocacy work the IS does directly at IGO fora.

A sample strategy objective: abolishing the death penalty

SCENARIO 1

Who do you need to convince to take action? The Constitutional Court.

Who or what is likely to convince them? Legal arguments connected to provisions of the constitution and international standards. Individual judges, lawyers' organizations, particular politicians, international concern/pressure.

Who or what are the people/factors that might oppose the action you seek? Police association, some judges, some politicians, media/public opinion.

Timing? The Constitutional Court has outlined a process for accepting submissions from experts and NGOs by a certain date.

Possible strategy: Provide a submission including arguments using international standards. Identify key judges, politicians and lawyers' organizations and persuade them to make private or public representations to the Constitutional Court. Seek action from judges and lawyers internationally. Arrange for supportive editorial comment if public opinion becomes hostile. If the

police's position is likely to become a threat, try and identify serving or retired high-ranking officers to put the abolitionist argument.

SCENARIO 2

Who do you need to convince to take action? Parliament (a majority of members).

Who or what is likely to convince them? Party policy, the issue being defined as one of individual conscience and personal responsibility, community attitudes, respected organizations, religious leaders, individual judges, lawyers' organizations, international concern/pressure.

Who or what are the people/factors or influences that might oppose the action you seek? Police Association, some judges, fear of crime, media/public opinion.

Timing? Parliament is scheduled to vote on abolition in six weeks time.

Possible strategy: Either seek commitment of political parties to abolition or for a vote based on individual conscience. Identify those members of parliament for and against and those most likely to change their mind. Focus action on those most likely to change their position. If public opinion is hostile to abolition either change this (if this is a realistic objective) or define the issue as one where public opinion should not be a deciding factor. Get individual groups to write to and meet with targeted individual members of parliament.

Making the choice

July: AI reviews and evaluates recent (March) session of Commission on Human Rights. Selects countries and issues to pursue at next session.

September: IS sends out initial indication of priority countries and themes for next session of the Commission.

October: Section discusses issues/countries with the government. Government indicates willingness to support a draft declaration that AI is supporting and its reluctance to support action on a particular country. Section gives feedback to IS.

November: IS and Section consult. IS has information that other countries are willing to support the Declaration and to push for action on a particular country. Section and IS decide whether to focus on support for Declaration or to also lobby harder to overcome government resistance to action on the particular country.

Difficult questions

Despite the expertise of your delegation and your preparations, you might be asked questions that are awkward or that you are unable to answer on the spot. The following responses may help:

"I don't know, but I can find out and let you know..."

"Yes, but..."

Change the subject: "I don't think we should be talking about what criminals deserve but about how a civilized society should treat its citizens..."

Shift the burden of proof to the questioner: "So why do you think that..."

Use your expert subject knowledge to give facts.

Appeal to common interests or a common sense of humanity.

Sections should ask themselves whether it is necessary and possible to have material, or at least a summary, translated into another language.

Active listening

Listening

concentration

understand without judgment

discover personal interest

move along without exerting pressure

Active

ask questions

give feedback to signal understanding

show any real interest and give positive support

CHAPTER 12 HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

Human rights education is increasingly seen as an important and integral part of the struggle against human rights violations. It aims to increase knowledge and understanding about fundamental rights and about the legal instruments designed to protect them. It also aims to transmit the skills needed to uphold human rights.

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AI and human rights education

AI's mandate aims to contribute to the observance throughout the world of human rights as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). In pursuance of this aim, AI promotes awareness and knowledge of, and adherence to, human rights standards in general, and actively campaigns against violations of certain civil and political rights.

AI's mainstream activities until the 1980s were mostly designed to oppose and denounce existing violations of some civil and political rights. In the past decade there has been growing awareness that the worldwide struggle against human rights violations can be strengthened if it is combined with more vigorous preventive human rights work such as human rights education (HRE) or human rights awareness (HRA).

AI defines human rights education or training as a program which provides knowledge and understanding about human rights, and which also seeks to develop attitudes and behaviour respectful of those rights. To be successful, such an educational program must be sustained over a period of time and involve interaction between two parties – trainer/trainee; teacher/pupil.

HRE includes the development of basic skills such as critical thinking, communication skills, problem-solving and negotiation, all of which are essential for effective human rights activism and participation in decision processes.

AI defines human rights awareness in terms of focusing on the dissemination of information about human rights. HRA work includes, for example, the displaying of posters, a concert such as "Human Rights Now", a radio program, or a lecture. The active participation of the audience is not required, and the event can be a one-off. This means that individual HRA events are unlikely to have a long-term impact on attitudes and behaviour.

There is a natural overlap between HRE and HRA. In some countries it may be necessary to begin with some HRA work in order to create the desired environment in which a sustainable HRE program can be developed and implemented.

A closer look at human rights education

HRE is about helping people understand the importance of human rights and providing them with the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to promote and protect them.

HRE can be regular training courses for police personnel on how to respect the rights of detainees, or on the need to report colleagues responsible for ill-treatment, or it may entail developing a curriculum and teaching materials on the UDHR for young children. Lobbying the relevant authorities to have human rights introduced in a specific training or teaching curricula is also part of the work human rights educators do.

While HRE work does not include AI's campaigning work on individual cases, HRE and other preventive work can be part of a country strategy, to enhance the local impact of AI's actions against violations of human rights and to help the development of a wider and stronger human rights movement.

AI's campaigning contributes to education for and about human rights. AI's members develop knowledge and skills in the course of everyday campaigning. Their activities educate the people they seek to mobilize in the wider community as well as those who are the targets of AI's actions.

Human rights education in practice

Educating an entire population about human rights is clearly an ambitious goal – particularly for AI or other non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

AI Sections have adopted a range of more focused approaches to increase their effectiveness. These approaches have included lobbying governments to ensure that human rights are included at all levels in the educational syllabus and sometimes working with the ministry of education or the police authorities providing advice on the contents of that curriculum. Some AI Sections have developed HRE packs which form the core of such educational programs.

For other Sections the focus of lobbying has been targeted towards IGOs or NGOs. In some societies there are national human rights bodies, again with large funds at their disposal and HRE within their mandate. The lobbying of these organizations and of governments has sought to ensure that building knowledge of human rights is one of their tasks, and one that they take seriously.

The armed forces have been another focus of domestic lobbying for targeted human rights training – partly in response to the growing number of governments deploying soldiers on international peace-keeping missions. The role and mandate of soldiers on such missions is, it has been argued, quite different from the role of a soldier sent to war.

This remains quite a new field of expertise, but one of growing importance as such deployments increase, particularly where armies with a domestic record of violating human rights serve in such missions.

Integrating human rights education in campaigning

Below are just some ideas which you might find useful. You might want to try them out or you might think of more appropriate ones for your country and AI structure.

c TIPS

c Make systematic the training of AI Section and group members on human rights issues. This will ensure that all those involved in campaigning have a sound knowledge and understanding of human rights and the mechanisms designed to protect those rights.

c When deciding Section and group action plans, ensure that HRE is an integral component. The integration of HRE work in AI enhances the work of Sections and groups.

c Coordinate with the Section and group members involved in HRE so that their work takes into account AI campaigns (they can use AI campaigning materials), and vice versa. For example, a poster produced to accompany a campaign could be made into a human rights teaching tool by sending it out with a leaflet giving suggestions on how the educator might use it in a lesson (see box above).

c Relevant sectors of society can be specially targeted in a particular campaign to make them sensitive to human rights issues, so that they can be asked to work for the introduction of human rights in specific teaching curricula.

c When relevant, appeals to governments of other countries can include the request for the introduction of teaching for and about human rights. For example, in a campaign on a country where children are victims of gross human rights violations the appeals written to the authorities can ask that those working with children receive training on children's rights and the mechanisms which protect them.

c Getting young people, and others, involved in campaigning action can be a valuable way of educating people – and can be done formally, using contacts with schools and other bodies.

Members of the Colombian Section running an information stall about human rights

Aims of a human rights education program

A human rights education program aims to enable individuals to acquire knowledge, understanding and experience of:

- N human rights concepts and the underlying values and attitudes that lead to the respect of human rights;
- N the instruments which record and protect human rights;
- N the skills, values and attitudes that uphold the same rights for all and encourage action in defence of these rights.

Aims of a human rights awareness program

A human rights awareness program aims to ensure that individuals acknowledge the existence, relevance and importance of:

- N the instruments which record and protect human rights;
- N the need to promote and protect human rights;
- N the human rights work carried out by governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Elements of a human rights education program

AI's HRE program includes:

- N lobbying for incorporation of HRE in official training and educational programs in institutions ranging from schools to universities, military and police academies and the civil service courses;
- N taking part in educational and training programs, whether organized by AI, by other organizations, or by official bodies;
- N organizing, alone or with other organizations, informal educational activities, such as street theatre, puppet shows for children, writing competitions for young people, films, radio and television programs;
- N supporting and facilitating the work of human rights educators inside and outside AI, mainly through participation in human rights education regional and national networks.

A campaigning poster as an educational tool

1992 was the anniversary of the arrival of Europeans in what came to be known as the Americas. Many indigenous organizations from the Americas region took this opportunity to teach people about the richness of their cultures. One of the many materials produced was a large poster which was distributed throughout the region in large numbers.

One side of the poster showed a beautifully illustrated map of the region. Next to each country an image described an aspect of the local indigenous population's culture. The poster was very colourful and attractive.

The other side of the poster showed ideas about how an educator could use it, and an explanation of what each picture represented. In one corner there was a short list of reference books which the educator could probably find in a library if s/he wanted more information on the subject.

The poster was laminated to help it survive wear and tear in the classroom, and was large enough to be easily read. It was sent to organizations that work on human rights issues, HRE, adult education, teachers' unions, etc, and was widely used as an HRE tool for campaigners in the region.

If you need advice the HRE Team at the IS will be more than happy to discuss any ideas with you and help in whatever way possible. You may also want to read Amnesty International's Human Rights Education Policy (AI Index: POL 32/03/93) and Amnesty International's International

Human Rights Education Strategy (AI Index: POL 32/02/96). But always remember to share your plans with the HRE group in your AI structure.

CHAPTER 13 EVALUATION

Campaigners and those who assist them want to know whether their efforts are actually having the intended impact. If not, they want to know whether there are different things they might try that could be more effective. Evaluation (and the related activity, monitoring) is a tool that all campaigners use to improve the effectiveness of their campaigning. It is a way of learning from and building on experience in order to do things better in the future.

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“Who shall stand guard to the guards themselves?”
Juvenal, 60-130 AD, Roman satirist

The importance of evaluation

The time spent on evaluation should not be seen as lost to campaigning, but rather as time used to enhance the impact of future work. Useful and practical evaluation can be done with relatively small amounts of time and other resources, and does not require specialist expertise.

Sometimes it is desirable to use an expert outsider, but evaluation done by campaigners themselves should be an essential and integral part of campaigning.

Evaluation simply means collecting information and using it to judge the merit or worth of something. The judgment might be about whether an activity was “un/successful” or “in/effective”; it might also include an assessment of the reasons for success or failure, of changes that might improve the effectiveness of the activity, or of additional or alternative activities.

The term “monitoring” is generally used to refer to the regular and systematic collection of information about what is happening. This might be the extent of media coverage, the number of people writing letters on behalf of a prisoner of conscience and the responses being received, or the number of requests for specific publications.

Some people also use the term “monitoring” to describe the process of using the information to assess how well things are going, and to make decisions about whether changes are needed. In this sense, monitoring is the same kind of activity as evaluation.

To avoid confusion, this chapter uses “monitoring” to refer only to the regular and systematic collection of information that describes “what is”. Evaluation refers to the use of information to assess whether there is a gap between “what is” and “what should be” or “what could be”, and if there is, how it might be closed.

The following questions may help you decide when to evaluate your campaigning, what to evaluate and how to do the evaluation.

gQUESTIONS

g Why do you want to evaluate the campaigning and who wants to use the evaluation?
Is it to inform the membership about what has been achieved or to help the campaign organizers improve the quality of the work, or both?

g What do you want to evaluate?
Is it just the impact or changes that the campaigning has had, or the campaigning methods as well?

g Was it the right strategy?

g When do you need the results of the evaluation?
Is there, for example, a planning meeting scheduled that needs the information to make decisions about future activity?

g What resources are available or needed for the evaluation?
How much time and money should you devote to it?

g What information is needed and how will it be collected?
What is the best you can get with the resources you have available?

g What does the information tell you about how well you are doing and what changes might be needed in your campaigning methods?

g What are the most effective ways of telling the relevant people of the results?
Is it in a newsletter, at a meeting or in a written report?

Why do you want to evaluate?

You need to be clear about “why” you want to evaluate your campaigning, and the related issue of “for whose benefit”, in order to decide such things as “what aspects” will be evaluated, and when and how the results will be reported.

The most important reason for evaluating is to improve future campaigning techniques. The main “audience” for such evaluation should be the campaigners themselves. Campaigners need to know what worked well and why in order to build upon their strengths. They need to know what did not work well and why in order to take steps to overcome weaknesses.

Another reason for evaluation is to inform AI members and others about the results of the activity which they have assisted. They contribute time and perhaps other resources to the campaigning and are entitled to know what has been achieved. If campaigners do not keep them informed, the members and others may not be willing to help in the future.

A third possible reason is “accountability” – to report on activities to the management committee or the annual general meeting of members.

An evaluation may have more than one purpose. In this case each purpose should be considered in determining what will be covered, the timetable, presentation and other aspects.

What do you want to evaluate?

There are two types of issues that could be the focus of monitoring/evaluation:

N Outcomes: has anything changed as a result of your campaigning? What impact have you had?

N Methods: what things did you do in order to bring about the changes? How well did they work?

Evaluation of outcomes

Some evaluations are restricted to gathering and assessing information about whether changes have taken place. The most important changes that evaluation should examine are those indicated by the objectives in the plan, i.e. the intended changes. An evaluation might also note unintended effects that may be important to future campaigning. There might be unintended positive effects (for example, you found a valuable new ally who might cooperate with you in the future) or negative ones (for example, you offended someone you might have wanted as an ally).

Evaluation of methods

Evaluation should also look at the campaigning methods, even if it is clear that the objectives were successfully achieved. “Methods” is used here in the widest sense and includes strategies, techniques, resources (people, money, etc.), and how the work was organized, managed and implemented. Only by understanding what worked well and what did not, and the reasons for success or failure, can monitoring/evaluation help you to build on strengths and find remedies for weaknesses.

Choosing what to evaluate

There is often not enough time, money or interest to evaluate thoroughly every aspect of campaigning. You have to make choices about what you will cover, and should do so on the basis of two criteria:

N What is most useful to you and other people for whose benefit you are doing the evaluation? What issues are of greatest importance or interest to them? If the campaign had a number of objectives and a variety of methods, were some more important than others?

N What is practical, taking into account the limited resources and the deadline for using the information?

Timing

Evaluation has to be useful to justify the resources expended on it, and timeliness is an important element of usefulness. Sometimes, the results of evaluation are needed by a specific time or date that cannot readily be altered. This may have significant implications for what is evaluated and the methods used to collect and assess the information. For example, if the deadline is relatively short, you may have to restrict the number of outcomes that you will try to examine and the number of people you can interview.

If you consider it essential that a particular issue be thoroughly evaluated and there is no specific deadline, you should set the deadline on the basis of the length of time required to do the research adequately.

Resources

Only one resource is absolutely essential for evaluation: time. One or more people have to collect information, people may have to spend time providing the information, the information needs to be assessed, and the results considered by those who are interested in it.

Other aspects may require money for things such as postage and printing.

There is no formula for determining how much time and money you should spend on evaluation. If you have some flexibility, then the “budget” should reflect the answers to these questions:

g How useful would it be to have the information that evaluation could provide? Will it help you to improve the quality of a technique that is critical in future campaigning?

g How much time/money will it cost to collect and analyse the information that is required to produce useful evaluation?

Can you do useful evaluation with no money and little time? Yes! Lack of money and time are problems that confront people in the IS and Sections with paid staff as well as groups whose members are all volunteers.

What information is required?

The information you need is determined by the focus of the evaluation. Is it going to look only at the changes the campaigning has brought about, or methods as well? For example:

N if the campaign objective is “to persuade the government to sign an international human rights agreement”, you will want to know what response the minister gave when AI representatives met her or him, and, if the government had announced its policy on the agreement, what it is. Can you find out why -- was it the public pressure, the quality of the presentation, etc?

N if you want to evaluate the usefulness of campaigning materials, you will want to know what the people to whom you provided the materials thought of them. Did they find the materials easy to understand and use? Were the materials produced and distributed in a timely manner? Did the materials persuade and enable them to take action?

The ways in which you collect the information depends on the kind of information you need as well as factors such as its accessibility, your resources and the deadline.

Some information may be readily available. For example, you can monitor coverage of your media releases by designating people to scan specific newspapers and magazines, and listen to/watch specific radio and television news programs. You can collect information about the impact of an exhibition by counting the number of people who attend and by having a visitors’ book in which they are invited to indicate their background (such as whether they are AI members) and write

comments. Important events may be documented in minutes of meetings to monitor whether or not people have done what they said they would do, on time, and if not, why not.

A big advantage of planning to evaluate when you are working out a campaign strategy is that you can identify at the beginning the information that will be needed and along the way can consider ways of collecting at least some of that information. For example, it is far more difficult to evaluate your media impact if you have not monitored it during the campaign.

Other information required for evaluation may have to be collected by means such as interviews and written questionnaires. If you are not familiar with designing and using questionnaires, try to obtain advice from someone who is experienced in these methods or from books on the subject.

There is some important information that you will not be able to collect. One reason is that it may be inaccessible. For example, governments often give vague or non-committal responses to requests for information until they think it suits their interests to announce their policy. Another reason is that the methods needed to collect the information may be too expensive and time-consuming. For instance, a common campaigning objective is “to raise public awareness” about an issue. To get direct evidence about this needs surveys before and after the campaign. Human rights campaigning organizations can rarely, if ever, afford to do this. In these circumstances, you may be able to identify and collect other information that is relevant to the issue you are evaluating. For example, in relation to the objective of raising public awareness, you may want to look at:

N the extent and quality of media coverage – using the media is one of the most common methods used by AI and other campaigning organizations on the assumption that the public reads and is influenced by “favourable” stories;

N the response of people who are not AI members – did they join AI, donate money, sign a petition or request literature? If you update membership statistics on a monthly basis, you can see whether there was an increase in the number of people who joined AI following the launch of a campaign, compared with previous months, or the same month a year earlier.

Assessment

Assessment is the process of using the information to accomplish the aims of evaluation – to answer questions such as “are we making progress?”, “are we using our resources well?”, “is there something different we should try?”

Assessments can be quite different. One kind is factual – what happened and why? Sometimes a factual assessment can be confidently made. At other times it cannot be made because we do not have the information that is needed.

In some situations it is relatively easy to claim a link between what we did and the outcome. For example, an AI speaker addressed a trade union meeting and the union then agreed to send a letter in support of an appeal for the release of a prisoner of conscience. In other situations we do not have enough information to be certain about the factors that led to the events that occurred. For example, if AI is one of a number of organizations that successfully lobbied the government to make a particular decision, it is unlikely you will be able to assess the exact contribution you made to the outcome.

A second kind of assessment is “making value judgments”, such as whether an activity was “successful” or whether results were “worthwhile”. Making a value judgment requires not only information about what happened and why, but also criteria against which “success” and “achievement” can be assessed. Success is more difficult to define where:

N Your plan does not specify targets in objectives or methods, such as “to increase public awareness”. How big an increase is a good outcome? How many signatures on a petition or number of people attending a meeting is a satisfactory result?

N Your target represents what you “hope” will happen, rather than a well-founded expectation. This is generally the case where an activity is new.

N Your target was partially achieved – you aimed to gain support from 10 trade unions and seven agreed.

Where there are no explicit success criteria, the person doing the assessment should be wary of imposing her/his values. The expectations of people involved in a campaign may differ, so it is important to state what happened (“our campaign launch was covered in three newspapers”) as well making judgments (“the coverage was good/poor”) that reflect your own expectations. If you do want to make a judgment, you should state the criteria on which it is based. For example, “the letter-writing campaign was a success – 300 people participated this year, compared to 200 last year”.

A third kind of assessment involves making recommendations about whether an activity should be continued in its current form, changed or discontinued, and whether a different activity should be initiated. Making recommendations involves making factual judgments about both the past (why did something work or fail?) and the future (how will something work?). Recommendations may be based on an assessment of the information collected for the evaluation, or on information related to other situations, such as successful campaigning techniques used by other organizations, or both. If you want to recommend something because it worked elsewhere, think carefully about the circumstances under which it worked. Are there any critical elements which are different to the situation you are evaluating, such as the resources available?

Presenting the results

How the evaluation should be presented depends on a number of factors, including:

- N who the monitoring/evaluation is for;
- N what they want it for;
- N when they want it;
- N whether a formal record is required.

For example, if an evaluation is to provide information to a large and widely dispersed group of people, you could prepare a detailed report and send it to them, or you could provide a summary in a newsletter, advising that a detailed report is also available on request.

If the evaluation is intended only for the campaign team, the most effective means of communication may be a short outline paper and an oral presentation. This would give the members the opportunity to seek clarification and elaboration, and to discuss how to use the findings.

The booklet produced by AI during the 1996 campaign for the establishment of a permanent international criminal court. The campaign was evaluated, both at the IS and by the rest of the movement.

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APPENDIX 1

useful quotations

This compilation includes inspirational quotations from prisoners on whose behalf AI has worked, listed alphabetically by country, as well as from organizations and personalities. The quotations are intended to be used individually: the compilation is not geopolitically balanced and is not intended for use as a collection. The quotations are arranged in the following order:

- N Prisoners of conscience and Urgent Action letters / 278
- N On the death penalty / 289
- N World faiths / 290
- N Media / 291
- N United States Government / 292
- N International organizations / 292
- N Performing arts / 292
- N Well-known personalities / 294

Prisoners of conscience and Urgent Action letters

Argentina

"At last, I can enjoy the immense pleasure of writing to you as a free man. Yes! I'm a free man and feel so much pleasure and excitement about being able to kiss and hug my wife, my children, my parents, brothers, sisters, family and friends, not to mention the strangers who have welcomed me with open arms. You are part of this group of human beings who have been so intimate and dear to my family... Perhaps you don't realize how much hope you gave us, how much you helped to bring relief from the horrible nightmare. From the beginning we realized we were not alone... we, the prisoners, received your help with indescribable joy.

"Thanks to you and your people we were able to get through those years in prison in dignity."

Released prisoner of conscience

"There should be no double standard [concerning human rights], because this double standard is part of the strategy of fascists and communists alike. On this point, Amnesty International has surely been the organization that has maintained an independent position with the most courage and which has withstood most of the attacks."

Jacobo Timerman, author and released prisoner of conscience

Australia

"Your correspondence of 16 September 1988 relating to the death of Edward Charles Cameron is acknowledged and your expressed concern is noted... In an endeavour to prevent further deaths in custody the Western Australian Government has been supportive of any action designed to reduce the likelihood of further deaths. Several of the recommendations of the State Interim inquiry into Aboriginal Deaths have already been approved by the Government while the others are being further examined with a view to implementation."

Letter sent to an Urgent Action participant by Ian Taylor, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, regarding the death in detention of Edward Charles Cameron, which was the subject of an Urgent Action appeal

Benin

"I am free. I have just been freed this evening. I assure you that I owe my freedom to you. I survived thanks to you. It is true that one must never despair in life. This victory is completely yours, you who have been untiring workers. From this moment a new page in my life has been turned."

Released prisoner of conscience, in a letter to AI

Chile

"With deep gratitude and emotion we have received your message of solidarity regarding the threats against 81 of our fellow actors, directors and writers. The truth is that we lack the words to express what your support has meant to us. You have touched us profoundly, and have given us strength at a time of growing alarm. There is no doubt that you have also protected us..."

"We have received thousands of messages... It has truly been a flood of affection and support. We wish we could thank you all personally, but we simply lack the hands to do so... we are in good spirits. Our trust is that 'Commando 135 – Pacifying Action Trizano' will fall short of the sufficient viciousness to carry out its threats. But, in any case, we will not leave our country. Here we stay, with your support and that of our people."

Edgardo Bruna, President of SIDARTE (Association of Radio, Television, Theatre, and Movie Artists, Writers, and Technical Workers), in response to letters received from members of the Urgent Action network concerning death threats in Chile

"On behalf of the Chilean Nursing College, we would like to salute you for your support of solidarity expressed in the report of violation of human rights in our country and the demand which it makes upon the authorities with respect to their responsibility to cease these atrocities.

"Your letters and actions of solidarity invigorate our cause and motivate us as citizens not to give up our commitment to freedom and emancipation."

Letter to a member of the Urgent Action network from members of the Chilean Nursing College: Patricia Grau Mascayano, Secretary General; Patricia Talloni Valdes, National President; and Hortensia Arizabio Valle, a member of the International Commission

"With this greeting we wish to share the joy of freedom and express our gratitude for all the support and solidarity you gave us. Thank you!"

Dr and Mrs Ramiro Olivares, in a January 1988 card to AI members who had worked for the release of prisoner of conscience Dr Olivares

Cuba

"While nothing could prevent my serving the 20-year sentence in its entirety, there is no doubt in my mind that your endeavours were a determining factor in the preservation of my life during my imprisonment."

Huber Matos, released prisoner of conscience

"After the rigorous investigations it always conducts, Amnesty International adopted me as a prisoner of conscience. They named several groups in West Germany, Holland, and Sweden to work toward achieving my freedom. I learned about the activities of the members of Amnesty International through my clandestine correspondence with [my wife] Martha. Being adopted by Amnesty International constituted a kind of protection. I believe this greatly contributed to the fact that the Cuban authorities did not physically do away with me in some violent manner. The government knew that all the world now knew that I existed, and not only that but exactly what my situation was. [Amnesty International] Group 110 in Sweden worked unceasingly for me, and in great part it is due to their extraordinary efforts that I was finally released."

Armando Valladares, released prisoner of conscience, in his book, *Against All Hope*

Czech Republic

"When I say that I have read your letter from 3 August with deep feelings of emotion and gratitude, it is an understatement. In fact, I am totally at a loss what words to choose in order to express my thanks to you all...for what you did for me and for other political prisoners in Czechoslovakia. And it is not because I am writing in a foreign language; even in Czech I would be able to use only an old-fashioned phrase: 'Thank you from the bottom of my heart'."

A former prisoner of conscience

"I would like to use this opportunity to thank all the people of good will who in the last years had helped me to survive. Only my wife was allowed to send letters to me in prison, but she managed to convey the astonishing solidarity and help large numbers of people were showing to my family. There were letters from Germany, from Austria, from New Zealand, from Iceland... When I was released I could read those letters, and I was overwhelmed by the magnitude and intensity of this mainly moral help. From Norway, for instance, my family had received woollen blankets made by schoolchildren. Approximately fifty children from one school took part, each of them had knitted one woollen square, then they put them together... and now under those blankets my two young daughters sleep.

"It is extremely difficult for me to speak about those things, but I am happy to have this opportunity to let the people outside know that what they did was of immense importance to me

and my family. I have got the feeling that the world is not as bad after all, if it is still possible that people are able to do for others – and for somebody they don't even know – what they did for me."
Ivan Jirous, poet and released prisoner of conscience

"For a number of months, I was totally cut off from the outside world, and the interrogators did their best to persuade me that nobody would give a damn if I were to disappear. And now this letter [written by an AI member from California, USA, and smuggled into his prison hospital room]... the overwhelming sensation I had been experiencing was a joyful feeling that somebody whom I didn't know at all, at least one person in the distant wide world thought that I did exist... It was immensely important for us to know that we were not forgotten, that people who mostly did not even know us, cared. And again – I do not underestimate the more tangible results of such appeals: months later, some of my friends were released before the end of their prison terms. Nobody can be sure under which circumstances, but I am convinced that one of the reasons was the fact that their cases were being talked and written about abroad, that they had not simply vanished without trace."

Karel Kyncl, released prisoner of conscience

"I was amazed at the great number of letters sent to heads of states, parliaments, influential politicians, and other people who are in a position to intercede effectively on our behalf... I would like to express to you my sincere thanks for everything Amnesty International has done for me. Without this work I would have had to stay in prison for many months. By this action, Amnesty International saved my life and gave me the chance of a new and truly human existence."

Dr Jan Mlynarik, historian and released prisoner

Dominican Republic

"When the first 200 letters came, the guards gave me back my clothes. Then the next 200 came, and the prison director came to see me. When the next pile of letters arrived, the director got in touch with his superior. The letters kept coming and coming: three thousand of them. The president was informed. The letters still kept arriving, and the president called the prison and told them to let me go.

"After I was released, the president called me to his office. He said: 'How is it that a trade union leader like you has so many friends from all over the world?' He showed me an enormous box full of letters he had received and, when we parted, he gave them to me."

Julio de Pena Valdez, released prisoner of conscience

Germany

"My friend informed me that your organization took care of me. Because of this I feel the deep desire to thank you very much for everything your organization has done for me. I understand there exist groups all over the world who adopt particular cases and who take measures to get people free... It is my intention, after having managed to start into my new life, to actively participate in AI's work."

Dr Martin Schmitt, former prisoner of conscience from former East Germany, in a letter to AI

El Salvador

"My friend, what you wrote has lightened my heart, because I understand that I am not alone, as I feel, but that the solidarity of the whole world is with me, I who am just a poor, insignificant woman destroyed by a common enemy. I never imagined that anyone would cast a glance in my direction but this fills me with the will to go on."

Teacher and released prisoner, in a letter to the AI group that had worked on her behalf

"...if there's lots of pressure – like from Amnesty International or some foreign countries – we might pass them on to a judge. But if there's no pressure, then they're dead."

Former torturer

Ethiopia

"One remarkable thing was the smuggling of the Amnesty International document into the cell by one of the soldiers who felt sympathetic to us... That really was great hope... A friend of mine came and told me, 'I was going to commit suicide. It was only this paper that saved my life'."

Released prisoner of conscience

Greece

"Accept my thanks for the sensitivity, attention and justice you have shown till now on the subject of conscientious objection to military service.

"I thank you all, as well as the people of Europe who, during my 10 months' imprisonment, filled my heart with courage with their words of love and their protest against the lengthy, unjust, ignominious imprisonments in Greece.

"In particular I would like to thank Amnesty International for its decisive work and the members of the European Parliament who support me with their statements, letters and presence at my trials."

Detained prisoner of conscience

"We received your letter of 10 December 1987 and we thank you very much for your interest and concern about our son Alexandros Albanidis, who is in prison for his religious beliefs. I would like to let you know that we have another son who is also in prison. He went there six months after Alexandros; his name is Christos Albanidis and he is also in the agricultural prison of Cassandras. You understand this is a very sad situation for parents to have two children and both of them to be in jail not because they robbed somebody, not because they stole from somebody, not because they killed somebody, or not because they committed any other crime, but because their conscience does not permit them to take a gun or a weapon and to kill their fellow human beings...

"Please accept my friendly greetings and we thank you from the deepest of our hearts."

Sotirios Albanidis, father of a prisoner of conscience, in a letter to an AI member

"This year the letters from Amnesty International and your sweet words made my heart feel joyful. You gave me courage to carry on our struggle. The world today needs all of us to achieve true Peace and human rights and liberty... From my small cell, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

Michelis Maragakis, prisoner of conscience, in a letter to an AI member

Guatemala

"I take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for your indispensable help which enabled me to regain my liberty and life and to bring to an end the unjust treatment which I received from the authorities of my country. I do this on my own behalf and on behalf of my family. I feel sure that my release would not have come about without your help.

"I would like to express my thanks to everyone who contributed their efforts, but I have come to realize, in these days following my release, that this would be most difficult to do. If it appears reasonable to you, perhaps you can send a copy of this letter to those persons who worked with you to help me.

"I also take this opportunity to beg your pardon for not writing sooner. The days immediately following my release were hectic. Leaving Guatemala was very difficult. I thank you again for all you have done."

Released prisoner, in a letter to AI

"I would like to take this opportunity to express the profound thanks which we owe to Amnesty International for the tenacious labour you have carried out for so many years on behalf of our people. The constant reports of Amnesty International have rescued from oblivion and anonymity the right to life of so many children, old people and others who have persecuted, kidnapped, tortured and murdered by the successive military dictatorships which have imposed themselves on our people through blood and fire. These murderers have tried to wipe us off the face of the earth, to wipe us out because our love of life and our unshakeable determination to defend it is inconvenient for those who only wish to preserve their profits and privileges. Your assiduous work, your 'divine madness' have been for us a reassuring confirmation that no matter how poor or ill-treated we are, we have the right to life and to be respected, that to kill a new-born baby or an old person bowed down by the persecution of the army constitutes a capital crime that deserves the most energetic condemnation."

Leader of an Indian peasant farmers' association in Guatemala, in a letter to AI

Kenya

"All the political prisoners released in the past two years have been released as a direct result of pressure from international human rights organizations."

Gitobu Manyara, released prisoner of conscience, speaking at the Annual General Meeting of the US Section in 1992

One day Maina Wa Kinyatti was given a card which said: "Stay strong – we are fighting for you."

"Those were very powerful words. They literally saved my life", said Maina Wa Kinyatti. "Only someone in prison knows how beautiful those words can be. They gave me courage. I wanted to hold on. I didn't want to betray those people on the outside working for me."

When Maina Wa Kinyatti arrived in the USA, he immediately contacted the AI group that had worked so hard on his behalf.

"It was incredible", he said. "It was as if I had known these people personally. It proves compassion knows no politics, no colour."

Maina Wa Kinyatti, released prisoner of conscience

Liberia

"I wish to express my profound gratitude for the concern shown by you during my illegal detention from 3 December 1984 to 26 September 1985 in Liberia, West Africa. It was precisely because of this gesture coupled with the unwavering fighting spirit of my people that I am today a free man. Otherwise, I may still be held behind bars. My crime was for speaking out against the wanton abuse of human rights and the oppressive policies of my government.

"Though I was subjected to very inhumane treatment such as flogging, questioning at gunpoint, forced and hard labour, threats of elimination, etc, I was able to pull through because of the knowledge that you were expressing concerns for my release.

"Please continue such good work for there are still scores of others languishing behind bars in my country and other parts of Africa. You certainly can make a difference. For my part, I have been steeled by these experiences and henceforth remain committed to the fostering of democracy and human decency. No amount of sacrifice will make me abandon this noble objective."

Ezekiel Pajibo, released prisoner whose case was the subject of an Urgent Action appeal, in a letter to Urgent Action participants

Malaysia

"Today I took all the letters and cards you sent me in the past, re-read them, looked at them again, and it is hard to describe the feelings in my heart. The number of these letters and cards is not many. I know that from 1977 onwards you certainly sent me a large number of letters and cards, but I received only 10; I don't know how many of those you sent me were lost – these things that I regard as precious jewels.

"Of the 10 items there are five that I received in 1977 or before while I was in 'the camp'. In anticipation that they might very well be taken from me, I had arranged to keep them in a place outside the camp, and so they have been preserved. There are three you sent to my sister which I was only able to see five or six years later. The other two are those you sent me at the beginning of this year. I cannot describe my gratitude towards you; as I re-read these letters I cannot control my own emotions."

Released prisoner of conscience

Mexico

"I received your letter of 27 January which I am now replying to with great pleasure.

"On Saturday 8 February

I was called to the office of the directors of the prison so that they could give me an envelope, inside which was a message, simple but stimulating.

"I say stimulating because without knowing me and so far away, people like you are concerned about my freedom, driven only by interest in the respect for human rights.

"In your letter you say that you do and will do whatever is possible to achieve my freedom. I want to tell you that your most modest effort has incalculable value. I have commented with my companions on various occasions that the freedom of the political prisoners [of my organization] was and will be the work not only of our people and organization, but also of other forces opposed to injustice, as is the case with Amnesty International.

"I appreciate your writing to me and ask that you continue to do so, and I promise to reply. Give an affectionate greeting to all the members of your group and tell them I hope their concern for the respect for human rights will not wane."

Prisoner of conscience, in a letter to the AI group working for his release

Morocco

"You know, before I received your last letter, I was a little unhappy and I felt absent. But as soon as I received your letter, I smiled. Shy smile in the beginning, but little by little, it became a frank and happy smile, and my mood changed wonderfully. You did me such good! For us, a letter is the outside, the forbidden! It increases the hope to see, some day in the future, unknown strands, the world of our imperfect dreams, the world of the living. When I opened your letter, my eyes went through the lines while my thought, my imagination were with you. Don't hesitate to write every time possible. I was deeply moved by your letter. You send me nice, attentive letters, full of kindness and comprehension. I congratulate myself on having you as my friends."

Letter from a prisoner to the AI group working on his case

"Whatever your religions, origins, colours, cultures... you, men or women, young or older, and even so younger children, you wrote me softly your wishes, strengthening me to have and keep more and more hope. Even there are some people among you who had the touching idea to light up a small candle for me. And your action is just unforgettable... I'm so affected by its tenderness, that [I am] unable to express correctly my mind... it was just unexpected for me to receive all this testimony of friendship and love. I'm cheerfully pleased that I don't feel any loneliness now, and thanks to you, even in this [precarious] condition... I passed a wonderful time. These last days of

1987 and early 1988, and like you did, I lighted up a candle thinking of you with wishes of love, peace, and happiness. Then, once more, I'm grateful to you for the [assurance] you gave me, that there are people in the USA who are concerned of lot [about] other human beings across the [ocean], and who don't forget those who struggle for freedom, justice, and peace... these words [are an] answer to all [the] cards I received."

Mghagha Mohamed, prisoner of conscience, writing to thank AI members who had sent him cards in December 1987

Nigeria

In Nigeria, the Military State Governor of Kwara State commuted the death sentence imposed on a 17-year-old boy for armed robbery. In a statement issued on 23 February 1988, the Acting Director of Public Prosecutions said that the Governor's decision was "in response to an appeal by Amnesty International".

Pakistan

Addressed to Shahid Nadeem, imprisoned for his union work and student political activities, the letter said: "You are not alone; don't lose heart. We pray for you. If there is anything you need, don't hesitate to ask."

In spite of the intense heat at the maximum security prison in the semi-desert, Shahid Nadeem said: "Suddenly I felt as if the sweat drops all over my body were drops from a cool, comforting shower... The cell was no longer dark and suffocating."

Soon the whole prison knew about his letter from an AI local group member in San Antonio, Texas, USA. "My colleagues were overjoyed and their morale was suddenly high."

That evening the deputy-superintendent summoned him. "He was so friendly and respectful I was shocked... He explained his dilemma as a God-fearing jailer who had to obey orders and follow the rules." The head warden also began to 'behave himself'. Taking their cue the junior staff changed as well.

As Shahid Nadeem puts it now: "A woman in San Antonio had written some kind and comforting words which proved to be a bombshell for the prison authorities and significantly changed the prisoners' conditions for the better."

Shahid Nadeem, former prisoner of conscience

"When Amnesty International adopted me as a prisoner of conscience, the newspapers started talking about me, I got better treatment in prison, and I was given a proper hearing in the courts. There had been a complete blackout on my name and case. That was blasted when Amnesty International took up my case."

Mukhtar Rana, teacher and released prisoner of conscience

Panama

"Faith in your efforts and concern sustained me throughout the horrible period of my imprisonment. Without hope I think I would have died."

Released prisoner

"The Panamanian Committee for Human Rights expresses its gratitude for the great interest Amnesty International has shown in the critical situation of the Panamanian prisoners of conscience.

"We are pleased to inform you that all the persons who were unjustly arrested have been released after having received cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. There is no doubt that Amnesty International's intervention and the hundreds of letters that were sent to President Eric Arturo Delvalle and to General Manuel Antonio Noriega contributed to the freedom of the Panamanian political prisoners."

The Panamanian Committee for Human Rights, writing to AI on 27 November 1987 about the cases of 15 Panamanians which had been the subject of an Urgent Action appeal

Paraguay

"For years I was held in a tiny cell. My only human contact was with my torturers. For two and a half of those years I did not experience the glance of a human face, see a green leaf. My only company was the cockroaches and mice. The only daylight that entered my cell was through a small opening at the top of one wall. For eight months I had my hands and feet tied.

"On Christmas Eve, the door to my cell opened, and the guard tossed in a crumpled piece of paper. I moved as best I could to pick up the paper. It said simply, 'Constantino, do not be discouraged; we know you are alive.' It was signed 'Monica' and had the Amnesty International candle on it.

"Those words saved my life and my sanity. Eight months later I was set free."

Constantino Coronel, released prisoner of conscience

"I have been able to recover my human rights. I consider this to be an important victory in the worldwide movement for human rights. This was directly due to the enormous number of letters and protests that arrived from inside Paraguay and from many parts of the world... I have kept a great pile of letters and cards that I received and which the postal censorship didn't dare seize. Without doubt, Amnesty International's documents and calls for urgent action contributed to this mobilization, unprecedented in Paraguayan history... I would ask Amnesty International to pass on my personal and profound gratitude to all those people who responded to Amnesty International's appeals on my behalf... Please accept my warm gratitude and my sincere hope that the noble cause of Amnesty International may continue to achieve success."

Maria Margarita Baez de Brites, released prisoner whose case was the subject of an Urgent Action appeal

"Early this morning I was taken out of my cell for the first time in three months and taken to the station's commanding officer's quarters. There he handed me a sealed envelope; it contained a copy of your letter dated 27 July to President Stroessner in which you express your concerns about my case and a brief message at the bottom of it. This simple act, normal in a democratic country like yours, is extraordinary here and it also has a very special meaning for me since it is the first time in the past six and a half years that mail sent directly to me has reached my hands. It's not easy to explain how I felt this morning when I was handed your letter. I can't tell you how I feel 10 hours later, but of one thing I'm sure: it's good to know I'm not fighting alone and I thank the Lord, for as long as there are persons like you, this crazy world will have hope and people like me will have a chance to have justice done."

Alejandro Mella Latorre, Chilean photographer detained in Paraguay, whose case was the subject of an Urgent Action appeal

Peru

"I am writing to thank you for Amnesty International's support during my detention earlier this year in Peru. I was at the time vaguely aware of your organization's interest in my problem and since my release have had the opportunity to see the Urgent Action memo issued on August 12th and to hear directly from friends of the assistance your offices provided.

"I am most thankful to you all for your efforts in my protection... I am aware of the weight which surely carries any expression of concern from an organization as widely recognized and highly regarded as is Amnesty for its seriousness of purpose and its professionalism. I feel very fortunate indeed that my case came to your attention..."

"With many thanks for your assistance to me and with heartfelt wishes for the continuance of your help to others."

Cynthia McNamera, whose case was the subject of an Urgent Action appeal during her detention in 1988, in a letter to AI

Carlos Taype was working for the Confederation of Peasants when he was arrested on 17 March 1984, taken to the barracks of the Civil Guard in the provincial capital, Huancayo. From prison, he wrote:

"Before, we knew nothing about Amnesty International. Until we were hunted, captured, tortured, some murdered, and imprisoned, until all of our human rights were violated. We have measured with our very bodies the valuable and important role that Amnesty International plays in the defence of human rights. Apart from us, how many more have there been in my country alone? How many more in the rest of the world? Now we can understand the great task you face. Being in the worst of conditions, the very fact of learning that those who defend human rights already knew of our detentions gives us great hope. It lightens the burden to know we are not alone, that there are others, like Amnesty International, who care about us. To you we owe a great deal. Because of the intervention of Amnesty International, some people have ceased to be persecuted, others were only half tortured, others won their release from prison, and others were not killed. All of this we owe to you."

After his release on 26 January, he said:

"I owe my freedom to the poor people of my country, to Amnesty International and all your groups... to all the institutions and personalities who fight against human rights violations... to those who energetically protested against my unjust confinement to the Peruvian government and authorities, in events, meetings, marches, in newspapers, in letters to Peruvian Embassies in other countries. In this way the Peruvian Confederation of Peasants received 565 copies of protests sent to President Belaunde from 29 countries demanding my immediate release... the only way I in particular can repay you is to keep fighting for the defence of human rights for my people and the peoples of the world. If we have to give up our lives to do this, then we will do so gladly."

Carlos Taype, released prisoner of conscience

Philippines

"Greetings of Solidarity and Justice! We have received countless letters from different groups of Amnesty International all over the world, mostly concerned with the plight of Rodolfo Romano and his father-in-law, Jose Laceda.

"It has touched us deeply that all compassionately expressed sympathy to the victims and revulsion to the perpetrators of torture and cruelty. These gestures of commiseration we will remember forever. The barrage of letters you sent to our Minister of National Defence and the Acting Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces denouncing the brutalities done by their men has certainly hastened action on these cases. We are pleased to bring the good news that your efforts have borne fruit of justice: the fabricated case which was filed against Rodolfo Romano by his torturers was finally dismissed by the court."

Office of the Bishop of Sosorogon, Philippines, 1984.

Romania

"Amnesty International saved my life..."

"I found out [that I had been adopted by AI] in prison, from somebody in the next cell. I didn't see the person; my cell was dark; I was not permitted to see other persons or be seen. He asked me quietly if I was Carmen Popescu..."

"He told me 'don't be frightened, don't be discouraged. You have friends over the seas: they know about you...'"

"The message from many Romanians who know your wonderful work for prisoners of conscience around the world is to say thank you for your wonderful work."

Carmen Popescu, released prisoner of conscience, in a talk to a high-school group in California, USA

Somalia

"I believe that without Amnesty International our world would have been more of a tyrannical and unhappy place to live. Apart from the day-to-day worthy achievements, obvious for all to see and generally appreciated by all men of good will everywhere, inspiring confidence and a hopeful future in the hearts of many who have sadly lost their freedom, tasting the painfulness and the bitterness of tyranny and repression, I believe the efforts of Amnesty International create a healthy and restraining effect on many unjust governments in this world."

Released prisoner of conscience

South Africa

"It is with great pleasure to tell you that I am free at last from detention.

"How grateful are we with all the help from you and friends. May God be with you throughout your lifetime. We are grateful indeed."

Released prisoner, in a letter to the San Francisco Bay Area AI group in the USA that had worked on his behalf

"Those letters made the Minister of Police actually visit the prison, show his face. The government doesn't ever want to admit they released somebody because of the pressure. But they do, they do. They would say, 'Who are these people writing letters? Why can't they leave us alone?'"

Released prisoner of conscience

"Some of the letters reached me in the hospital where I was treated for a heart attack resulting from torture. Knowing we are not alone in our struggle strengthens the courage and determination of myself and my people. We are hopeful. We cannot afford not to be optimistic."

Released prisoner of conscience

After describing AI as a "social scourge", Transkei Security Police Chief Colonel Martin Mgceba showed prisoner Fikile Bam a large collection of telegrams and messages of concern about him from all parts of the world. Mr Bam was then released unconditionally. No charges were ever brought against him and the authorities have given no reason for his detention without trial. Mr Bam, a lawyer, expressed his thanks to AI and to all who appealed on his behalf.

"I am a black Lutheran minister in South Africa and Amnesty International just helped win back my freedom..."

"I want to express my deepest thanks to you for your generous commitment to easing the plight of literally thousands of prisoners of conscience.

"And if you ever wonder if your support of Amnesty International USA really matters, feel confident it does. Bless you..."

"I owe you and Amnesty International my life."

Dean Reverend T. Simon Farisani, released prisoner of conscience

South Korea

"Don't stop writing. Each individual can have an effect. If you give us moral support, we will do the rest."

Kim Dae Jung, opposition leader and released prisoner of conscience

"During the dismal and lonesome days, international concern and support have always encouraged us greatly... All the dictators have fantasies that they can suffocate and divide people in their own country. Under these circumstances we know that what they are afraid of most is world opinion and criticism of their tyranny. Here we can see the effective role of the Amnesty International movement encouraging the oppressed.

"Your efforts and prayers saved my life and thanks to your support I can have an opportunity to live as a human being."

Lee Shim-bom, released prisoner of conscience

"Thank you for your letter. When in prison, especially, I could not fail to forget your encouragement, which created my courage and power. Thanks to God and you, I have safely returned home from imprisonment of 54 months. Only looking at the blue sky, I have the pleasure of flying into the sky. I don't know how much I am delighted to be free. Up to now, I have treasured the pair of socks made of wool which you gave me in prison, which keep my feet as well as my heart now warm. I thank you from the bottom of my heart again."

Park Chong-suk, teacher and released prisoner of conscience, writing in November 1987 to the Dutch AI group that had worked on his behalf

Former Soviet Union

"While I was in Severodonetsk I received New Year's greetings cards from Austria, but without any sender's address. Now I understand that they came from an Austrian group of Amnesty International...

"It is difficult to imagine where I would be and in what condition I would be if it were not for your work. There were not only your letters addressed officially to the CPSU Central Committee, the Procurator General and the director of the camp, but there were also the letters which you addressed to me personally – especially a greeting card for my birthday, which touched me deeply.

"The administration subjects the prisoners to a very great moral solitude. Many efforts can be undertaken to defend [the prisoner]: demonstrations, petitions, letters to the authorities, etc... but the prisoner himself cannot know about these in the midst of rot and stench. And if by chance he does learn of this, a break in space and time is created. Everything that happens, everything that is done on his behalf happens in a completely different world, on a different level, it seems to the prisoner...

"And the guards learn ...that there is a certain V. in the zone who is receiving letters from abroad. And these guards will be a little cautious regarding me, because an ordinary citizen is suspicious about everything foreign. Because of this I will be protected from the gratuitous cruelty of this petty administration, which is characterized by aggressiveness: I won't be beaten, I won't be put in a punishment cell, etc... Of course if the higher authorities give certain orders to the guards, 'the machine' will take its course and I will be beaten anyway, put in a punishment cell and denied food. But I will have 80 per cent protection from all that. And all thanks to an envelope!"

Released prisoner of conscience, in a letter to an AI group

"When you are in confinement, you have no contact with friends, or anyone. You feel completely cut off, deprived of the outside world. Suddenly I got the letters [from Amnesty International members]. It is difficult to explain what that meant. These two letters I got gave me hope. I

understood how important this human rights support, and the defence from the West was for me, because only thanks to it did I keep my mind and my brain alive."

After he was freed, Viktor Davydov was called into the office of the KGB colonel who had first investigated his case. The official pointed to a stack of letters sitting on the desk. "I want you to write to them and tell them you are free so they stop sending these letters", he said. The letters were from AI members and had been written to the Soviet authorities, to appeal on Viktor Davydov's behalf.

"The only reason why I am not in a psychiatric hospital, why I was not arrested again, is the activity of human rights organizations and other activity in the West in defence of Soviet human rights."

Viktor Davydov, dissident

and released prisoner of conscience who had been held in a special psychiatric hospital because of his "socially dangerous acts"

"Thanks to the strong and persistent efforts of Amnesty International, I am now a free woman and my husband Ivan Kovalyov, a prisoner of conscience, is also free..."

"In September 1977

I joined the Helsinki Monitoring Group – a private group created to monitor Soviet compliance with the human rights provisions of the 1975 Helsinki Accords..."

"Because of my human rights work for the Helsinki group, I was arrested in 1980 and convicted a year later of 'anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda'..."

"During my long imprisonment, my husband and I were not permitted to see each other. For me the worst part of my confinement was the terrible isolation. My feeling of being forgotten, cut off from contact with my husband, my family and the outside world.

"Because of our human rights work, we knew of Amnesty International and hoped that they knew of our plight. And then I began to hear that Amnesty groups were working on my case and others. To know that we were not alone and not forgotten gave us a tremendous feeling of hope. When one is shut off from the rest of the world, I cannot even begin to express how very precious and powerful the gift of hope is.

"To encourage ourselves and to demonstrate solidarity, we recreated the AI universal symbol of the candle and barbed wire in our labour camp. This was easy to do because we had the candles in our camp and of course plenty of barbed wire..."

"As a former prisoner, I want to stress how very important it is to continue the work of Amnesty International. For some prisoners in Soviet camps, it is a matter of life or death. You and other Amnesty members must never give up your fight for human rights until every prisoner is released. Never underestimate your collective power.

"The very fact of being named a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International and having one's case publicized restrains the Soviet authorities – and acts as a powerful deterrent to more serious abuse.

"I know this is true from personal experience. Although other prisoners were severely beaten, I'm convinced I was not beaten only because my name and the circumstances of my imprisonment were known and vigorously publicized by Amnesty International..."

"From the bottom of my heart I want to thank you again for your commitment to the life-saving mission of Amnesty International. And I hope that your work on behalf of many other political prisoners will be just as successful as your work on behalf of my husband and me."

Tatyana Osipova, human rights activist and released prisoner of conscience, in a letter to members of AI

"I am very happy to inform you that thanks to the efforts of many people like you and your friends from your Amnesty group, I am a free man now, residing with my relatives in Canada..."

"I beg you to convey my sincere gratitude to all your friends whose persistent and unyielding pressure on the Soviet authorities played an important role in overall efforts, which finally resulted in this happy conclusion.

"Thank you all and may God bless you."

Danylo Shumuk, released prisoner of conscience, in a letter to an AI group

"I am eternally grateful that for the first time in my life I can meet the honoured members of Amnesty International. I was fully aware of Amnesty International's work even before my arrest...

"After I arrived in the camp, the news from newcomers or loved ones about the work of Amnesty International, particularly about individual cases, gave us much joy... We thought the work of Amnesty International was of supreme importance to prisoners of conscience, although due to the political realities of the USSR, we didn't always come into direct contact with the fruits of your labour. And the slanderous attacks on Amnesty International in the [Soviet] press only reaffirmed our commitment to Amnesty's goals. About a year ago when we began to see signs of amnesties for political prisoners, we were convinced this was the result of pressure from Amnesty International groups.

"Having come to know many prisoners in the Mordovian and Perm camps, I extend the greetings of many many others who truly value the work of Amnesty International. It is very difficult to survive in a labour camp if there is no one paying attention to your particular case. Your situation was much easier if you knew that there was someone out there caring for you, lobbying on your behalf."

Vytautas Skuodis, released prisoner of conscience, in a talk to a New York AI group in the USA

"I was very glad to receive your letter as not all letters from overseas friends and helpers reached me and my family. What is important is that these letters are very useful even if they don't reach us. Sometimes in the camp, the camp authorities and guards started to be especially polite to me and avoided in my presence to ill-treat other women prisoners. I guessed something had put them on their guard. Later on, just by accident, I found out that a letter from the West came for me and caused this change in behaviour. Any letter or postcard addressed to a political prisoner, their family or to official places in the USSR plays an important role in the life of a dissident and improves his position even if the letter doesn't reach his hand, so again and again I repeat, be patient and persistent in writing your letters to save these people, if you possibly get disappointed, if you see no results for your work – your writing is still productive...

"One time they weren't careful at the Post Office and I received Christmas greetings from Spain. I don't speak Spanish but this postcard I always carried in my pocket and sometimes in the severe Siberian frost this card gave me a drop of Spanish sun."

Julia Vosnesenskaya, writer, poet, and released prisoner of conscience, in a letter to AI

Sudan

"At last I can write to you from home. I am now a free man...

"I cannot find words to express my thanks to you in Amnesty International, for your solidarity, your sympathy and your struggle for my release. Without your help, without the feeling that other people in the world are defending our freedom and helping us and our people, life would have been so hard and difficult. Please convey my thanks and best wishes to your friends."

Sidgi Awad Kabbalo, released prisoner of conscience

Swaziland

"I was on the verge of total collapse and desperation before I was introduced to you, but you gave me strength and courage to go on."

Relative of a released prisoner of conscience

Taiwan

"During my four years in prison... your action and warm concern helped us to continue believing in the value of human beings with firmness even when we were in the coldest jail. I certainly have no regrets for losing freedom just because of my thoughts and ideals."

Released prisoner of conscience

"I can never forget how I was moved to tears when unexpectedly I was handed in a solitary cell a brief letter from Amnesty International."

Released prisoner

"Eleven years ago, the Taiwanese people, even privately, were not bold enough to receive former political prisoners. Now though, they dare to hold warm welcome parties – openly and publicly. There are many reasons for this change, but the painstaking efforts and the influence of Amnesty International may be one of the most important factors. Therefore, we Taiwanese have to be all the more grateful to [AI]."

Released prisoner of conscience

Thailand

"I am Mr Snan Wongsuthee. I would like to thank you for everything. I have already been released from the prison on 3 February 1988. By help of Amnesty International I have got the freedom. I would like to thank you very very much again."

Snan Wongsuthee, released prisoner whose case was the subject of an Urgent Action appeal, in a telex to AI

Tunisia

"It is with great joy that I send you my first letter in liberty, out of prison, to express my deep gratitude for the efforts made by you and your friends."

Abderraouf ben Romdhane, released prisoner of conscience, in a letter to an AI member who had corresponded with him in prison

Uganda

"I write to thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything you did for me and my baby when we were both in custody... These letters were a great consolation to me and mother... I believe these letters influenced the Uganda Government authorities when they decided to release me on 19 September 1984."

Letter to AI from a released prisoner whose case was the subject of an Urgent Action appeal

Uruguay

"I myself perhaps owe my life, and with absolute certainty I owe my freedom to the action that you took at the moment I was kidnapped in my country in November 1980. This is the reason why I have great confidence in what you can do."

Released woman prisoner whose case was the subject of an Urgent Action appeal

"It gives me the greatest of pleasure to communicate with you and establish a dialogue in writing, in which I want to express my gratitude for all the support that has been extended to my family, to my people, and to me personally. The gratitude that all the Uruguayans feel for the moral and material assistance which all of you extended during these dark years we had to face is so great that it is difficult for me to find adequate words to express this feeling. Therefore, I only will say

that I send you in these lines my most affectionate acknowledgement of your attitude, wishing that you will never need our support, but if fate should put you in circumstances requiring our help, count on it unconditionally from then and forever."

Released prisoner of conscience, in a letter to the AI group that had campaigned for his release

"You have been present during all these years with a constancy and dedication which have accompanied me in the worst moments, giving me strength and joy.

"I remember clearly the emotion I felt on returning to my cell after one of the fortnightly visits, the only time I talked to anyone, having learned about your letters. The solidarity that is expressed over oceans of distance gives strength and faith in one's solitude, and helps one confront the repressive apparatus by keeping one's human integrity and its essential values intact."

Lilian Celiberti, released prisoner of conscience, in a letter to the AI group that had worked on her behalf

"We feel very insignificant – in comparison with all the effort and 'lobbying' that you have put into helping us. As people, we feel proud to be members of the human race when we come across people like you. I don't know whether you have ever considered this, but probably the best thing you have done for us is to maintain our morale and restore our faith in human nature. I am really astonished at how much you have done, how many people, and how much time, all without my knowing anything at all... From our hearts, our profoundest thanks for everything and we hope that this letter is not the last time we have contact."

Brenda Ines Rovetta Dubinsky and Antonio Morelli, released prisoners, in a letter to an AI group

"For my mother as well as for my family, I want to tell you how important it was for me to know that outside my family and across the seas there were people whom I did not know, but who fought on my behalf and were near to me. When I read the letters that you sent me or my mother, my heart bursts with emotion as it does also when I learned of the financial help you gave my family, which was essential for them to survive.

"The most important thing is that...between us, human beings, it has been proved that borders are absurd, languages are surmountable, that distances can be overcome, because the heart is big...and people like you keep the hope of a new dawn alight."

Maria Cecilia Duffau Echevarren, released prisoner of conscience, in a letter to an AI group

Vietnam

"We could always tell when international protests were taking place... the food rations increased and the beatings were fewer. Letters from abroad were translated and passed around from cell to cell, but when the letters stopped, the dirty food and repression started again."

Released prisoner of conscience

"I have recommenced my life as a free citizen, with below-average health and several physical weaknesses – the consequences of three years of detention, deprivation and ill-treatment. I want to express my thanks, to you personally as well as to the members of your organization for all the efforts and interventions which you have made to free me. Perhaps I have to thank your interventions for my remission of two years (three years in prison, instead of the five to which I was sentenced)."

Released prisoner, in a letter to AI

Former Yugoslavia

"This letter gave me much courage. I feel like a different person. Just the thought that there is someone like this group that intervenes for human rights... It is nearly two years since my husband was locked up and no one from the government has asked me how I am living. I love my

homeland and want to be a good citizen, but we have been pushed aside without a thought. Therefore a letter such as the one from Amnesty International gives a person strength and makes you feel human again. The very fact that you have written to us means a great deal to me, and I will not forget it."

Wife of prisoner of conscience, Anto Kovacevic, prisoner of conscience, in a letter to the AI Dutch group working for Anto Kovacevic's release.

"Greetings to Amnesty International. I have come home from prison and am very, very grateful... Mainly I owe my early release to you and to your work on my case... Thank you for all your support."

Anto Kovacevic, released prisoner of conscience, in a letter to AI and the groups that had worked for his release

"My only crime was my concern for humanity... I was treated in a very brutal manner because I had the courage to demand an amnesty for prisoners of conscience in Yugoslavia. I wrote a petition and collected some signatures. Then I sent it to the Yugoslav Presidency..."

"During that time of persecution and suffering, I came to know your generous hearts, full of sympathy, full of solidarity, fraternal affection and ideal support. Your constant care for my fate and the efforts you took to publicize this...did not permit injustice to triumph. I passed 271 days in solitary confinement, often without the right to read or rest. Because of that my eyes have become weak. However for me that is all nothing in comparison with the great happiness of being able to feel authentic human solidarity and to gain, in you, such devoted friends. I pray that God enables you to feel my great gratitude and friendship. We are united by the same ideal: to do well for all people. You defend human rights, for me this is the greatest duty of every person."

Dobroslav Paraga, released prisoner of conscience, in a letter to AI

On the death penalty

"Retribution or vengeance seems difficult enough for a government to justify where adult offenders are involved and vengeance against children for their misdeeds seems quite beyond justification... The spectacle of our society seeking legal vengeance through the execution of children should not be countenanced."

American Bar Association report

"State-authorized murder is no more right than some of the heinous crimes committed by individuals."

Donald Avenson, House Speaker of the Iowa Legislature, quoted in the Des Moines Register, 25 January 1989, USA

"The death penalty has been a gross failure. Beyond its horror and incivility, it has neither protected the innocent nor deterred the wicked. The recurrent spectacle of publicly sanctioned killing has cheapened human life and dignity without the redeeming grace which comes from justice meted out swiftly, evenly, humanely."

Pat Brown, Governor of California (1959 to 1967)

The death penalty "is undeniably a murder which arithmetically cancels out the murder already committed; but it also adds a regularization of death, a public premeditation of which its future victims are informed, an organization which in itself is a source of moral suffering more terrible than death..."

Albert Camus

"The Observer opposes capital punishment, period. The statistical evidence of racism in its application is overwhelming. And anyone can be wrongly convicted of a crime – and wrongly executed for it. That is the horror of capital punishment. Nor do we think that executions either promote public regard for the value of life or deter potential murderers any more than the threat of life imprisonments would."

The Charlotte Observer

"The murder rate has always varied widely from nation to nation, presumably due to the differing cultural attitudes to violence and the availability of weapons. Nothing else could explain why the US murder rate has held steady at about 60 times the British rate, both before and after the two countries stopped executing people."

Gwynne Dyer, San Francisco Chronicle

"If you cast your eyes around the world and want to know the most infallible way to judge whether a nation is free or oppressive, all you have to know is whether that nation imposes the death penalty.

"What nations lead the world in executions? The Soviet Union and South Africa. What totalitarian or authoritarian nations have abolished the death penalty? None. What democracies impose capital punishment? With the exception of the United States, none..."

"What does this suggest?"

"In my view, it tells us that, even though liberals tend to oppose the death penalty, the most powerful argument against it is conservative in nature: The state should not have the ultimate power over any individual, no matter what.

"This is a far less sweeping, far more modest argument against the death penalty than those usually made.

"In my view, it has the virtue of being right."

Jeff Greenfield, syndicated columnist and ABC News analyst, in a column which appeared on 30 January 1989 in the Dallas Times Herald

"Injustice is still alive and well and equal opportunity is still denied black Americans even in death."

The Reverend Jesse Jackson

"As one whose husband and mother-in-law have both died the victims of murder-assassination, I stand firmly and unequivocally opposed to the death penalty for those convicted of capital offenses. An evil deed is not redeemed by an evil deed of retaliation. Justice is never advanced in the taking of a human life. Morality is never upheld by legalized murder."

Coretta Scott King

"The old law of an eye for an eye leaves the whole world blind."

Martin Luther King, Laureate of the Nobel Prize for Peace

"The death penalty is no more effective a deterrent than life imprisonment... While police and law enforcement officials are the strongest advocates of capital punishment, the evidence is overwhelming that police are no safer in communities that retain the sanction than in those that have abolished it. It also is evident that the burden of capital punishment falls upon the poor, the ignorant, and the underprivileged members of society."

US Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall

"If you can prove to me that in any state that has the death penalty that there is a reduction in (crime rate) I'd be supportive of it. But I've yet to see the death penalty in any shape, manner or form reduce the crime rate for violent crime in any state."

Governor Rudy Perpich of Minnesota, quoted in the Star Tribune of 10 December 1988

"I regard the death penalty as a savage and immoral institution that undermines the moral and legal foundations of a society. I reject the notion that the death penalty has any essential deterrent effect on potential offenders. I am convinced that the contrary is true: that savagery begets only savagery."

Dr Andrei Sakharov, released prisoner of conscience from the former Soviet Union

"It is the deed that teaches, not the name we give it. Murder and capital punishment are not opposites that cancel one another, but similars that breed their kind."

George Bernard Shaw

"Capital punishment deserves no standing in our criminal justice system.

"Most countries that presume to the description 'civilized' have long since abandoned state killing, with no increase in what previously had been capital crimes. If the death penalty were a deterrent to crime, there could be an argument for it. But it is not. It is just an unworthy act of social vengeance, and there's worse still: It may actually incite violence, serving perversely as a socially approved demonstration that killing is a legitimate way to solve a problem."

Tom Teepen, editorial page editor, Atlanta Constitution

World faiths

"He who destroys one life is as though he destroys a whole world."

The Mishna

"We believe it to be the task of the Jew to bring out great spiritual and ethical heritage to bear upon the moral problems of contemporary society. One such problem, which challenges all who seek to apply God's will in the affairs of men, is the practice of capital punishment... We believe there is no crime for which the taking of human life by society is justified, and that it is the obligation of society to evolve other methods in dealing with crime... to prevent crimes by removal of its causes, and to foster modern methods of rehabilitation of the wrongdoer in the spirit of the Jewish tradition of tshuva (repentance)."

Resolution of the 1959 Union of American Hebrew Congregations General Assembly

"I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

"To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."

Isaiah 42:6,7, the Bible (Kings James version)

"Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.

"Open thy mouth righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy."

Proverbs 31:8,9, the Bible (Kings James version)

"...in its humanitarian concern, the Holy See strives to recommend clemency, even pardon, for those condemned to death, above all when these have been condemned for political reasons, which can moreover be very changeable, tied to the personality of those in power at the moment."

His Holiness Pope John Paul II

"We can choose death for offenders. If we do, we must be prepared to kill some by mistake, others arbitrarily, and all at very high cost, without making society safer. At best, we give ourselves a false sense of security."

Howard Zehr, Mennonite Central Committee's Office of Criminal Justice

"Save those who repent before ye overpower them. For know that Allah is Forgiving."

The Qur'an

"The extermination of the root (of existence) (namely of man) is not to be countenanced; that by no means constitutes the eternal dharma. Indeed proper expiation can be made without killing."

The Mahabharata

"War, capital punishment, the taking of human life, cruelty of all kinds whether committed by the individual, the State or society, not only physical cruelty, but moral cruelty, the degradation of any human being or any class of human beings under whatever specious plea or in whatever interest... are crimes against the religion of humanity, abominable to its ethical mind, forbidden by its primary tenets, to be fought against always, in no degree to be tolerated."

Sri Aurobindo

"All men tremble at punishment. All men fear death. Likening others to oneself One should neither slay nor cause to slay. Who so, himself seeking happiness Inflicts punishment upon beings who also desire happiness He will not attain happiness hereafter."

"Hatred does not cease by hatred; hatred ceases only by love; this is the eternal law."

The Dhammapada

"Where there is Divine Knowledge there is Righteousness; where there is Falsehood there is Sin. Where there is Greed there is Death but where there is Forgiveness there is God."

The Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib

"Strictly speaking from a Mahayana Buddhist point of view, taking of life generally is prohibited and the practice of compassion an essential ingredient..."

"Deep down we must have real affection for each other, a clear recognition of our shared human status. At the same time we must openly accept all ideologies and systems as means of solving humanity's problems. No matter how strong the wind of evil may blow, the flame of truth cannot be extinguished."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet, Tenzin Gyatso

Media

"Amnesty is to be commended for its care and tenacity in documenting the 'ugly picture' of what governments are still doing to their people 40 years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Amnesty does not recognize a world broken into blocs and makes no distinctions between the human rights abuses of 'our side' and 'their side,' nor does it reduce violations to some sort of rankings whereby one country might claim justification in coming off numerically better than a rival. Rather, the reports are given straightforwardly, with a simple, implicit challenge that the government responsible clean up its act..."

"Amnesty, with its reports and with its quiet, polite, but splendidly obstinate letter-writing campaigns on behalf of individual political prisoners, is helping to move the world to a single standard of human rights. Time and again we see that ostensible support for the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights has not prevented abuses. But worldwide political pressure can be effective in pushing a nation from nominal to real support for that standard. And Amnesty has been an effective agent of that pressure."

Christian Science Monitor editorial, 5 October 1988

"The world's foremost human rights organization."

Peter Jennings, ABC News, speaking of AI

"For 25 years they have shined the light of conscience on the jailers and the torturers. Amnesty International fights for the freedom of political prisoners with cards and letters. And the amazing thing is, it works."

Ted Koppel, on a 1986 ABC News Nightline show focusing on AI

"For the world's prisoners of conscience, Amnesty International is a beacon of hope..."

"No group has worked more visibly or effectively than AI to end [human rights] abuses."

Christopher Ogden, in the cover story on AI in the international edition of Time Magazine, 17 October 1988.

United States Government

"Twenty-five years ago, British barrister Peter Benenson founded Amnesty International, an organization dedicated to investigating cases of imprisonment, torture, and execution of prisoners of conscience around the world. When it first began, Amnesty International – or AI – comprised a handful of volunteers in a small London office. Today it has more than 500,000 members, subscribers, and supporters, and 3,400 affiliates in more than 55 countries of Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

"Through the years, AI has monitored, reported, and protested abuses of prisoners' rights in virtually every country on earth, from psychiatric confinement of political dissidents in the USSR to police attacks on black demonstrators in South Africa; from tortures of civilians by government security in Zimbabwe to banishments of political opponents in Chile; from forced denationalization of ethnic Turks in Bulgaria to police mistreatment of suspected terrorist sympathizers in northern Ireland. Since it began its activity, more than half of the prisoners of conscience have eventually been freed. AI does not take credit for their release, although many have written or phoned their thanks to Amnesty members. In 1977, a full measure of appreciation was finally accorded when Amnesty International was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace.

"Amnesty International's greatest asset is its objectivity, and no country is immune from its scrutiny. It receives no funds from governments or politically-motivated interest groups, giving it a credibility enjoyed by few other organizations. Certain regimes, especially in totalitarian countries, invariably fare poorly in Amnesty's yearly reports, and top the list of human rights abusers worldwide. Some, like the Soviet Union, only publicize Amnesty reports that support their own propaganda objectives. When Amnesty's criticism focuses on their own transgressions, a few have resorted to fabricating attacks on Amnesty itself. In 1981, after an AI report described mass executions in Iran, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini accused the organization of 'collaborating with the conspiracy of superpowers to suffocate the Islamic republic.' The Ayatollah forgot about 1978 Amnesty charges of secret police tortures during the previous reign of the Shah.

"Because of Amnesty International's dedicated work, more and more people are concerned about human rights. Because of the publicity accorded Amnesty's investigations and reports, governments that violate human rights are more sensitive to international censure, and may often think twice before incarcerating, torturing or executing prisoners of conscience. Amnesty

International's symbol is a lighted candle entwined by barbed wire. After a quarter century of defending the rights of the persecuted around the world, it has become the essence of that symbol – a candle of freedom and hope in the dark face of repression.

"That was a VOA Editorial, reflecting the view of the U.S. Government."

Voice of America editorial, broadcast on 28 May 1986, the 25th anniversary of AI's founding

International organizations

"Through its activity for the defence of human worth against degrading treatment, violence and torture, Amnesty International has contributed to securing the ground for freedom, for justice, and thereby also for peace in the world."

Nobel Prize Committee, upon awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to AI

"In our day and age people should not have to suffer for their conscience, their beliefs, or their opinions... In drawing attention to this issue, Amnesty International has once again rendered a valuable service to the entire international community. Your previous campaigns against torture, the death penalty, arbitrary and summary executions, and now against political imprisonments have served to focus world opinion on these problems in a very special way."

Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, former Secretary-General of the United Nations

"Amnesty International is making effectively good the rule that 'eternal vigilance is the price of liberty'."

Jorge El Illueca, President of the United Nations General Assembly

"It's a worn cliché, but if Amnesty did not exist, it would have to be invented. It is simply unique."

Jean-Pierre Hocke, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Performing arts

"When Amnesty began 25 years ago, the subject of human rights didn't even come up between governments. Now, partly because of the work of Amnesty, it's really impossible for governments to discuss their agendas with each other without having to discuss human rights and their violations, and the facts of torture, detainment, no trials, etc."

Joan Baez

"It's been a double pleasure. As an attorney and as a Latin American, I know how important Amnesty International has been in terms of saving lives in Latin America and throughout the world, and also how important it is that people become aware that the problems that we confront on this earth are common and the solution to these problems should be, and will be, also a common one. And it is a tremendous opportunity to have all these different people, all this different music in a city like New York, which is very befitting as a rallying point to make people aware of the need to confront these issues together and to resolve them together as well."

Ruben Blades, at the Meadowlands, USA, during the 1986 AI "Conspiracy of Hope" concert tour

"Amnesty inspires us to play. The music cuts through to people, and the message is clear: You can write a letter or send a postcard. And the more you give, the more you get back.

"It's a success story, and it's good to be part of a success story. There's so many tears shed over world hunger and the like, but these are tears of joy when it comes to Amnesty International, because a thousand people a year get out of prison."

Bono of U2

"I believe this tour is very important because it will make people aware of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I hope their consciousness will be raised, that people will become aware of their rights as individuals and exercise those rights, and that they will then go on to urge their governments to comply with this document. It is clear to me that we as individuals are not free until we are all free."

Tracy Chapman, in Montreal, Canada, during the AI 1988 "Human Rights Now!" concert tour

"We're Amnesty members, and we believe in the cause."

Bob Dylan, who with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, appeared in Los Angeles, USA, in the "Conspiracy of Hope" concert tour for AI

"The work that I have done with Amnesty is very important to me. I was very moved to meet some of the people that had been rescued from torture and unjust imprisonment, for whom Amnesty had been the only line of hope. Although there is still so much that needs changing, there is no doubt that Amnesty, in its 25 years, has changed the attitudes of governments on human rights all around the world. Through the simple tools of letter writing and the embarrassment of publicity, Amnesty has been surprisingly effective.

"It is part of a process that is making ordinary people aware of the power and responsibility they have in improving our world.

"I ask you to get involved."

Peter Gabriel

"It's necessary that people know what Amnesty does. It's an international body that infiltrates the pits of madness and horror."

Bill Graham, organizer of the 1988 "Human Rights Now!" concert tour

"We are free citizens, and it's our responsibility to share that freedom with the rest of the world."

Madonna, speaking from the stage in Los Angeles, USA, during the "Conspiracy of Hope" concert for AI

"We are asking the governments worldwide to put the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in practice. I want my audience to understand my message directly through my music and the rhythms of Africa. My message is the dignity of all human beings."

Youssou N'Dour, in Montreal, Canada, during the AI "Human Rights Now!" concert tour

"It's difficult for the Neville Brothers to afford this tour, financially. But morally and spiritually, we couldn't afford not to do it."

Aaron Neville of the Neville Brothers, speaking of their participation in the "Conspiracy of Hope" concert tour for AI

"Rock 'n' roll, to me, is a statement about energy and freedom. Therefore, it has a direct relationship to Amnesty – the most astonishing group I've ever been involved with."

"The moral outrage that you feel about some of the things that happen, you can actually do something [about] with Amnesty International. I think people should be aware of that. It really does make a difference."

Lou Reed

"Amnesty International is an extremely important (what an understatement!) human rights organization that helps to free prisoners of conscience (people imprisoned for speaking out and standing up for what they believe in!), ensure fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners, and end torture and executions – worldwide. Their 25 years of hard work, care and dedication has helped bring hope and, in most cases, life to thousands of people throughout the world.

"You too can help, and it's easier than you probably think.

"Amnesty International provides members with human rights news and suggestions for letter-writing activities. Yes, just by writing a letter to a government official who can authorize each prisoner's release, you are helping to let them know you're watching, and this has been quite an effective method in helping to stop senseless torture and death."

7 Seconds

"We believe in the dignity of all human beings. We wholeheartedly support the work of Amnesty International in defence of all those who are imprisoned or tortured because of their peacefully held beliefs. So should you!"

Simple Minds

"At the moment I don't think there's a more important organization in the world than Amnesty International. That's why I'm here."

Bruce Springsteen, in London, United Kingdom, during the "Human Rights Now!" concert tour for AI

"As a child I got a sense of many things from rock 'n' roll music – a sense of life, a sense of fun, a sense of human possibility, a sense of sex. But I think that what I got most of all from the records that first inspired me was a sense of freedom. One of the greatest challenges of adulthood is to hold on to your idealism after you lose your innocence. Whether you are young or old, if you believe that a single human spirit can be a very powerful thing, Amnesty International, in a very tough, pragmatic, and realistic way, gives you a way to put your ideals into service in a world in which they are so badly needed."

Bruce Springsteen in Montreal, Canada, during the AI "Human Rights Now!" concert tour

"It can be fun to write to people who lead authoritarian or repressive regimes, have a dictator as a pen-pal, and be a complete nuisance to him by sending him these letters."

Sting

"One postcard might seem very insignificant, but when you multiply that by thousands upon thousands these governments are embarrassed as hell to receive them, and it really does work."

Sting, speaking of the AI postcard campaign during the "Conspiracy of Hope" concert tour for AI

"The people who are looking for a better future are the people that Amnesty International must protect, whether they are working for the environment, political reform, better working conditions, wages, housing or health. These things affect all of us. These are real people with families and addresses. I hope that this tour will reinforce Amnesty International where it is most needed. I think Amnesty International is one of the most civilized organizations in the history of the world. It strives for justice through the work of ordinary people. I am proud to be a part of it and this tour."

Sting, in Montreal, Canada, at the AI "Human Rights Now!" concert tour

Well-known
personalities

"What after all has maintained the human race on this old globe despite all the calamities of nature and all the tragic failings of mankind, if not faith in new possibilities and courage to advocate them?"

Jane Addams

"Open your newspaper any day of the week and you will find a report from somewhere in the world of someone being imprisoned, tortured or executed because his opinions or religion are unacceptable to his government. There are several million such people in prison – by no means all of them behind the Iron and Bamboo Curtains – and their numbers are growing. The newspaper reader feels a sickening sense of impotence. Yet if these feelings of disgust all over the world could be united into common action, something effective could be done."

"Pressure of opinion a hundred years ago brought about the emancipation of the slaves. It is now for man to insist upon the same freedom for his mind as he has won for his body."

The Forgotten Prisoners, the article in The Observer, in which Peter Benenson announced the founding of AI

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

Edmund Burke

"We must realize that we cannot escape the common lot of pain and that our only justification is to speak on behalf of those who cannot."

Albert Camus

"Freedom of expression is the matrix, the indispensable condition of nearly every other form of freedom.

Benjamin Nathan Cardoza

"The cost of liberty is less than the price of repression."

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois

"Never be afraid to raise your voice for honesty and truth and compassion against injustice and lying and greed. If people all over the world, in thousands of rooms like this one, would do this, it would change the earth."

William Faulkner

"The strong and the weak have alike a right to Justice."

Mahatma Gandhi

"In poor Basque villages even teenage boys spoke of Amnesty International (perhaps the only English words they knew), and a returned political prisoner explained how much it meant to them, in jail, to feel that this organization existed and that they were not forgotten by the world."

Martha Gelhorn, US writer and wife of Ernest Hemingway, after a visit to post-Franco Spain

"When men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas – that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market, and that truth is the only ground upon which their

wishes safely can be carried out. That at any rate is the theory of our Constitution. It is an experiment, as all life is an experiment."

"If there is any principle of the Constitution that more imperatively calls for attachment than any other it is the principle of free thought – not free thought for those who agree with us but freedom for the thought that we hate."

US Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

"The spirit of truth, and the spirit of freedom – they are the pillars of society."

Henrik Ibsen

"I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

Thomas Jefferson

"There can be nothing more dreadful than that the actions of a man should be subject to the will of another."

Immanuel Kant

"The rights of all men are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened."

John F. Kennedy

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Martin Luther King

"I firmly believe that I am a spokesman for justice and freedom and equality – a man moved by the plight and pain of my oppressed brothers and sisters."

Don Mattera, poet, journalist and former prisoner of conscience from South Africa on whose behalf AI has worked

"In Germany they first came for the Communists; I did not speak because I was not a Communist. Then they came for the Jews; I did not speak because I was not a Jew. Then they came to fetch the workers, members of trade unions; I was not a trade unionist. Afterward, they came for the Catholics; I did not say anything because I was a Protestant. Eventually they came for me, and there was no one left to speak."

Pastor Martin Niemoller, a Protestant minister imprisoned during Germany's Third Reich

"Necessity is the plea for every infringement of human freedom. It is the argument of tyrants; it is the creed of slaves."

William Pitt, 1783

"Perseverance is more prevailing than violence; and many things which cannot be overcome when they are together, yield themselves up when taken little by little."

Plutarch

"We stand today at the threshold of a great event both in the life of the United Nations and in the life of mankind. This Universal Declaration of Human Rights may well become the international magna carta of all men everywhere... Man must have freedom to develop his full stature and through common effort to raise the level of human dignity."

Eleanor Roosevelt, advocating for the USA the approval of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 9 December 1948

"Disavowed – sometimes very quietly – but systematically practised behind a facade of democratic legality, torture has now acquired the status of a semi-clandestine institution."

"The purpose of torture is not only the extortion of confessions, of betrayal: the victim must disgrace himself, by his screams and his submission, like a human animal. In the eyes of everybody and in his own eyes. He who yields under torture is not only to be made to talk, but is also to be marked as sub-human."

Jean-Paul Sartre

"I believe that world peace can only be achieved when there is freedom for people of all politics, religions and races to exchange their views in a continuing dialogue. For this reason I would particularly ask all those who are working in their different ways towards world peace to make their contribution, preferably by active service or failing that, by financial contribution, to this great new endeavour called Amnesty International"

Dr Albert Schweitzer, 1963, Laureate of the Nobel Prize for Peace

"Under a government which imprisons unjustly, the true place for a just man is also in prison... the only house in a slave state in which a free man can abide with honor."

Henry David Thoreau

"I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

"Liberty of thought is the life of the soul."

Voltaire

"He who helps in the saving of others, saves himself as well."

Hartmann Von Aue

"The greatest evil today is indifference. To know and not to act is a way of consenting to these injustices. The planet has become a very small place. What happens in other countries affects us."

Elie Wiesel, Laureate of the Nobel Prize for Peace

APPENDIX 2

useful addresses

This appendix lists some of the organizations concerned with human rights worldwide and includes notes on their activities which are of interest to AI Action File coordinators. The information is based on Human Rights Internet, the Encyclopedia of Associations, and Encyclopedia of Associations: International Organizations. The organizations appear in the following order:

- N International/general human rights organizations / 298
- N Organizations that work on behalf of imprisoned lawyers and judges, and against legal system abuses / 298
- N Organizations that work against torture / 298
- N Organizations that work on behalf of writers and journalists / 299
- N Organizations that work on behalf of scientists and engineers / 299
- N Organizations that work on behalf of health professionals, and against medical or psychiatric abuse / 299
- N Organizations that work on religious cases / 299
- N Other human rights organizations / 300
- N Business ethics centres and information sources / 301
- N Women's non-governmental organizations / 302

International/general human rights organizations

International League for Human Rights (ILHR)/Ligue internationale des droits de l'homme

432 Park Avenue South,

Room 1103,

New York, NY 10016,

United States of America

Tel.: 212-684-1221

Fax: 212-684-1696

N especially for cases of human rights advocates

N produces Human Rights

Bulletin (monthly), In Brief (series), ILHR Annual Review and special reports

Freedom House

120 Wall Street, 26th Floor,

New York, NY 10005,

United States of America

Tel.: 212-514-8040

Fax: 212-514-8050

N conducts worldwide survey of human rights

N has a research and documentation centre

N produces many publications

N gives awards

Human Rights Watch

485 Fifth Avenue,

New York, NY 10017,

United States of America

Tel.: 212-972-8400

Fax: 212-972-0905

N includes Africa Watch, Americas

Watch, Asia Watch, Helsinki Watch, and Middle East Watch

N publishes reports, including

Review of Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights and the annual Summary of Persecution Against Human Rights Monitors

N lobbies the US Congress

N affiliated with the Fund for Free Expression

International Federation for Human Rights/Federation internationale des droits de l'homme (FIDH)

14 Passage Dubail,

75010 Paris, France

Tel.: 1-40 37 54 26

Fax: 1-44 72 05 86

N conducts missions

N publishes 30 mission reports

each year, and a weekly newsletter in French

- N works in the defence of victims of arbitrary abuses of human rights by government
- N maintains a library
- N has research programs
- N sends observers to trials
- N conducts public protests

Organizations that work

on behalf of imprisoned lawyers and judges, and against legal system abuses
International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)/Commission internationale des juristes (CIJ)

PO Box 160,

26, chemin de Joinville,

CH-1216 Geneva Cointrin,

Switzerland

Tel.: 22-7884747

Fax: 22-7884880

- N sends observer missions to trials of major significance

- N includes the Centre for the

Independence of Judges and Lawyers, which works on behalf of lawyers persecuted or harassed for their professional work in upholding the principles of the rule of law

- N publishes country reports, and a quarterly newsletter

International Human Rights Law Group (IHR LG)

1601 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 700,

Washington, DC 20009,

United States of America

Tel.: 202-232-8500

Fax: 202-232-6731

- N assists and cooperates, on a

pro bono basis, with non-governmental organizations in preparing complaints of human rights violations to be filed before international, regional, and domestic legal forums

- N gives awards

- N produces many publications

- N has an affiliate: The Human Rights Advocates, PO Box 5675, Berkeley, CA 94705, Tel.: 415-540-8017

Lawyers Committee for Human Rights

330 Seventh Avenue,

Tenth Floor North,

New York, NY 10001,

United States of America

Tel.: 212-629-6170

Fax: 212-967-0916

- N has volunteer lawyers

- N helps with pro bono

representation of indigent political asylum applicants in the USA

- N gives human rights medal

Human Rights Advocates International (HRAI)

341 Madison, 20th Floor,
New York, NY 10017,
United States of America

Tel.: 212-986-5555

Fax: 212-599-3027

N investigates allegations of
human rights violations

N maintains a law library of
international texts

N represents exiles

N publishes research results

Organizations that work against torture

World Organization Against Torture

37-39, rue de Vermont,

Case Postale 119,

CH-1211 Geneva,

Switzerland

Tel.: 22-7333140

Fax: 22-7331051

N works against torture,
"disappearances" and summary executions

N works closely with AI

N rapidly disseminates
information about people at risk of torture

N offers rehabilitative services
to victims of torture

N produces publications

Association for the Prevention of Torture

Case Postale 2267,

1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland

Tel.: 22-7342088

Fax 22-7345649

N visits detention centres

N publishes a newsletter in French
and German, How to Combat Torture and other publications

Organizations that work
on behalf of writers and
journalists

Writers and Scholars International

Lancaster House,

33 Islington High Street,

London N1 9LH,

United Kingdom

Tel.: 171-278 2313

Fax: 171-278 1878

N documents censorship and
repression on writers, artists, scholars, journalists and others worldwide

N gets information from the IS

N publishes Index on Censorship
six times a year

Article 19
Lancaster House,
33 Islington High Street,
London N1 9LH,
United Kingdom
Tel.: 171-278 9292
Fax: 171-713 1356

International PEN
Writers in Prison Committee,
9/10 Charterhouse Buildings,
Goswell Road, London EC1M 7AT,
United Kingdom
Tel.: 171-2534308
Fax: 171-2535711

N works for the release of
imprisoned writers, journalists, translators and publishers

N will "adopt" imprisoned writers
as honorary PEN members

N gets information from the IS

N sends delegations to visit
imprisoned writers

N organizes letter-writing groups

N conducts research

N publishes biannual reports

Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)

330 Seventh Avenue, 12th Floor,

New York, NY 10001,

United States of America

Tel.: 212-465-1004

Fax: 212-465-9568

N works on behalf of imprisoned
journalists and editors

N publishes a quarterly newsletter;

CPJ Update, which includes the Committee's current case list and updates on cases; and many
other publications, including the annual Attacks on the Press

N gives awards

N receives Freedom Writers
mailings

World Press Freedom Committee (WPFC)

c/o The Newspaper Center,

11600 Sunrise Valley Drive,

Reston, VA 22091,

United States of America

Tel.: 703-648-1000

Fax: 703-620-4557

N maintains a strong global voice
"against...those who abuse newsmen"

Organizations that work
on behalf of scientists and engineers
American Association for the Advancement of Science and Human Rights Program
1333 H Street, NW,
Washington DC 20005,
United States of America
Tel.: 202-326-6790
Fax: 202-289-4950

Organizations that work
on behalf of health
professionals, and against medical or psychiatric abuse
Geneva Initiative on Psychiatry
PO Box 1282,
NL-1200 BG Hiversum,
Switzerland
Tel.: 31-35-6838727
Fax: 31-35-6833646
e-mail: gip@euronet.nl
Joannes Wier Foundation
PO Box 1551,
3800 BN Amersfoort,
The Netherlands
Tel.: 033-726749
Fax: 033-726811

Physicians for Human Rights (Denmark)
Banegaardsplads 20,
DK 8000 Aarhus,
Denmark
Tel.: 8619 6588
Fax: 8619 8393

The Association of Israeli-Palestinian Physicians for Human Rights (Israel)
PO Box 10235,
Tel-Aviv 61101,
Israel
Tel.: 3 5250526
Fax: 3 5250527

Physicians for Human Rights (UK)
Peter Kandela,
29 Greenlands Road,
Staines, Middlesex,
TW18 4LR,
United Kingdom

Tel.: 0784 461999

Fax: 0784 469145

Physicians for Human Rights (USA)

100 Boylson Street,

Suite 702,

Boston, MA 02116,

United States of America

Tel.: 617 695 0041

Fax: 617 695 0307

Organizations that work

on religious cases

Christian Solidarity International

Zelglistrasse 64,

PO Box 70,

CH-8122 Binz,

Switzerland

Tel.: 1-980 4700

Fax: 1-980 4715

N works for religious freedom

N assists persecuted Christians

N provides legal aid to ensure a
fair trial, where possible

Christian Solidarity International

P.O. Box 70563,

Washington, DC 20024, USA

Tel.: 301-989-0298

Fax: 301-989-0398

N protests against religious
persecution

N has an "Adopt-a-Nation"

prayer and correspondence program

N gives awards

N holds human rights briefings

with members of the US Congress

N provides legal counsel for

arrested Christians

Pax Christi – International Catholic Peace Movement

Rue du Vieux Marché aux Grains 21,

B-1000 Brussels, Belgium

Tel.: 2-502 5550

Fax: 2-502 4626

N produces handbooks and
bibliographies on human rights

N publishes Pax Christi

International Newsletter six times a year

N deals with peace, justice and

non-violence issues

N gives awards

Quaker United Nations Office

13, Avenue du Mervelet,

CH-1209 Geneva, Switzerland

Tel.: 22-7333393

Fax: 22-7340015

N publishes the quarterly QUNO
newsletter

N publishes human rights reports

N lobbies on conscientious
objection

World Jewish Congress,

American Section

501 Madison Avenue, 17th Floor,

New York, NY 10022, USA

Tel.: 212-755 5770

Fax: 212-755 5883

N defends the rights of Jews
whenever those rights are denied, violated, or imperiled

N produces many publications
and reports

Other human rights
organizations

International Trade Union House

Bd Emile Jacqmain 155,

B-1210 Brussels, Belgium

Tel.: 2-224 0211

Fax: 2-201 5815/203 0756

N defends fundamental human
and trade union rights

N maintains International

Solidarity Fund to provide assistance to workers who are victims of oppression

Minority Rights Group International

379 Brixton Road,

London SW9 7DE,

United Kingdom

Tel.: 171-978 9498

Fax: 171-738 6265

N publishes reports

N publicizes violations of human
rights of minorities

International Committee of the Red Cross

19, avenue de la Paix,
CH-1202 Geneva, Switzerland

Tel.: 22-7346001

Fax 22-7332057

N visits political detainees
worldwide

N works to ensure that political
prisoners' detention conditions conform to international standards

N seeks to ban torture and
summary execution

N produces an Annual Report and
publications on humanitarian law

National Lawyers Guild

55 Avenue of the Americas,
New York, NY 10013, USA

Tel.: 212-966-5000

N produces many publications

N has Central American Refugee
Defense Fund

N has sub-committees or task forces on:

Cuba, the Middle East, the Philippines, Southern Africa, Central America, Chile and Ireland

N works for the right of political
dissent

Defense for Children International

3 Stephen Place,

Ossining, NY 10562, USA

Tel.: 914-761-1641

Fax: 914-762-0316

N responds to individual cases of
human rights abuse against children

Central American Refugee Center (CARECEN)

3112 Mount Pleasant Street, NW

Washington, DC 20010, USA

Tel.: 202-328-9799

N provides emergency legal
assistance for refugees

N operates social service
referral program

N makes research on human
rights violations in El Salvador

N produces publications on
refugees

Survival International

310 Edgware Road

London W2 1DY
United Kingdom
Tel.: 171-7235535
Fax: 171-7234059
N seeks human rights for
indigenous peoples
N conducts missions
N provides speakers and
educational materials
N publishes biannual newsletter,
monthly Urgent Action Bulletin and reports

Center for Victims of Torture
717 East River Road,
Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA
Tel.: 612-626-1400
Fax: 612-626-2465
N provides medical and
psychological treatment for victims of torture
Business ethics centres and information sources

Europe/Japan/USA
Caux Round Table

N forum for senior business
leaders and industrialists concerned with the development of constructive economic and social
relationships between their countries and with their joint responsibilities towards the rest of the
world. Plenary meetings take place each summer in the Swiss village of Caux (the conference
centre of the Swiss Foundation for Moral Re-Armament). Largely due to the initiative of
Ryuzaburo Kaku, Chairman of Canon Inc, the Round Table has focused increasingly on the
necessity for an expanded sense of corporate responsibility in an interdependent world.
The Caux Round Table publishes a document called Principles for Business, a corporate code
based on the ethical ideals of kyosei, a Japanese work for "living and working together for the
common good", and human dignity.

Caux Round Table Secretariats

N Europe:
Maartens de Pous, Coordinator
Amaliastraat 10,
2514 JC The Hague,
The Netherlands
Tel.: 070 364 3591
Fax: 070 361 7209

N Japan:
4-13-4 Sendagi Bunkyo-ku,
Tokyo 113
Tel.: 03 3821 3737

Fax: 03 3821 6479

N USA:
1156 15th St, NW, Suite 910,
Washington DC 20005
Tel.: 202 872 9038
Fax: 202 872 9137

The Caux Round Table is affiliated to:

Minnesota Center for Corporate
Responsibility
1000 La Salle Avenue,
Minneapolis,
MN 55403-4122, USA
Tel.: 612 962 4122
Fax: 612 962 4125

The Institute of Business Ethics
12 Palace Street, London
SW1E 5JA, United Kingdom

Director: Stanley Kiaer

N conducts regular surveys and publishes papers on business ethics. It has also published a model code for businesses which includes a reference to human rights.

Hong Kong

Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC)

N As a response to an increasing number of reports of corruption, the ICAC launched a campaign in 1994 beginning with Hong Kong's first ever Conference on Business Ethics. The conference was organized by the six leading chambers of commerce and the ICAC, and sponsored by over 100 trade and professional bodies. It was attended by over 3,000 business leaders, who agreed that a set of broad guidelines in the form of a corporate code of conduct should be formulated and recommended to all listed and large private companies in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong Ethics Development Centre

1/F Tung Wah Mansion,
199-203 Hennessy Rd,
Wanchai

Tel.: 2587 9812

Fax: 2824 9766

Exec. Sec.: Mr Lawrence Tse

Dep. Exec. Sec.: Mrs Helen Lee

N Set up under the auspices of the community relations department of the ICAC and its resource centre opened in May 1995. In addition to providing a library and inquiries service, a team of officers will launch a corporate ethics program for business organizations and will coordinate activities to promote work ethics among young people. It also produces a quarterly newsletter, Ethics in Practice.

USA

Business for Social Responsibility

1850 M St NW, Ste 750,

Washington DC 20036

Tel.: 202 872 5206

Fax: 202 872 5227

Pres. : Michael Levett

N has 700 members – small and

medium-size businesses – and promotes responsible and ethical corporate business behaviour and public policy.

Council on Economic Priorities

30 Irving Place,

New York, NY 10003

Tel.: 800 882 6435

N compiles and makes available

information on the social responsibility of individual corporations.

Investor Responsibility Research

Centre

Suite 700,

1350 Connecticut Ave, NW

Washington, DC 20036-1701

Olsson Center for Applied Ethics

University of Virginia,

Darden School, PO Box 6550,

Charlottesville, VA 22906

Tel.: 804 924 0935

Womens' non-governmental organizations

Regional structures are being organized to undertake and facilitate follow-up action to the World Conference in Beijing in each region. Please contact the following for up-to-date information:

Africa

FDEA/FAVDO Women's Network

Point Focal Afrique Pour Beijing

Sicap Amitie,

Avenue Bourguiba

Villa No. 4336, B.P. 3921

Dakar, Senegal

Contact: Soukeyna Ndiaye Ba

African Women's Development & Communications Network (FEMNET)

P.O. Box 54562,

Nairobi, Kenya

e-mail: femnet@elci.gn.apc.org
Contact: Njoki Wainaina

Asia & the Pacific
Pan Pacific/SE Asia Women's Assn. Intl
2234 Petcuhburi Road
Bangkok 10310, Thailand
Fax: 2-718-0372
Contact: Sumalee Chartikavanij

Pacific Regional YWCA
P.O. Box 3940, Samabula
Suva, Fiji
Fax: 301-222
Tel.: 304-961
Contact: Salamo Fulivai

Europe & North America
ECE Working Group,
IH NGO CSW
Office E2-1, NGO Lounge
Palais des Nations, CH-1211
Geneva 10, Switzerland
Fax: 22-917-0181
Tel: 22-917-4735
e-mail: ngoceewomen@gn.apc.org
International Liaison: Danielle Bridel
Women's Resource Centre
301 Vaughan Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba,
R3B 2N7, Canada
Fax: 204-943-6159
Tel.: 204-489-3531
Contact: Stella Zola Lejohn

Latin America & the Caribbean
CISCSA
Avenida Rafael Nunex 4329
Cordoba 5009, Argentina
Fax: 51-814-063
Tel.: 51-811903/814063
e-mail: anafalu@wamani.apc.org
Contact: Ana Falu

Parque Hernan Velarde 42
Lima 1, Peru
Fax: 14-339-500
Tel.: 14-330-488
e-mail: flora@geo2geomail.org

Contact: Virginia Vargas, Flora Tristan

Middle East

Alliance for Arab Women
28 Adly Street - Flat 74, Fl. 7
Cairo, Egypt
Fax: 2-393-6820

Contact: Western Asia, Hoda Badran

General Federation of Arab Women

P.O.Box 9796, Jabel El-Hussain
Amman, Jordan
Fax: 6-694-810

Contact: Haifa Abu Ghazaleh

Others

Congo offices/Status of women committees
Conference of NGO's (CONGO)

777 UN Plaza - 8th Floor
NYC, NY 10017, USA
Fax: 212-986-0821/682-5354
(New York)

Fax: 301-530-1760 (Maryland)
Contact: Afaf Mahfouz, 1st Vice -President

NGO Committee on the Status of Women, NY

777 UN Plaza 8th Floor
NYC, NY 10017, USA
Fax: 212-986-0821/682 5354
Tel: 212-986-8557

Contact: Sudha Acharya, Chairperson

Vienna NGO Committee on the Status of Women

Kirchengasse 26,
A-1070 Vienna, Austria
Tel./Fax: 1-526 18 99

Contact: Marlene Parenzam, International Liaison

Geneva NGO Subcommittee on the Status of Women

Office E2-1, NGO Lounge,
Palais des Nations, CH-1211
Geneva 10, Switzerland
Fax: 22-917-0181
Tel: 22-917-4735

e-mail: goceewomen@gn.apc.org
Contact: Irene Hoskins, Chairperson

APPENDIX 3 USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

This appendix lists useful publications and sources of information which may help you when you are devising a campaigning strategy, working with others, or simply need to look up information. It is arranged under the following headings:

- N Children / 304
- N Children's rights / 304
- N Youth / 305
- N Religion / 305
- N Business / 305
- N Fundraising / 306

Children

An Introduction to the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

Christine Lundy

Full Circle Press,

c/o Gothic Design,

RR #4, St Thomas,

Ontario, Canada N5P 3S8

Fax: 519 - 775 0099

N US\$7.50 plus 15% postage and packing

Papers of the Stockholm Congress

c/o DCI, PO Box 88,

1211 Geneva, Switzerland

Tel.: 22 - 754 0558

Fax: 22 - 740 1145

e-mail dci-hq@pingnet.ch

N law reform and enforcement;

prevention and psycho-social rehabilitation; tourism and children in prostitution; the sex exploiter;

health and psycho-social dimension; media; child pornography; education; social values

N copies from the NGO Group

for the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Ombudswork for Children; Innocenti Digest No 1

UNICEF International Child

Development Centre,

Piazza SS Annunziata 12, 50122 Florence, Italy

Tel.: 55 - 234 5258

Fax: 55 - 244 817

N key information on a critical

children's rights concern

Have we asked the children?

International Working Group

on Child Labour, 1997

Huddestraat 3,

1018 HB Amsterdam,

Netherlands

Fax: 20 - 422 0443

Tel.: 20 - 422 0444

Monitoring and measuring the state of children – Beyond survival;

Helmut Wintersberger and

Asher Ben Arie, 1997

National Council for the Child,

20 Metudela Street,

Jerusalem 92306, Israel

Tel.: 2 - 563 9191

Fax: 2 - 563 6869

e-mail: Benarieh@shum.cc.huji.ac.il

UN Convention on the rights of the child training kit

International Save the Children
Alliance
Save the Children,
17 Grove Lane,
London, SE5 8RD,
United Kingdom
Tel.: 171 - 703 5400
Fax: 171 - 708 2508
N £28.00 plus postage and
packing £5.00 (UK), £10 rest of the world

Children's Participation Pack: a practical guide for playworkers
The Children's Participation
Project,
Kirklees Metropolitan Council, Save the Children,
United Kingdom
N ordering as above

Never too young: How young children can take responsibility and make decisions. A handbook
for early years workers
Judy Miller,
National Early Years Network, Save the Children,
United Kingdom
N ordering as above

Empowering children and young people: Training Manual
Children's Rights Office and
Save the Children,
United Kingdom.
N ordering as above

World's Web: the global education pack for work with young people
Save the Children, UK
N ordering as above

Position on child work
International Save the Children
Alliance
59 chemin Moise Duboule,
CH 1909 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel: 22-788 8180
Fax: 22-788 8154
e-mail:
alliance@iprolink.ch.
<http://www.savechildren.or.jp/alliance>

Children: the invisible soldiers
Rachel Brett and Margaret
McCallin, 1996

Rädda Barnen,
107 88 Stockholm,
Sweden
Fax: 8 - 689 9013
Tel.: 8 - 689 9000
e-mail: info@rb.se
<http://www.rb.se>

Early child development: Investing in our children's future
Mary Eming Young,
The World Bank,
ISBN 0-444-82605
Fax: 202 - 522 3234
e-mail:
myoung3@worldbank.org

Children's rights
I am a child, I have rights
Save the Children,
UNICEF and Ministry of
Education, Liberia
N copies from Save the Children,
ordering as above

My rights, Part 1 (5-8 years),
Part 2 (9-12 years),
Part 3 (13-18 years)
The Swedish NGO Child
Convention Group,
Rädda Barnen,
107 88 Stockholm,
Sweden
Tel.: 8-698 9000
Fax: 8-698 9013

My rights in our world
Children's Rights Office,
235 Shaftesbury Avenue,
London, WC2H 8EL,
United Kingdom
Tel.: 171 - 240 4449
Fax: 171 - 240 4514
e-mail: crights@ftech.co.uk
N £1.50

Our book... of child rights
Kathy Keirle Ali and Zulfiquar
Ali (English and Arabic)

Human Rights Education
 Programme,
 11-B Main Korangi Road,
 Phase 1, DHA Karachi,
 Pakistan
 Tel.: 21 - 588 6273
 e-mail:
 zufli@hrep.khi.sdnpc.undp.org

We want our right to education, Children's Rights and Responsibilities, Women and girls have rights too

Three booklets from Kuleana Centre for Children's Rights, in English and Kiswahili
 Children's rights memory game
 Kuleana Centre for Children's
 Rights,
 PO Box 27,
 Mwanza, Tanzania
 Tel.: 68 - 500 911
 Fax: 68 - 42402
 email:
 kuleana@tan2.healthnet.org

Questions Parents Ask, Voices of Youth brochure
 also available on the internet:

<http://www.unicef.org/voy>

Its only right: A practical guide to learning about the Convention on the Rights of the Child
 UNICEF New York,
 3 UN Plaza, New York 10017
 Fax: 212 - 755 1449

Youth

The Rights Kit! produced AI Canada (E-S):

N Acts as a "handbook" for

Youth Campus groups. It includes an overview of the Youth Campus program plus information on group

organization, branch resources, letter-writing,

campaigning and fundraising. A glossary, record sheets and a variety of key AI pamphlets are included, plus an appendix of articles on AI's history and recent human rights concerns, publicity materials and sample posters. It is also a helpful resource for AI members working with Youth Campus groups or doing outreach on this target sector.

Youth Can Change the World - Youth and Student Activism in Amnesty International: Youth Campus Program

N This is aimed at students and

youth interested in AI and AI members doing outreach with youth. It is a booklet with loose enclosures and includes an overview of individual, multi-issue club and Youth Campus group membership options, advice on how to start campaigning for human rights, registration forms, sample actions and letter-writing advice.

Amnesty International National Student Program AIUSA: pack

N Includes leaflets on the following areas: What is Amnesty International?; How to find what you need in AI; How to fundraise for your group; How to plan events; How to publicize your events; How to run fabulous meetings; How to recruit and retain members; How to work with your administration; How to be a great faculty advisor; How to move towards diversity. It also has a brochure entitled Overview for Action which includes background on AI and on techniques of letter writing, Urgent Actions, fundraising, campus and local outreach, campaigns, action opportunities and training.

SAY is the national student magazine of AIUSA developed specifically for students with information, actions, updates as well as articles and poems written by students themselves.

Religion

Arguments for Human Rights from the World's Religions (produced by AI-UK)

Religions against the Death Penalty: The Case for Abolition (AI-UK)

Vrij of Vogelvrij (produced in 1995 by Belgian Section)

N includes some of AI's recent campaigns/actions on religious issues, a survey of the relevant international declarations and conventions relating to the fundamental right of religious freedom, and issues around the "universality" of religious freedom. The booklet also gives some relevant texts on human rights from the Roman Catholic Church and from the World Council of Churches, and a biblical reflection on religious freedom.

IS campaign circulars with advice on how to approach religious groups include:

1989 Campaign against the Death Penalty: Circular No. 15 – Approaches to the religious target sector.

N This gives a brief outline of attitudes to human rights from the point of view of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, and suggestions on how to approach members of these faiths.

Religious Action 1993 (AI Index: ACT 79/01/92):

N cases of violations of human rights of religious people from 13 countries, and suggestions for action.

Business

Business and Society Review

Warren

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One Penn Plaza, 42nd Fl,

New York, NY 10119, USA

Tel.: 800 950 1210/212-971

5000

N quarterly

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1250 23rd St, NW,

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Tel.: 800 372 1033/202- 452
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The Complete Fundraising Handbook,

Sam Clark, 1992

(ISBN 0-907164-65-X)

MOBILIZING THE IS FOR ACTION DURING CRISES

This appendix looks at how the International Secretariat (IS) responds when a human rights crisis emerges in the world and the organization decides to go into crisis response mode.

Mobilizing the IS

Regular work:

At the time of writing there is a two-person permanent crisis response team based at the IS who are part of the Campaigning and Crisis Response Program. The team comprises a crisis response project manager and a crisis response campaign organizer. The team's job is to:

- N ensure the development of an international movement capacity to respond to crises;
- N undertake periodic evaluation of AI's crisis response to improve its effectiveness;
- N contribute to the development of policies in relation to crisis response;
- N facilitate the development of communication systems, membership structures and techniques to help mobilize effective action in response to crises.

Crisis mode:

The decision from the Secretary General to go into crisis mode signals to everyone in the movement that they should consider how they will contribute to tackling the crisis. In the IS, the crisis response project manager immediately forms a crisis team for the affected country, made up of key IS staff and is responsible for the project management and smooth running of the team.

The role of this IS crisis team is to:

- N contribute to the development of strategies and plans and to the decision-making within the crisis team;
- N undertake tasks agreed within the crisis team;
- N ensure fast communication and coordination with their own programs (and others as designated), follow implementation of tasks within their program and report back to the crisis team;
- N keep other relevant staff informed of the knock-on effects of their crisis tasks;
- N be the first point of contact for Sections (normally assigned to one member of the team – the crisis response campaign organizer) and for media (normally the IS press officer responsible).

Other crisis response team members might include one or more of the following as circumstances dictate: a logistics officer, an information officer, a language editor, someone from the relevant region's membership development team, a representative from the Research and Mandate Program.

One Deputy Secretary General is responsible overall for the crisis project. The day-to-day management of the crisis team is performed by the crisis response project manager.

Where necessary and possible, extra staff are deployed to the IS crisis team (this may include recruiting from Section staff, other non-governmental organizations, etc). For example, a Section campaign coordinator might come to the IS in the role of regional campaign coordinator, just working on the crisis team. This would enable the permanent regional campaign coordinator to remain in post dealing with the rest of their region. Sections' help in identifying people for crisis team work is invaluable; the more we can be prepared in advance for rapid deployment of extra resources the better.

What happens next?

When crisis mode is declared the decision is also immediately communicated to the movement. Within the next 48 hours the IS has a checklist of things which need to be done, examples of which are:

- N hold a crisis team meeting to decide on immediate activities;
- N react immediately, perhaps with an Urgent Action and a media statement;
- N consider security and, if possible, organize deployment to the field;
- N approve initial budget, identify extra resources needed.

Examples from the IS checklist with particular relevance to Sections are:

- N Consider the security of AI membership in country "x" and take appropriate measures, including consultation with the Section secretariat where possible.
- N Establish communications systems for IS staff and Section crisis response coordinators for sharing of ideas on how to address the crisis.
- N Consider specific tasks Sections can perform or help with.
- N Consult Sections on crisis strategy (either in writing, through a conference call or at a meeting).
- N Keep all Sections informed of key developments (at least weekly); this is normally communicated by fax to all Sections in the form of a weekly crisis response bulletin.
- N Select four or more key Sections for the crisis which would have particular input on strategy and support for the international effort.

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