

# WIRED

FOR PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS  
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2012 VOLUME 42 ISSUE 005

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



SÌ ALLA  
DIGNITÀ

Sì a...  
**BENVENUTI  
A ROMA**

UGUAGLIANZA  
NEI DIRITTI

**STAND WITH US**  
STOP EUROPE'S ROMA PEOPLE BEING  
FORCED OUT



# INSIDE THIS WIRE



## COVER IMAGE

Protesters call on local authorities not to close Tor de' Cenci, a Roma camp in Rome, Italy, July 2012. At the event, actors and musicians spoke and played music, Roma dancers performed on stage and activists collected signatures for a petition against the closure.



## “WHAT DOES THIS TELL OUR CHILDREN?”

Meet the Roma people facing imminent forced eviction in Italy, then sign and send our postcard to Italy's Prime Minister. **PAGE 4**



## A DYING TREND

“Eradicating the death penalty will make us a much better society,” says veteran anti-death penalty activist **CARMELO CAMPOS-CRUZ**. He talks to **WIRE** to mark the 10th anniversary of the International Day against the Death Penalty on 10 October. **PAGE 8**



## “THE SEA IS A CEMETERY”

Many young Tunisians disappear at sea on their way to Europe. Are current migration policies making things worse? **PAGE 12**



## THE TRUTH WILL NOT DIE

Thirty years ago, 200 people were massacred at El Calabozo in El Salvador. Survivors and relatives still haven't had justice. Support them by signing and sending our postcard to President Mauricio Funes. **PAGE 14**



## THE ‘WITHOUTS’ OF KUWAIT

Kuwait's stateless Bidun people have been ignored for 50 years. Today, they are fighting to be recognized as citizens. **PAGE 16**



## DIGITAL PANIC BUTTONS

Find out how new technology can be used to protect human rights activists. **PAGE 19**



## WHAT ELSE?

Good news & updates (**PAGE 20**), letters from refugees and asylum-seekers detained in Cyprus (**PAGE 18**) and campaign news (**PAGE 2**).

**WORLDWIDE APPEALS**  
**READ, SHARE, ACT – SEE OUR INSERT**

Amnesty international activists during Bologna Pride in Italy, June 2012. The speech bubble on the right says “Libera di essere lesbica” – “Free to be a lesbian”.

## Getting WIRE

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First published in 2012 by Amnesty International Publications [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

© Amnesty International Ltd  
Index: NWS 21/005/2012, ISSN: 1472-443X

Printed by Banbury Litho, Banbury, United Kingdom, on 100gsm Cocoon Preprint 100% Recycled paper.

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

Cover image: © Amnesty International (photo: Fernando Vasco Chironda)







DIFFERENT PEOPLE  
SAME RIGHTS

LIBERA DI  
ESSERE LESBICA

HUMAN RIGHTS



# The Agenda

News from Amnesty International's regional teams and campaigns

## Brazil community can stay – for now

Good news for the Laranjeira Ñhanderu community in Brazil, who have been allowed to stay on their ancestral lands. A court recently suspended an eviction order against them while anthropologists verify their claim to the Santo Antônio de Nova Esperança farm. Activists worldwide sent letters supporting the community after Amnesty issued an Urgent Action on their case last year.

## “My heart aches for my friends”



Moon Myung-jin (Worldwide Appeals, March-April 2012 and pictured above) was released from prison in South Korea on 29 June.

“I received many letters from Amnesty International members,” he said. I haven’t met them personally, but they sent me the messages like ‘I support you, I will work on your release, I support what you believe’. These words meant a lot to me and I thank them. My heart aches for my friends who are still in prison for conscientious objection.”

Turn to our middle spread to see how you can send appeals for other individuals at risk.

“I joined Amnesty International because they had a special offer; buy one, set one free.”  
**UK comedian Gary Delaney**

## Attack on sexual and reproductive rights

At the UN Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, the Holy See (Vatican) led an attack against sexual and reproductive rights, supported by the G77, an organization of developing countries. Alongside Canada and the USA, the G77 opposed the responsibility of businesses to respect rights being included in the draft outcome document. Governments also struck out references to freedom of association and assembly. Read more at:

[bit.ly/Rioplus20-rights](http://bit.ly/Rioplus20-rights)

## Justice for sexual violence survivors in Colombia

An Amnesty team recently met survivors of sexual violence during Colombia’s armed conflict, as well as victims’ relatives and members of local organizations. The aim of the trip was to plan the next stage of a campaign demanding justice for women who have suffered sexual violence during the conflict. Watch out for campaigning activities later this year. Meanwhile, you can show your solidarity at

[facebook.com/solidaridadcolombia](https://facebook.com/solidaridadcolombia)

“I am proud to have taken action. A simple mouse click could make the change!”

**Vladimir Leonov, who took part in our online Faxjam for freedom of expression**



## Closer to ending the death penalty

Connecticut could become the 17th US state to abolish the death penalty, after its State Senate recently voted to repeal it. The bill is now awaiting approval by the House of Representatives and for Governor Malloy to sign it.

“Connecticut’s lawmakers have done the right thing and shown great leadership on advancing human rights,” said Suzanne Nossel from Amnesty International USA. The relatives of 179 murder victims were among those who supported the bill.

[bit.ly/Connecticut-deathpenalty](http://bit.ly/Connecticut-deathpenalty)



'Stop the Bullets': one of many murals painted in Caracas, Venezuela, during an Amnesty week of action against gun violence in June 2012.

“Myself.  
My computer.  
The Amnesty  
website. And  
14 letters.”

Amnesty activist Jonn Kmech from Canada, who took part in our Write for Rights campaign

## Bhopal, a silent picture

During the London 2012 Olympics, activists worldwide put the spotlight on one of the biggest industrial disasters in history. Among them was Indian artist Samar Jodha, who staged an art installation with Amnesty International UK showing photographs from the now disused Union Carbide pesticide plant. In 1984, a toxic gas leak from the factory killed thousands in Bhopal, India. Dow Chemical, the factory's current owner, was invited to make the decorative wrap for the Olympic stadium. We pushed for the Olympic organizers to stop denying the link between Dow and the tragedy, for the factory site to be cleaned up, and justice for survivors.

To see Samar Jodha's images, visit [bhopalsilentpicture.com](http://bhopalsilentpicture.com)

### IN JUST ...

... 1 minute

Pull out and put up our anti-death penalty poster on p. 10-11

... 2 minutes

Add your name to one of our campaigns at [amnesty.org/en/activism-center](http://amnesty.org/en/activism-center)

... 5 minutes

Sign and send one of our postcards (or all three – see our insert)

... 10 minutes

Write an appeal for somebody at risk – see our middle insert to find out how

# Up front

## A life in isolation



© Amnesty International

Amnesty International Researcher Tessa Murphy recently got a rare insight into what life is like for isolated inmates in a high security US prison.

My first impression of California's Pelican Bay State Prison was the grim contrast between the

beauty of the surrounding countryside and the stark prison buildings. As we entered the Security Housing Unit, the smell of stale air hit me first, and then the quiet. Then the muffled silence was disturbed by a shout warning us that guards were passing with an inmate shackled at the wrists and ankles.

Pelican Bay is known for its harsh conditions and long-term isolation of over a thousand prisoners. It's normally closed to the outside world, but an Amnesty delegation was allowed in following two hunger strikes.

Inside the unit, inmates are held in tiny, windowless cells with a few basic possessions and a TV – if they can afford it. Through a cell door, we spoke to Victor, who has been held in the unit for over two decades. “You're the first outsiders I've seen in years,” he told us, straining his eyes to see through the perforations in the solid steel door. The facility is designed to deny prisoners normal human contact.

There are no opportunities for social interaction among inmates. Phone calls aren't allowed, and Pelican Bay is so remote that many inmates don't receive visits. The family of one inmate we spoke to – like many others – lives over 700 miles away. When prisoners do get visitors, they are separated by a glass screen and must speak via telephone.

The men we spoke to were curious about Amnesty's work. Many relished the opportunity to talk. All were aware that beyond the walls of the prison, a tenacious community of prison advocates – including Amnesty International – are supporting their fight for improved conditions.

Urge the authorities to limit the use of isolation in California's prisons and to improve conditions for all prisoners held in the Secure Housing Unit. Write to:

Secretary Matthew Cate

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation  
1515 S Street, Sacramento, CA 95814, USA

And read our report *The Edge of Endurance* at [amnesty.org](http://amnesty.org) (Index: AMR 51/060/2012)

### LETTERS

Want your views and comments to appear in The Agenda? Write to us at [yourwire@amnesty.org](mailto:yourwire@amnesty.org)

More than  
**600** students  
and university lecturers have been  
arrested in Iran  
for their political activities  
since 2009



## ‘WHAT DOES THIS TELL OUR CHILDREN?’

**Europe’s Roma people are being forced into segregated camps. Campaigner MATTEO DE BELLIS tells the story of one community in Italy, where people live under constant threat of eviction.**

**A**n Italian schoolteacher once told me how sad she felt to see local Roma families being forced to leave their homes. She described seeing children’s exercise books being carelessly destroyed by state officials in the process. Books with carefully written words and colourful drawings, which pupils and their parents had worked hard to keep nice and neat for school. “What are we telling our children by allowing this to happen?” she asked.

Her story is a powerful snapshot of how brutal forced evictions are. Across Europe, police and bulldozers can suddenly turn up at so-called “informal” camps, without warning, to evict people and tear down their shacks. Huge trucks pull up to take away their clothes, pots and pans, furniture, toys – personal things they’ve been given no time to pack. It all ends up lost in the chaos, or destroyed.

And then people are simply forced to leave, often without consultation or notice, compensation for their losses or an alternative place to live. Many just

become homeless. Even people in “tolerated” or “authorized” camps, originally set up or recognized by the local authorities, can be forcibly evicted. They are sometimes re-housed in other isolated, purpose-built camps. The end result is simple segregation.

I visited Tor de’ Cenci, a Roma camp on the southern outskirts of Rome, Italy, earlier this year. Built close to a residential neighbourhood about 15 years ago, the local government installed metal containers, authorized people to live in them, and built a sewage system. A new street sign announced the camp’s existence.

The community of almost 400 people are originally from Bosnia or Macedonia. Their children, many of whom were born in Italy, have attended local schools and been socially included in a way that Roma rarely are. They’ve enjoyed having basics like a local supermarket and doctors’ surgeries nearby.

But in 2008, the local and national mood changed. Silvio Berlusconi’s government declared a

“Nomad Emergency”, giving some state officials special powers to deal with Roma camps. Soon after, Rome’s new administration announced that they would close Tor de’ Cenci as part of their new “Nomad Plan” and move people to a remote new camp called La Barbuta.

Opened in June 2012, La Barbuta is completely surrounded by fences and cameras. Visitors to Rome might spot it from their plane: it lies disturbingly close to the Ciampino airport runway outside the capital.

People in Tor de’ Cenci have lived under threat of eviction since the Nomad Plan was launched. Now that La Barbuta is ready, local authorities are in a hurry to fill it. Most people I met said they don’t want to move there. It will shut them off from normal life, local services, schools, transport and shops.

One option could be to refurbish their old camp, but the authorities haven’t even considered this. Tor de’ Cenci is in a dire state. The containers are getting old and the sewage system needs upgrading. Rubbish is everywhere. The local authorities say bad health and safety justifies closing the camp, even though camp maintenance is in fact their responsibility. “This camp has been abandoned by the authorities since 2009,” said Dijana, a Tor de’ Cenci resident.

Not a single person I met in Tor de’ Cenci said they wanted to live in a camp at all. “Stop camps, bloody camps,” one man said. But it’s the only option





**Left:** Daily life in Tor de' Cenci, a Roma camp on the outskirts of Rome, July 2012.

**Right:** La Barbuta, a new purpose-built camp surrounded by CCTV cameras, lies right next to Rome's Ciampino airport runway.

**Below:** A child watches as local authorities destroy containers in Tor de' Cenci, July 2012.

© Amnesty International



on the table – they have been given no choice. Many would much prefer a flat and to be integrated with the rest of society. Some say they have been on social housing waiting lists for years.

The authorities keep saying there's no money for social housing for Roma. But, they did somehow find €10 million to build La Barbuta. And hundreds of thousands of Euros were spent on CCTV in camps in Rome and Milan alone – enough to pay many families' rent for years.

Segregating Roma into camps doesn't come cheap, nor do forced evictions. Around 1,000 Roma camps have reportedly been evicted in Milan and Rome alone since 2007. Some sources say each eviction could cost between €10,000-20,000. Why isn't this money being spent on adequate housing for Roma people instead?

The answer most likely lies in old prejudice and preconceptions. All over Europe, Roma people are still seen as nomads who don't want to settle down. They are still treated as unwanted outsiders who don't deserve a say over their own futures. In fact, 97 per cent of Italy's around 170,000 Roma people are not nomadic, and most have indeed settled down or are trying to. Around half are Italian nationals.

Italy isn't living up to its EU member obligations under the 2000 Race Equality Directive not to discriminate against Roma or any other ethnic

## DISCRIMINATION AGAINST EUROPE'S ROMA PEOPLE THE FACTS

- Well over 10 million Roma people live in Europe. They are the region's largest, most disadvantaged minority.
- Roma people usually have lower incomes, worse health, poorer housing, lower literacy rates and are more likely to be unemployed than other Europeans.
- Tens of thousands live in isolated slums, often without running water or electricity.
- People living in camps are often forcibly evicted, sometimes more than once. Local authorities often don't offer them adequate alternative housing. Many people therefore end up homeless or living in makeshift accommodation for years.
- When they are offered alternative housing, it's often in precarious and segregated areas next to garbage dumps, sewage treatment plants, or industrial areas on the outskirts of cities.
- Discrimination in law and practice often stops Roma communities from realizing their rights to housing, health care, education and work.
- Amnesty International is calling for an end to discrimination against Roma people in Europe. In particular, European governments should put a stop to forced evictions, and allow Roma communities to influence the decisions that affect their lives.

group. In 2011, the European Commission asked member countries to develop national strategies for giving Roma people better access to housing, work, education and health services. Earlier this year, Italy submitted its own National Strategy for Roma Inclusion to the EU, promising to stop them being shut off into isolated camps.

But the exact opposite is still happening in Italy, as well as in other European countries. Whole communities are being made homeless or forced into purpose-built ghettos without being consulted about what kind of housing they want, or even being warned that the bulldozers are coming.

In July and August, after months of uncertainty, about 200 people from Tor de' Cenci resigned themselves to moving to La Barbuta. Local authorities quickly demolished their old containers. Rome's Mayor, Giovanni Alemanno, then signed an ordinance for the camp to be closed on 28 August. The only alternative for those still living there, apart from moving to La Barbuta, is Castel Romano, another isolated camp outside Rome. It is not even served by a bus.

On 4 August, Rome's Civil Court accepted a request by local NGOs to stop transferring more people to La Barbuta until an anti-discrimination court case determines whether these transfers are legal.

Meanwhile, the children still living in Tor de' Cenci are waiting to find out which school they'll attend this autumn. The decision to move them to La Barbuta

has been made, regardless of what they might want. What, indeed, does this tell Roma children about their place in society?

Amnesty International is campaigning to stop forced evictions of Roma people living in camps and to end segregation. We want new laws and guidelines developed for police officers and other officials involved in evictions. We want plans for closing authorized or tolerated camps to be rewritten after genuine consultation with affected families. And we want Roma people to be offered alternative housing that isn't limited to camps.

This will send a clear message that Roma people have rights too, including to a future alongside their neighbours across Europe.

### ACT NOW

Sign and send our postcard asking Italy's Prime Minister to stop forced evictions and segregation of Roma people.



## THIS IS WHAT A FORC



# EXPOSING WRONGS ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

**PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY NOW HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF GETTING JUSTICE INTERNATIONALLY WHEN THEIR RIGHTS ARE TRAMPLED ON AT HOME.**

**F**amilies being forced from their homes with no warning, and left destitute and homeless. Governments allowing companies to do mining on Indigenous People's traditional lands without getting their consent. Half a million women dying every year of pregnancy complications that could be prevented.

These are just a few examples of how governments are abusing people's economic, social and cultural rights, every day, around the globe. So far, it's been difficult to hold them to account and get justice for some of the world's most vulnerable people. Until now.

Because within our grasp is a new treaty that will give people a chance of getting justice at the UN when their governments fail them. We have campaigned for years for this new international complaints mechanism – called the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

Justice is vitally important for all individuals, groups and communities whose rights are violated. They need an effective remedy for the harm they've suffered. This could mean, for example, giving someone back the home they were forcibly evicted from, and a legal guarantee that it won't happen again.

Human rights violations happen because governments haven't put in place the laws, policy and practice needed to stop them. They might be negligent, or discriminating against certain groups of people. Or they might simply have decided not to do anything to protect these rights.

But when a country joins the Optional Protocol, people can start exposing the human rights abuses they've suffered at home for all the world to see. This kind of unwanted attention will force governments to pay more than lip service to the rights of, for example, people living in slums or women who can't afford good health care.

As of August 2012, eight countries had joined the treaty – Argentina, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mongolia, Slovakia, and Spain. We just need two more countries to bring it into force. We're now calling on every country in the world to join too, and make sure people's human rights are better protected.



**Hoy Mai's village, Bos, was bulldozed and burned to the ground in 2009: "My house, my things, my clothes – all went up in smoke." She was imprisoned after travelling to Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh, to complain about the eviction. She was released after signing away the rights to her land.**

**Roma people being forcibly evicted from Via Severini, another Roma camp in Rome, on 26 March 2012. Families were given just a few hours to collect their belongings before the bulldozers took over.**  
All images © Amnesty International

## FORCED EVICTION LOOKS LIKE

### ACT NOW

Sign and send our postcard calling on South Africa to join the ICESCR and the Optional Protocol. And sign our petitions at [tinyurl.com/SA-demand-protection](http://tinyurl.com/SA-demand-protection) and [tinyurl.com/Senegal-OP-petition](http://tinyurl.com/Senegal-OP-petition)



# A DYING TREND

To mark the 10th International Day of the Death Penalty on 10 October, we talked to a leading Caribbean activist, Carmelo Campos-Cruz, about his fight to abolish capital punishment – in the region and worldwide.

## THERE HAS BEEN GREAT PROGRESS

“It’s a real challenge to maintain a strong opposition to capital punishment when the number of homicides, and the cruelty with which they occur, has been increasing dramatically. Yet there has been great progress towards ending the death penalty internationally. Numbers speak for themselves: executions and death sentences are decreasing steadily, as is the number of countries using capital punishment. Nevertheless, some cases are still alarming, like Iran, which executed more than 360 people in 2011.

“The worldwide abolitionist movement is better organized and more integrated than years ago. We’re bringing on board people who have historically been seen as supporting state executions, like murder victims’ families, police officers, public prosecutors and members of conservative organizations. This has helped enormously to uncover some of the myths used to justify state killing.”

## ON THE FRONT LINE

“As a human rights activist, you have to be clear about what you’re fighting for. You must be on the front line during difficult times. And you’ll need to do many different tasks – drafting press releases, organizing conferences, fundraising, lobbying politicians and researching different topics.

“I began working against the death penalty in 1998, almost by chance. I was asked to represent Amnesty International Puerto Rico in a meeting to form the organization Citizens against the Death Penalty. I set up the Puerto Rican Coalition against the Death Penalty (PRCADP) in 2005, together with other organizations. The idea was to bring together different sections of Puerto Rican society – churches, unions and communities, and student, political and professional organizations. Today, PRCADP has 40 members and is itself a member of the World Coalition against the Death Penalty.

“PRCADP is part of a global movement, but since 2007 it has focused on ending the death penalty in the Caribbean, where there is strong support for capital punishment. Many Caribbean states have high crime rates, but the evidence shows that there is no link between homicide rates and whether or not a country uses the death penalty.”



© Carmelo Campos-Cruz



© Amnesty International



© Amnesty International



**Left:** Carmelo Campos-Cruz with Sister Helen Prejean, author of *Death Man Walking*.  
**Below:** Stills from a “sand art” film about the death penalty by Amnesty International Korea. Watch it at [tinyurl.com/death-penalty-film](http://tinyurl.com/death-penalty-film)

## BUILDING BRIDGES OF UNDERSTANDING

“The Caribbean region suffers from language barriers and fragmented relations between countries. Since 2011, a group of organizations and individuals has been working to form The Greater Caribbean for Life, an organization which will campaign against the death penalty by building on our similarities. The network’s name represents respect for the right to life in the struggle against capital punishment.

“Working in coalitions is a rewarding and effective way to tackle most human rights issues. Don’t be afraid to share views with people of different ideologies. Only by building bridges of understanding will we advance and integrate our societies.”

## LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGNING ARE DIFFERENT

“Local and international campaigning are two different things, but there are similarities. It’s always important to consider the particular circumstances of the region or country you are targeting. For instance, the USA will consider the financial cost of executions, while this isn’t so relevant in China, for example.

“For a local-level campaigner, it’s important to share strategies and resources with other local organizations. But you also need international support for the actions you develop in your country.

“In a country like Puerto Rico, having contact with the international anti-death penalty community has been important to help us make them understand our unusual circumstances. The case of Puerto Rico is unique in the world. Although capital punishment was abolished in 1929 (long before most abolitionist countries) and the 1952 Constitution prohibits it, the death penalty can still be imposed by a US federal court for crimes committed in Puerto Rico.”

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**We have the extraordinary situation of state executions being carried out against the will of the people.**

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## IT IS ESSENTIAL TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

“I can’t imagine myself not campaigning, especially in a world with so many inequalities and unfulfilled aspirations. It is essential to make a difference in a humble and realistic way. Once that becomes an important part of your life, you will always fight against injustices one way or the other.

“Motivation mainly comes by knowing that you’re doing what’s right, no matter if most people accept it or not. For me, it also comes from a firm belief that eradicating the death penalty will make us a much better society. Another important source of inspiration comes from other people who are involved in the struggle, like innocent people who have been freed from death row, and murder victims fighting against capital punishment.”

**Carmelo Campos-Cruz co-founded the Puerto Rican Coalition against the Death Penalty and was President of the Board of Directors at Amnesty Puerto Rico. He is also a lawyer, a professor and a PhD candidate in International Law.**

10 October 2012 is the 10th World Day Against the Death Penalty. This year we will focus on the worldwide progress towards abolition over the last decade and the challenges ahead. We will also urge governments to take another step towards abolition by voting in favour of the fourth UN General Assembly resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

Amnesty International has campaigned for worldwide abolition of the death penalty since 1977. Many countries have since abolished capital punishment and the number of states carrying out executions has fallen. But there is still more work to be done. To find out how you can get involved on 10 October, visit [amnesty.org/death-penalty](http://amnesty.org/death-penalty)

# CLOSE THE TOXIC LOOPHOLES

**“THE WASTE WAS DUMPED AROUND 8PM. FIRST THE SMELL SUFFOCATED US AND THEN WE COULDN’T BREATHE.”**  
**ABIDJAN RESIDENT, CÔTE D’IVOIRE**

Six years ago, people in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, woke up to find that toxic waste had been dumped around their city – close to their houses, workplaces, schools and fields. A new Amnesty International and Greenpeace report now shows exactly how this man-made disaster was allowed to happen.

The waste came from Europe and belonged to Trafigura, a leading oil trading company. Trafigura chartered a cargo ship, the Probo Koala, which brought the waste to Côte d’Ivoire in August 2006. Trafigura contracted a small, local company to take the waste to a municipal dump in Akuado, a residential area of the capital, Abidjan. During the night, this newly-licensed company dumped several truckloads of the waste there and in many other parts of the city.

Local people experienced symptoms including nausea, headaches, vomiting, abdominal pains, skin and eye irritation. Tens of thousands flooded hospitals and medical centres looking for help. One doctor told us it was “the biggest health catastrophe that Côte d’Ivoire has ever known”.



**A woman protests outside the law courts in Abidjan, September 2008.**

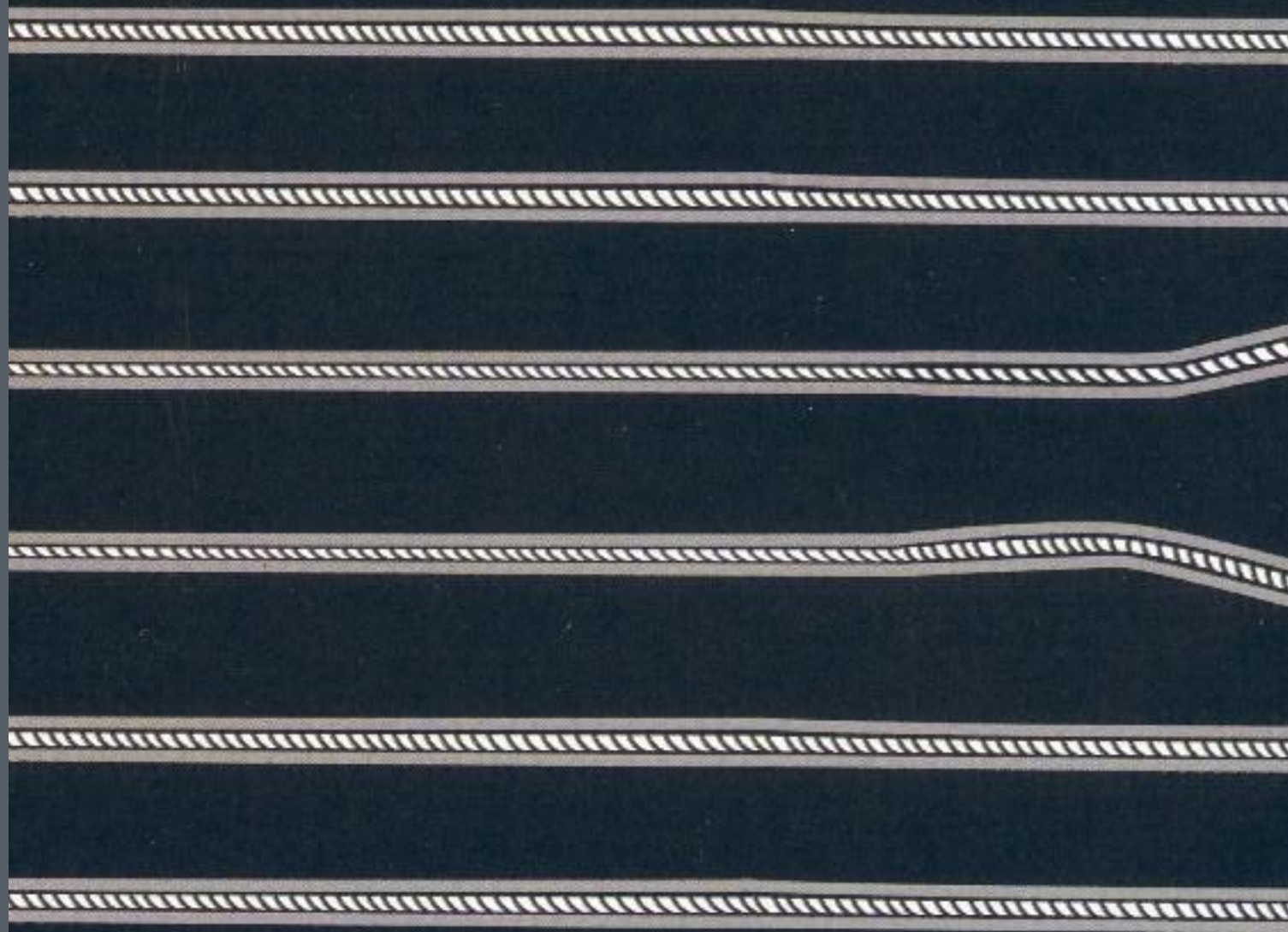
Trafigura was recently found guilty of illegally exporting harmful waste to Cote d’Ivoire by a court in the Netherlands. The company has appealed. Trafigura has never been properly investigated or prosecuted for the toxic dumping in Abidjan. It reached a financial settlement with Côte d’Ivoire’s government in exchange for guarantees of legal immunity. It also settled a group claim brought by victims in the UK courts weeks before the case was due for trial. Victims still haven’t got access to key scientific and medical information about the waste and its impact.

Our new report highlights how companies can still avoid accountability for crimes committed across multiple jurisdictions, as in this case, and calls on states to close the legal loopholes that allow this to happen.

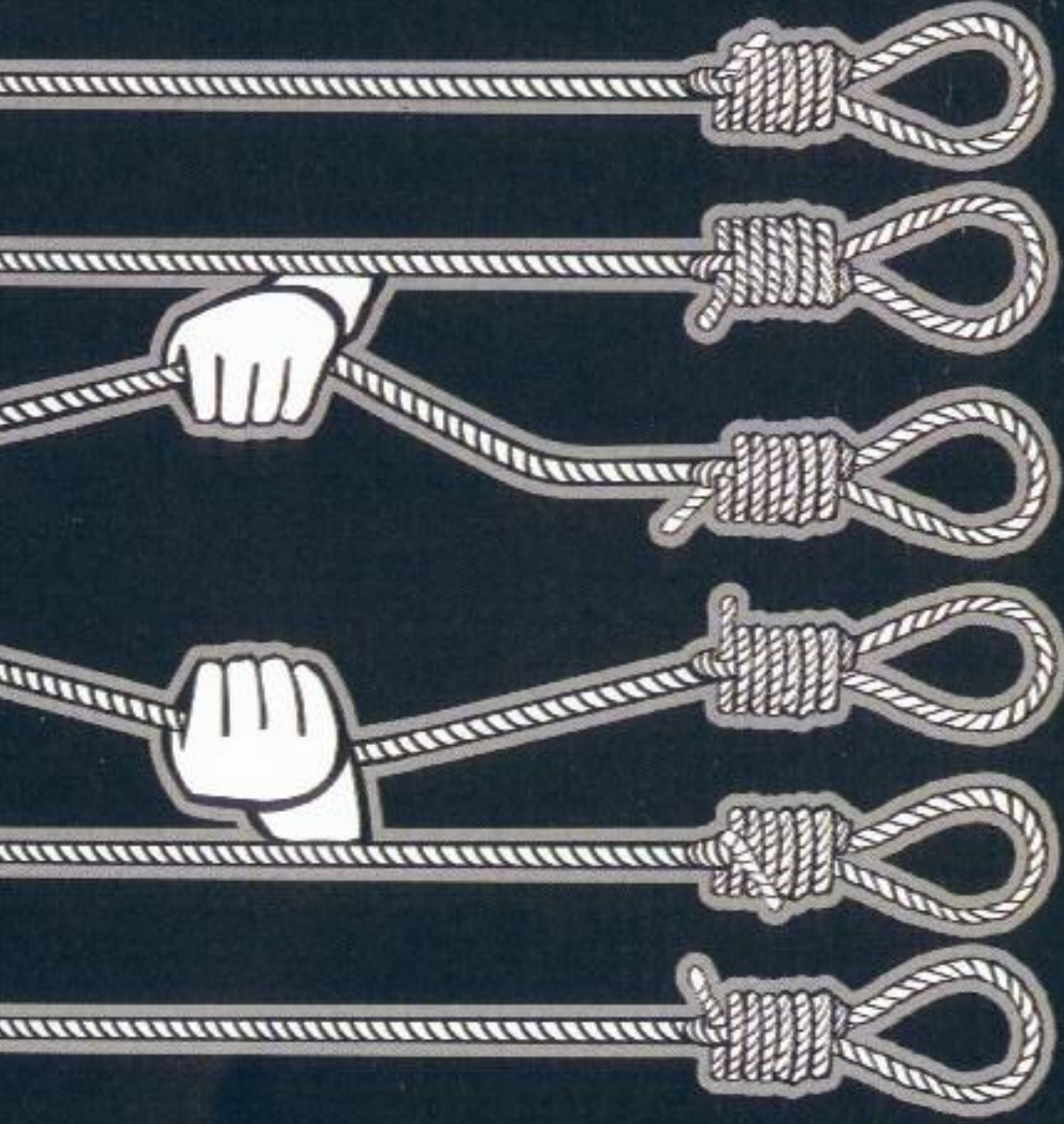
## ACT NOW

Read our new report at [tinyurl.com/trafigura-report](http://tinyurl.com/trafigura-report)









Together we will be free...!

10 OCTOBER 2012  
WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY  
[AMNESTY.ORG/DEATH-PENALTY](http://AMNESTY.ORG/DEATH-PENALTY)

"Together we will be free" by Onish Aminelahi, Iran – one of over 2,000 posters submitted to a 2010 competition inviting designers to create posters promoting universal abolition of the death penalty.  
Visit [posterfortomorrow.org](http://posterfortomorrow.org)

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**







© Pieter Stockmans – Tussen Vrijheid en Geluk

# ‘THE SEA IS A CEMETERY’

**Many destitute young Tunisians die at sea during desperate attempts to reach Lampedusa, a small Italian island at the gateway to Europe. Campaigner CATHERINE PELLEGRINO discussed why with NESRINE MBARKA HASSAN, a Tunisian human rights activist.**

**T**he people of Zarzis, a small coastal town in the south of Tunisia, refuse to eat fish, says Nesrine Mbarka Hassan, a Tunisian human rights activist.

Many of their young people have died trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. The locals believe the fish are feeding on their children. “In their eyes, the Mediterranean sea is now a cemetery,” Nesrine says. “Some mothers won’t even go near the beach. Others go to there to talk to their children.”

I met Nesrine in Lampedusa as Amnesty activists gathered there for an international human rights camp in July. In 2011, the 6,000 inhabitants of this small Italian island saw up to 1,000 migrants arriving on their island every night.

In the same year, at least 1,500 people died at sea trying to reach Europe from North Africa, according to the UN refugee agency, UNHCR. Some were believed to be asylum-seekers and refugees fleeing conflict in Libya. Others were young Tunisians desperate to escape a life of poverty.

Every year, thousands of people set sail for Europe in overcrowded and unseaworthy boats. Most lack professional crews and safety equipment, and many end up lost at sea.





Assisting people in distress at sea, regardless of their nationality, status or circumstances, is a key principle of the international law of the sea. But European countries have occasionally failed to rescue people leaving the North African coast, in what could seem like attempts to avoid taking responsibility for migrants and refugees.

Malta and Italy have refused several times to allow people rescued in international waters by private boats to disembark on their territory. In some cases, the authorities refused to respond to distress calls and passed the responsibility on to each other. And while governments argue, the people on the boats either die of thirst, or drown.

Most Tunisian migrants are young men from the south, areas marginalized under Tunisia's former president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Nesrine explains. "There's no industry in these parts of Tunisia. These are desert areas, so there is no agriculture. Young people have little hope of finding a job. Their only options are to move north, to Tunis, or try to reach Europe. So they think, 'Better die trying than stay here.'"

After Ben Ali was toppled on 14 January 2011 during the country's uprising, Tunisian migrants continued to set sail for Europe, she says. "Young

people still feel they have no future in Tunisia. In fact, the flow of irregular migrants picked up immediately after the uprising. Once Ben Ali was gone, migrating to Europe became an expression of freedom."

The culture of migration is now deeply ingrained in Tunisian society: "Neighbours and relatives leave in groups. They spread the word between them when a boat is about to leave for Europe and travel together," Nesrine says. "The families find solace in the fact that their sons are not travelling alone. There's a real sense of shared faith."

When a boat doesn't make it, whole towns are in mourning: "Sometimes there are 12 or 13 funerals in the same town. Sometimes even the same apartment building. The whole community can be affected when a boat sinks." Some families don't know if the sons who left are alive or dead. Nesrine has put some in touch with a colleague in Italy, who then visits detention centres with a list of names, hoping to find some of them alive.

She doubts young Tunisians will stop trying to reach Europe by boat: "We need to demand that European countries change their migration policies," she says. "At the moment, they seem to be more concerned with keeping migrants away from their borders than saving lives."

**Above from left:**

**Remains of a boat in Lampedusa; Photos that migrants carried with them on their journey across the sea, found abandoned on boats; Nesrine Mbarka Hassan.**

## ACT NOW

Join our campaign for the human rights of migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees in Europe and at its borders at [whenyoudontexist.eu](http://whenyoudontexist.eu)





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# THE TRUTH WILL NOT DIE

**SURVIVORS AND RELATIVES OF PEOPLE WHO WERE  
MASSACRED IN EL SALVADOR 30 YEARS AGO REFUSE  
TO BE SILENCED — THEY STILL WANT JUSTICE.**

**“**I didn't realize that I cried through the night, but they say I cried. It took me years, years, to start to get over it. Because I walked along the street crying, I used to eat, crying, I used to have my supper, crying, at every meal, crying.”

This is what Jesús, an elderly woman, told Amnesty when we met her in April 2012. Her mother,

father, brother and four-year-old son were murdered in the massacre of El Calabozo on 22 August 1982. She survived. Today, she is part of a group still fighting for justice from the Salvadoran state.

Witnesses say the Salvadoran army murdered over 200 unarmed civilians in cold blood that day. Soldiers raped some of the women and girls before killing them. The UN Truth Commission established after the conflict also documented the El Calabozo massacre. But despite the evidence, no one has ever been charged, tried or convicted.

El Salvador's 12-year internal conflict began in 1980 between the military-led government and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), a coalition of five left-wing guerrilla groups. As the repression grew, the violence intensified and many massacres took place. People living in San Vicente department in northern El Salvador, like Jesús, quickly learned to fear the military.

In mid-August 1982, the military began a carefully planned operation in San Vicente. By that time, those living in the local villages were mostly women, young children and elderly people, who had stayed behind to tend the crops.

After several days and nights of bombing raids, villagers heard rumours that ground troops were



coming. Thousands of people began to flee their homes in the middle of a heavy storm. Families struggled through dense undergrowth, carrying those who couldn't walk themselves.

"The armed forces called the operation 'scorched earth', because they wanted to finish everything – people, animals," another survivor, Felicita, told us. "The cows they saw, they killed. Horses, chickens, dogs, cats – they left the people with nothing. They burned the houses, everything."

On the evening of 21 August, several hundred people – mostly women and children – finally made it to the banks of the swollen Amatitán river, to the point known as El Calabozo. They planned to move on again after the children had rested. But by daybreak the army had arrived. Felicita, who hid in the undergrowth with one of her children, described what happened next:

"The soldiers were above and below the place, so people couldn't get away, and they started to close in. They didn't scare the people into thinking they were going to kill them – they just told people to form a line. People shouted not to kill them because of the children.

**Left: Relatives and survivors walk the now well-trodden path to the riverside, where their loved ones were massacred in 1982.**

**Below: The El Calabozo memorial: 30 years on, now elderly survivors and relatives like these women are still fighting for justice.**

**Below right: Jesús holds a picture of her father, who was killed by the army at El Calabozo.**

But the officer in charge gave the order to shoot them, and then came the screams of the poor people."

It's difficult to confirm how many people were murdered. The soldiers reportedly threw acid on some of the bodies, and the river swept many of the dead away. Survivors and relatives compiled a list of over 200 missing people, from babies to grandparents.

When El Salvador's conflict ended in 1992, those who had fled began to return to San Vicente. Survivors and relatives filed a case with the authorities in the hope of getting justice for those massacred. But despite the evidence and eyewitness testimonies, the courts closed the case in 1993.

Since then survivors and relatives have struggled to have the case heard. Each time it has been reopened it has faced a new legal obstacle. Some can't wait much longer. "Some of the people have already died of old age," said their lawyer, Claudia Interiano. "It seems as if they're waiting for the survivors of the massacres to die so the problem goes away".

The past is still very present in El Salvador. Individuals accused of being involved in massacres like El Calabozo still hold influential positions. And cases mysteriously stand still for decades in a justice system that has repeatedly failed victims. Almost none of those who ordered and carried out the killings, torture and sexual violence during the conflict, which left an estimated 75,000 people dead, have ever answered for their crimes.

The lack of any official acknowledgement that the brutal killings in El Calabozo even happened, or official engagement with survivors and relatives, is a sign of the government's indifference, according to

Carolina Constanza, director of the Madeleine Lagadec Centre for Human Rights: "Nobody remembers the victims – they aren't part of the government's agenda."

"The relatives and the communities are crying out for justice and truth. We who accompany them are asking the state to recognize the truth, and search for a way to give the victims reparation," she told us. A glimmer of hope came when the current government took formal responsibility for another massacre in the village of El Mozote, and began a programme to make reparations to that community.

Those murdered at El Calabozo won't be forgotten. On 22 August this year, their relatives, survivors and hundreds of others met once again at the church near the massacre site. Every year, they follow the same difficult trail that their loved ones took that desperate night 30 years ago, arriving at the memorial near the river bank.

There, the names of their loved ones are engraved as a testament to the fight against impunity. They are a reminder for those who organized, committed and tried to cover up the murders, that time will not erase their deeds. Those who survived will not be silenced. The truth of what happened will not die.

As Felicita put it: "We've been fighting and working for a long time, tirelessly. We can't stop until we see justice done for these people."

## ACT NOW

**Sign and send the postcard in our insert asking El Salvador's President to bring those responsible for the El Calabozo massacre to justice .**





# THE ‘WITHOUTS’ OF KUWAIT

“I can’t get a birth, marriage or divorce certificate, I’m not allowed to work in the public sector or to own property, and I’m not allowed a university education.” Nawaf al-Badr, 27, angrily sums up what it means to be a Bidun person in Kuwait.

The word comes from the Arabic *bidūn jinsiyya*, meaning “without nationality”. The Bidun people are quite literally Kuwait’s “withouts” – lacking access to basic services in one of the richest per capita countries in the world. It’s almost as if they don’t exist.

Nawaf is stateless, even though his family has lived in Kuwait for three generations. We met him during a visit to research human rights violations in Kuwait earlier this year. He is a member of the Kuwait Society for Human Rights, and an international member of Amnesty International.

The Bidun’s voices have recently grown louder. Fed up with being trapped in poverty, and inspired by the “Arab Spring”, they’ve staged mass protests since February 2011. Thousands of men and women are demanding to become Kuwaiti citizens. They want to be included in the only society they know, and that has been theirs for so long.

Government security forces have cracked down on their demonstrations and arrested people. ‘Abdullah ‘Atallah Daham, aged 25, told us he was beaten and suspended in a stress position after a protest last year. He was held in Kuwait Central Prison for 75 days before being released on bail in March along with 32 others. Their trial, on charges including participating in an “illegal gathering”, is ongoing.

Bandar al-Fadhli, aged 30, told me he’d been arrested six times. He was beaten and repeatedly kicked on one occasion, and told to soil his clothes when he asked to go to the toilet. The Kuwaiti

authorities clearly wanted to make an example of these men, and have yet to investigate their allegations of torture.

The story of the “withouts” has many twists and turns. Many Bidun are descended from nomadic Bedouin tribes that roamed freely across the borders of the Gulf countries. Their ancestors didn’t apply for nationality around the time Kuwait gained independence from Britain, in 1961. Some were illiterate, or didn’t understand the concept of citizenship. Others refused to give up their centuries-old way of life to belong to any one country.

In the 1980s, the Bidun were blamed for a series of terrorist attacks and shut out of government schools, denied free health care, and barred from certain government jobs. They were branded “illegal residents”, with government officials claiming that most of them were nationals of neighbouring countries, who had destroyed their documents to claim the benefits of being Kuwaitis.

When Kuwait was liberated after Iraq’s 1991 invasion, many Bidun were suspected of having collaborated with the enemy. They lost their jobs in the army and police forces, and in the public sector. Many ended up living in poverty in shanty towns on the fringes of society.

For the “withouts”, Kuwaiti nationality is the key to a better life: to free education and health care, and job opportunities. Bushayer, a young Bidun woman, tearfully told us she’d given up hope of getting a higher education. She’d been admitted to university and saved money for the high fees, but then her state identity documents expired. Now, her life was on hold, because she didn’t know when – or if – the government would renew them.

All Bidun have to carry ID to access basic things like a driving licence, credit, health checks or schooling. But their ID is temporary, and when it expires after two years, there’s no guarantee it will be renewed. Many people who apply for a renewal have been put under a vaguely defined “security block” without explanation. Many say the institution in charge, the Central System for the Remedy of the Situation of Illegal Residents, just stifles their aspirations instead of helping to solve their problems.

Bidun women feel the discrimination intensely. Families that can’t afford to send all their children to school choose to educate their sons, while their daughters take turns every other year. Stuck at home, with little or no education, these girls don’t have many job prospects. Marrying a rich man is their only other way to escape poverty and avoid becoming a burden. Bushayer and her friend, Nadia, told us that some women now choose not to marry or have children, simply to avoid repeating this cycle of despair.

“Our houses are small and the girls often end up sleeping on the kitchen floor,” Nadia added. “We don’t really express our anger at the situation. We’ve learned to keep our expectations low and to have no aspirations. They tell us to be happy with what we have.” She and Bushayer feel that they, as women, can’t participate in demonstrations. “But through Twitter, after 50 years of silence, we can shout now,” Nadia said.

So far, Kuwait’s leaders have turned a deaf ear to the Bidun’s calls for justice. There are over 100,000 Bidun in Kuwait, but the government says only 34,000 of them have any hope of getting citizenship.





**AFTER 50 YEARS OF SILENCE, KUWAIT'S BIDUN PEOPLE ARE SHOUTING OUT FOR THEIR RIGHT TO BECOME CITIZENS. BY CAMPAIGNER SIMA WATLING.**



© Ilenia Piccioni | Molo7 Photo Agency

Deaf athlete Ali Shamkhi Al-Fadly, a 24-year-old Bidun man, stands in Freedom Square, Taima. He represented Kuwait in an Arab championship for deaf people in Tunisia in March 2011, where his team won 20 medals. But as a Bidun, Ali is denied access to services that could help with his athletic career, and is not able to register as a disabled person. He gets a passport to compete in sporting events abroad, but the Kuwaiti authorities confiscate it at all other times.

*Inset:* A birth certificate belonging to a Bidun girl. Like all Bidun identity papers, it will only be recognized as a legal document if it is approved by a central governmental body, in an arbitrary process that is open to abuse.

Meanwhile, the bar for those who apply is being raised higher and higher. Families have to prove that they were part of Kuwait's 1965 census, that they've lived in the country continuously, or that their relatives have done military or government service. Ultimately, the decision often seems to boil down to people's personal influence and connections.

For half a century, the Bidun have been trapped in limbo. Their only way out is if the authorities find the political will to solve their situation for good. They could do so by making the citizenship criteria much simpler, and fair, and protecting all the Bidun's human rights without discrimination – in particular their rights to health, education and work. And they should allow people like Nawaf, Bushayer and Nadia to challenge their statelessness in court, instead of facing random rejection by a faceless institution for unknown reasons.

Kuwait has both the legal experts and the human rights activists needed to stop the Bidun going without any longer. They cannot wait another 50 years, and their calls for change are growing louder.

**ACT NOW**

Find out more about the Bidun here: [tinyurl.com/kuwait-bidun](http://tinyurl.com/kuwait-bidun)

© Antonio Tiso | Molo7 Photo Agency



(my wife and my 10 years old son are suffering from...)  
 The Cyprus government not only gives us protection  
 but also pushing us to go. As you know the  
 protection is against deportation and detention  
 because I am not criminal. I am religious asylum  
 seeker that I said hundreds of times, if I go  
 back to my country I will face death and my  
 family will be destroy. The Cyprus government  
 keep me in this location for almost seven months

© Amnesty International

A letter to Amnesty International  
 from a man detained in Cyprus,  
 protesting against his situation and  
 detention conditions.

## CYPRUS: PUNISHMENT WITHOUT A CRIME

“They treat us as hardened criminals,” reads one of many letters detainees handed us recently at Cyprus’ Lakatameia police station and Block 10 of Nicosia Central Prison. “We are kept here simply due to visa issues, we are asylum-seekers and refugees.”

Hundreds of people are kept here without having committed a crime, simply because Cyprus has no other immigration detention facilities. Most are waiting to be deported. Others – like people from Syria – are just waiting: deportations to Syria have been suspended because of the unrest there.

The people we met here have fled war, persecution or grinding poverty in countries such as Iran, and across Africa and Asia. They are detained for months, even years. Some have gone on hunger strike or attempted suicide in their small, dirty cells.

Another letter said they have “no access to fresh air or exercise, no direct sun light, no TV or radio and no way to clean our clothes”. Families are often separated: “My son is now depressed and my wife under too much stress,” wrote one inmate.

Cyprus is violating international human rights law, because irregular migrants should only be detained as a last resort. Free legal aid is so limited that only a few people manage to challenge the legality of their

detention. Even in cases where the Supreme Court has ruled a detention unlawful, people have not been released.

This is quite simply wrong. As one letter writer put it: “I am human and I have rights.”

### ACT NOW

Call on the Cypriot authorities to stop treating irregular migrants as criminals, by:

- making alternative detention facilities available
- only using detention as a last resort, in accordance with international human rights standards
- always respecting Supreme Court decisions to release detainees.

Write to:

Eleni Mavrou  
 Minister of Interior  
 Ministry of Interior  
 Dimostheni Severi Avenue  
 1453 Nicosia  
 Cyprus

# DIGITAL PANIC





# L BUTTONS

## USING NEW TECHNOLOGY CREATIVELY CAN PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

**Y**ou've been writing a blog criticizing your country's police and security forces for attacking and detaining human rights activists. They have taken away people you know personally, who have been denied a fair trial, and sometimes tortured. Their families have had no news for weeks and don't even know if they're alive. Lately, the security police have been watching your every move. You fear they could take you too at any time. If they do, you want to let people know, quickly and easily, while you still can.

This scenario is very real for many people who defend human rights. That's why Amnesty is piloting a project to develop new digital tools to protect activists. Early this year we co-hosted a 'hackathon' with IDEO, a leading design and innovation consultancy. A hackathon brings together web designers and software engineers with area experts to collaborate in solving specific problems.

Their challenge: how can technology help human rights activists facing unlawful detention? Nine winning concepts were chosen from over 320 proposals. One of those now being developed by Amnesty is a one-click mobile phone application, or app, for people at imminent risk of being detained.

The app would allow you to send urgent information to your friends, families and important contacts, simply by tapping your phone screen. In future, you might be able to trigger a whole chain of events in this way, including sending your GPS position to your contacts and alerting them to delete your computer files, or upload pre-written messages on Twitter and Facebook.

"This is the beauty of open source software development," says Tanya O'Carroll, Technology and Human Rights Project Officer, who heads the Amnesty project with our Director of Digital Communications, Owen Pringle. "Once the 'alert' app is out there, others can take it up, evolving it into a multitude of new variants, localised by region, issue and need. This makes it harder for

authorities to track but also puts control directly in activists' hands."

These ideas are part of a growing trend of combining technology and activism in creative ways. For example, the Kenyan organization Ushahidi, which means 'testimony' in Swahili, has helped eyewitness testimony reach many more people. It uses a service that links live reporting to a Google Map location via SMS or the web. This by itself brings greater public scrutiny, but can also tell other activists where to concentrate their efforts, or even which areas to avoid for safety.

Similar concepts have been used widely to protect human rights. In Burundi, Kyrgyzstan and Mexico, Ushahidi has been used to report on election fraud. In Bangladesh, "Bijoya" documents attacks on women. Nigeria's "Security Tracker" exposes all kinds of crimes. Amnesty International USA's eyesonsyria.org project records human rights abuses in Syria. And the "LRA Crisis Tracker" has documented assaults and violence by the Congolese Lord's Resistance Army since 2009.

Digital networking creates new risks as well as possibilities. "People at risk shouldn't be put in more danger because of digital technologies, which could be used to identify or find them," says Sherif Elsayed-Ali, Amnesty's Head of Refugee and Migrants' Rights.

Data security and anonymity is therefore one of the basic guidelines of the project, and was a critical consideration for contributors to the June 2012 Hackathon in Berlin, San Francisco and other cities, organized by Random Hacks of Kindness (RHoK). The challenge asked how technology could monitor abuses faced by refugees and migrants, without compromising their security or identity.

In San Francisco, activists developed the concept of an online network enabling people who are migrating to send messages to friends and family members, wherever they are. A variant of this is already being developed for migrants passing through shelters in Mexico. It will give them a secure online space for keeping in touch with their loved ones. People can also use it to share valuable information about safe or risky routes, where to access water easily along the way, and to track where and when someone last logged in if they've disappeared.

We hope that the first prototypes can soon be tested in real situations. For people at risk of human rights abuses, using new technologies creatively could be a life-saver. This is also the first step in revolutionizing Amnesty's approach to using technology to protect human rights.



## GOOD NEWS & UPDATES

# HAVE YOU HEARD BACK FROM A GOVERNMENT OR AN INDIVIDUAL AT RISK?

Please tell us if you've had a response to an appeal featured in Wire. Send your story and copies/scans of any correspondence to [yourwire@amnesty.org](mailto:yourwire@amnesty.org) or to our address on the inside cover.

## YOUR ACTIONS CHANGE LIVES

### ANTI-STEEL PLANT CAMPAIGNER RELEASED ON BAIL

Indian activist Narayana Reddy has been released on bail after five months in prison. He is part of a campaign against the South Korean company POSCO, which intends to build a steel plant on common lands used by local farmers in Orissa state, India. We believe the charges against him were fabricated to silence the ongoing campaign.

### "A LOT OF LETTERS"

"So many thousands of people wrote to me. That was extremely important, not only as a morale booster but also keeping me in touch with the issue of human rights across the world. The idea that this was an unjust incarceration was absolutely important. There were a lot of letters – I used to get more letters than the rest of the inmates of the jail put together."

Activist and former prisoner of conscience Binayak Sen, speaking to Amnesty staff in June 2012. He was sentenced to life in prison on politically motivated charges in December 2010, and freed on bail in April 2011. A decision on his case is still pending.

### IRAN FREES WOMEN'S RIGHTS ACTIVIST

© Campaign for Equality



Ronak Safazadeh, a member of Iran's Kurdish minority, was released from prison on 10 May 2012. She was detained on 9 October 2007, one day after she collected signatures for the One Million Signatures Campaign (also known as the Campaign for Equality), aiming to end discrimination against women in Iranian law. We considered her to be a prisoner of conscience, held only for her work for women's rights and Kurdish people in Iran.

Although she is due to spend the next five years on probation, Ronak Safazadeh has continued with her university studies, which she began in prison. Her mother thanked our members for supporting her daughter's case.

### FREEDOM FOR KHUN KAWRIO



© Kayan New Generation Youth (KNGY)

Khun Kawrio (Worldwide Appeals – March/April 2012) was one of at least 20 political prisoners released in Myanmar on 3 July 2012. The youth activist had been tortured and denied medical attention during his interrogation.

Hundreds more political prisoners remain behind bars in Myanmar. We believe many of them are prisoners of conscience who should be released immediately and unconditionally. All remaining political prisoners should be given a fair trial under an internationally recognized offence or be released.

### DOCTOR FREED

Wenceslao Mansogo Alo was weeks into a three-year prison sentence for professional negligence when he was released from prison in Equatorial Guinea on 6 June following a presidential "pardon". The charges against him appear to be politically motivated. He is a medical doctor, a prominent human rights defender and a member of Equatorial Guinea's only independent opposition party.

The "pardon" did not cover the part of the sentence that requires him to pay compensation and a fine, and also bans him from practising as a doctor for five years.

Wenceslao Mansogo Alo appealed to the Supreme Court against his conviction and sentence after the trial. He has decided to proceed with the appeal despite the "pardon". He sends his thanks to Amnesty activists for their efforts on his behalf, which included a letter writing campaign. We continue to call for the remaining penalties against him to be lifted.





© Valérie Chételat



© Reuben Stearns/Amnesty International



© Control Arms Coalition/Andrew Kelly

Activists worldwide campaigned hard for an effective Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) this year. What could have been a landmark arms trade deal was delayed by Russia, China and the United States in July 2012. But it is still within reach. The draft text will most likely be sent back to the UN General Assembly in October.

**Main:** “Hands up for arms controls” street action in Bern by Amnesty International Switzerland in June 2012.

**Above:** Body bag action by the Control Arms Coalition in front of the UN building, New York, USA, 2 July 2012.

**Left:** The fashion designer Vivienne Westwood.



**“EVEN THE BRIEFEST  
TOUCH OF KINDNESS  
CAN LIGHTEN A HEAVY HEART.  
KINDNESS CAN  
CHANGE THE LIVES  
OF PEOPLE.”**

AUNG SAN SUU KYI  
NOBEL PRIZE ACCEPTANCE SPEECH  
12 JUNE 2012

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



**LAND RIGHTS  
ACTIVIST IN  
HIDING**

©Ana Aranha, A Publica.



Nilcilene Miguel de Lima is the president of an association of small producers representing 800 smallholder families in Lábrea, Amazonas state. Her house has been burned down and she has been threatened, beaten and forced to flee her land, all for speaking out against illegal logging.

Before she was forced out of the region, she lived in a simple wooden hut with no electricity, telephone line or running water, and planted manioc (cassava) with her husband on their smallholding.

Threats against Nilcilene began in 2009, when she started speaking out against the arrival of illegal loggers. According to the local community, gunmen hired by the loggers harass and evict smallholders and intimidate anyone who dares to question their actions. Those who

resist face violence. At least six rural workers have been killed in the region since 2007.

In May 2010, local gunmen severely beat Nilcilene, leaving her covered in bruises. In June 2010, Nilcilene was again beaten. She fled eight days later after being threatened by a gunman at her house. She returned to find her house burnt down and her crops destroyed.

In October 2011, the Brazilian government provided her with armed guards. But she continued to receive threats such as “your bullet-proof vest can protect your body but not your head”. Nilcilene’s relatives also received threats and several have fled. So serious were the threats that Nilcilene left the region again and is currently in hiding at an undisclosed location. She is desperate to return home.

**Please write, calling on the Minister of Justice to ensure the safety of Nilcilene Miguel de Lima, according to her wishes. Urge the authorities to thoroughly investigate all threats made against her and to bring those responsible to justice. Send appeals to:**

**Exmo. Sr. José Eduardo Martins Cardozo  
Esplanada dos Ministérios  
Bloco “T”, 4º andar  
70.712-902 - Brasília/DF  
Brazil**

**Start your letter: Exmo. Sr. Ministro**

**BULGARIA**

**MIHAIL STOYANOV**

**WORLDWIDE APPEAL**

**STUDENT KILLED  
IN HOMOPHOBIC  
ATTACK**



© Amnesty International

Mihail Stoyanov, a 25-year-old medical student, was beaten to death while walking in Borisova Garden in Sofia on 30 September 2008. The attack on Mihail was brutal; he was beaten until his windpipe was broken and he suffocated. Four years later, those who killed Mihail have not yet been brought to justice.

Witnesses say Mihail was attacked because his killers thought he was gay. When Mihail’s mother, Hristina, reported him missing at the local police station, she was bombarded with questions about Mihail’s habits and friends. The police also searched their home for drugs. She was then told that Mihail had been killed.

In 2010, two suspects were arrested. Three witnesses said that they saw the two suspects

killing Mihail; one pleaded guilty during the investigation. They were all part of a group that had attacked other men because of their perceived sexual orientation in the same park. In April 2012, they were released on bail. Although the prosecutor acknowledged that strong evidence was collected against the suspects during the investigation, they have never been officially charged and brought to trial. The procedure is currently at a standstill.

Bulgaria systematically fails to adequately investigate and prosecute homophobic hate crimes. Most hate crimes go unreported because the victims do not trust the authorities, partly because they have on some occasions been overtly homophobic and transphobic.

**Please write, calling for those responsible for the killing of Mihail Stoyanov to be brought to justice. Urge the authorities to immediately address the issue of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Bulgaria. Send appeals to:**

**Prosecutor Dragomir Yanchev  
Sofia City Prosecutor’s Office  
2 Vitosha Boulevard  
1061 Sofia  
Bulgaria**

**Fax: +359 2 981 8 32  
E-mail: press@prb.bg**

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC – CECILIO DÍAZ AND WILLIAM DE JESÚS CHECO**

**WORLDWIDE APPEAL**

**KILLED BY  
POLICE**



© Private

© Private

William de Jesús Checo (pictured right), a painter and decorator, and bakery worker Cecilio Díaz, were killed by police on 10 October 2009 in Copey, Villa Vasquez. The police claim that both men were killed in an exchange of gunfire between gang members and police.

However, an investigation commission appointed by the Prosecutor General concluded that: “The large number of gunshots fired at both victims and their trajectory indicated that the alleged exchange of gunfire did not take place and that there was intent to kill the two men.” On the basis of the commission’s conclusions, a tribunal ordered five police officers and a navy officer to be detained pending an investigation into the incident.

The Minister of the Interior and Police dismissed the commission’s conclusions, saying the evidence was not strong enough. The Minister declared that he would ensure that the police officers received the best legal defence available. On 9 January 2010, a court ordered the release of the officers on bail. In March 2010, the President ordered a member of the investigation commission to retire, and promoted two of the officers under investigation for the killings.

Nearly three years after the killings, no officer has been charged with the deaths of William de Jesús Checo and Cecilio Díaz. The families of both men desperately demand justice.

**Please write, giving a short summary of the case. Call for a thorough and impartial investigation into the deaths of William de Jesús Checo and Cecilio Díaz, and for those responsible to be brought to justice in a fair trial. Send appeals to:**

**Procurador General de la República  
Ave. Jiménez Moya esq. Juan Ventura  
Simón  
Palacio de Justicia  
Centro de los Heroes Constanza, Maimón  
y Estero Hondo  
Dominican Republic  
Email: lreyes@pgr.gob.do  
Start your letter: Señor Procurador**



## INDIA

## KARTAM JOGA

## WORLDWIDE APPEAL

### INDIGENOUS ACTIVIST REMAINS IN PRISON

Prisoner of conscience Kartam Joga has now served almost two years in Jagdalpur prison. Amnesty International believes he is being targeted for his human rights work in Chhattisgarh state, central India.

Kartam Joga is an activist with the Communist Party of India, and an elected member of a local self-government body. He has documented human rights violations against the Adivasi Indigenous Peoples since 2005, when their hamlets were attacked by a private militia, the Salwa Judum, which is widely believed to be recruited and sponsored by the state.

Kartam Joga petitioned India's Supreme Court in 2007, demanding accountability for human rights violations committed by security forces and the Salwa Judum. In 2011, the Supreme Court declared the Salwa Judum illegal and unconstitutional.

In September 2010, even as the Supreme Court was hearing Kartam Joga's petition, he was detained on several charges, including collaborating with armed Maoists in bombings, attacking security forces, and murdering a state official. Subsequently, courts found no evidence against Kartam Joga in three of the four cases against him and acquitted him. Hearings in the fourth and final case against him – deferred several times so far – are still ongoing.

Like the previous charges, Amnesty International believes that the remaining charge against Kartam Joga is also politically motivated, and considers him to be a prisoner of conscience.

**Please write, calling for the charges against Kartam Joga to be dropped, and for him to be released immediately and unconditionally.**

**Send appeals to:**

Dr Raman Singh  
Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh  
Chief Minister Niwas  
Raipur 492001  
India

Fax: +91 771 2221306  
Email: cm@cg.nic.in

Send a message of solidarity to:  
Kartam Joga  
Central Jail  
Jagdalpur 494001  
India

© Private



## INDONESIA – MUNIR SAID THALIB

## WORLDWIDE APPEAL

### ACTIVIST KILLED

Eight years after the killing of human rights activist Munir Said Thalib, the Indonesian authorities have failed to bring to justice all those responsible. Munir was found dead on a flight from Jakarta to the Netherlands on 7 September 2004. An autopsy carried out by the Dutch authorities showed that he had been poisoned with arsenic.

One of Indonesia's most prominent human rights campaigners, Munir took up the cause of dozens of activists who had been subjected to enforced disappearance. He co-founded two human rights organizations, helped to uncover evidence of military responsibility for human rights violations in Aceh and Timor-Leste (formerly East Timor), and made recommendations to the government on bringing

high-ranking officials to justice. In September 1999, he was appointed to the Commission of Inquiry into Human Rights Violations in East Timor (KPP-HAM).

Munir was in constant danger as a result of his human rights work. In August 2003, a bomb exploded outside his home in Jakarta. In 2002 and 2003, mobs attacked the office where he worked. Although three people have now been convicted for their involvement in Munir's death, there are credible allegations that those responsible for his death at the highest levels have not been brought to justice. Indonesia's human rights defenders continue to be threatened, intimidated and attacked. They believe they would be better protected if there was true accountability for Munir's killing.

**Please write, calling on the authorities to establish a new independent investigation into the killing of Munir Said Thalib and bring the perpetrators at all levels to justice in fair trials. Urge the authorities to recognize and publicly support the legitimate work of human rights defenders and condemn any type of harassment or attacks against them.**

**Send appeals to:**

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono  
Istana Merdeka  
Jakarta 10110  
Indonesia

Start your letter: Your Excellency



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## SAUDI ARABIA

## SITI ZAINAB BINTI DUHRI RUPA

## WORLDWIDE APPEAL

### DOMESTIC WORKER UNDER DEATH SENTENCE

Siti Zainab Binti Duhri Rupa, an Indonesian national and mother of two, has been detained in Medina Prison since 1999. She is currently under sentence of death and is thought to be mentally ill.

According to sources in Indonesia, in November 1999 she admitted stabbing her female employer. Under interrogation, she said she had killed her employer because of "mistreatment". She had no legal representation at any stage and did not have access to a consular representative during the police interrogation. The police suspected that she suffered from mental illness at the time of the interrogation.

Before she was arrested, Siti Zainab Binti Duhri Rupa sent two letters in which she said

that her employer and her employer's son had acted cruelly towards her.

Amnesty International has been campaigning for her sentence to be commuted since 1999, and has drawn the Saudi Arabian authorities' attention to UN Commission on Human Rights resolution 2004/67, which urges "Not to impose the death penalty on a person suffering from any form of mental disorder or to execute any such person".

**Please write, expressing concern for the mental health of Siti Zainab Binti Duhri Rupa, and calling for her death sentence to be commuted. Urge that she be given immediate access to legal representation in order to seek a pardon, and that she also be given consular**

**assistance, adequate translation facilities, and medical assistance as necessary.**

**Send appeals to:**

His Majesty King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud  
The Custodian of the two Holy Mosques  
Office of His Majesty The King  
Royal Court  
Riyadh  
Saudi Arabia

Fax: (via Ministry of Interior) +966 1403 3125

Start your letter: Your Majesty



© Documentation of CIMW





**PROTECT**  
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND  
CULTURAL RIGHTS FOR  
ALL SOUTH AFRICANS

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



**EL CALABOZO: 'OUR HOPE IS  
THAT JUSTICE IS DONE'**

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



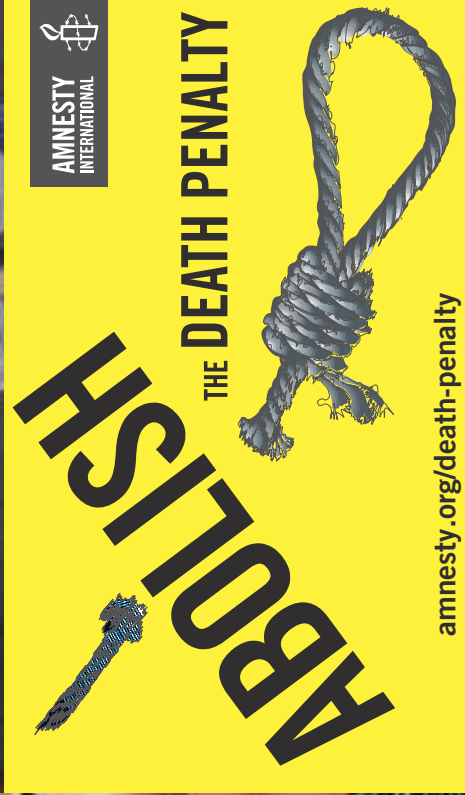
**BENVENUTI  
A ROMA**

Firma contro  
IL PIANO NOMADI



**SPEND A MINUTE ON  
ITALY'S ROMA PEOPLE**

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



**ABOLISH**  
THE DEATH PENALTY

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



[amnesty.org/death-penalty](http://amnesty.org/death-penalty)

# 10 OCTOBER 2012 WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL 



AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL

Dear Prime Minister,

Please spend just ONE MINUTE of your time on Italy's Roma people. They're still being discriminated against, forcibly evicted and segregated into camps like La Barbuta outside Rome, despite your government's promises to stop this from happening. They're being evicted without genuine consultation, written notice or adequate alternative housing. Many end up homeless.

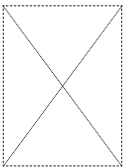
For each postcard you receive, please spend just ONE MINUTE discussing with your Ministers of Cooperation, Interior and Employment, how you can urgently:

- stop forced evictions (for example, by prohibiting them in domestic law and issuing guidelines for officials who carry out evictions)
- promote desegregation (for example, by scrapping all "Nomad Plans", and drafting and funding new plans together with affected communities)
- give Roma people equal access to adequate housing (for example, by removing any obstacles to social housing that discriminate against them).

Thank you for your time.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_



**Professor Mario Monti**  
**President of the Council of Ministers**  
**Palazzo Chigi**  
**Piazza Colonna 370**  
**00187 Rome**  
**Italy**

Index: EUR 30/0008/2012

*Image: A girl from Tor de' Cenci protests against her camp being closed, July 2012. © Amnesty International (photo: Fernando Vasco Chironda)*  
Amnesty International, International Secretariat, Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, UK. [amnesty.org](http://amnesty.org)

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



Dear Minister,

Every day, South Africans endure poverty, lack of housing and services, and inadequate water and sanitation. Families continue to struggle for survival.

Although economic, social and cultural rights are enshrined in the country's constitution, the full realization of these rights remains limited.

South Africa is one of the few countries not to have ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) – which protects such rights. Its Optional Protocol offers South Africans the opportunity to hold their government accountable for their full implementation.

I urge you to ratify the ICESCR and to sign and ratify its Optional Protocol, and thereby demonstrate your commitment to an adequate standard of living for all South Africans.  
Yours sincerely,

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



*"Our hope is that justice is done, that our voices are heard, for those people who died and also for the people who are suffering still."*

*Edelina, a survivor of the massacre at El Calabozo.*

Dear President Funes,

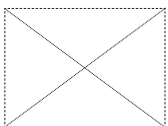
More than 200 children, women and men were gunned down by Salvadoran soldiers in the El Calabozo massacre on 22 August 1982. Thirty years on, no one has been held to account for this mass killing of unarmed civilians. Survivors and relatives are still being ignored.

Please act immediately to ensure that the investigation finally advances and that those responsible are brought to justice.

I also urge you to provide reparation to the survivors and relatives, whose anguish continues to this day, and to publicly acknowledge and apologize for the state's role in the massacre.  
Yours sincerely,

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

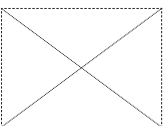
Country: \_\_\_\_\_



**Minister Mate Nkoana-Mashabane**  
**Department of International Relations and**  
**Cooperation**  
**Private Bag X152**  
**Pretoria**  
**0001**  
**Republic of South Africa**

Index: AFR 53/004/2012

*Image: A girl calls on the South African government to ratify the ICESCR and its Optional Protocol during a demonstration in Johannesburg. © Amnesty International*  
Amnesty International, International Secretariat, Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, UK. [amnesty.org](http://amnesty.org)



**Presidente Mauricio Funes**  
**Presidente de la Republica**  
**Casa Presidencial**  
**Alameda Dr. Manuel E. Araya No. 5500**  
**San Salvador**  
**El Salvador**

Index: AMR 29/003/2012

Survivors of the El Calabozo massacre are still fighting for justice.  
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