

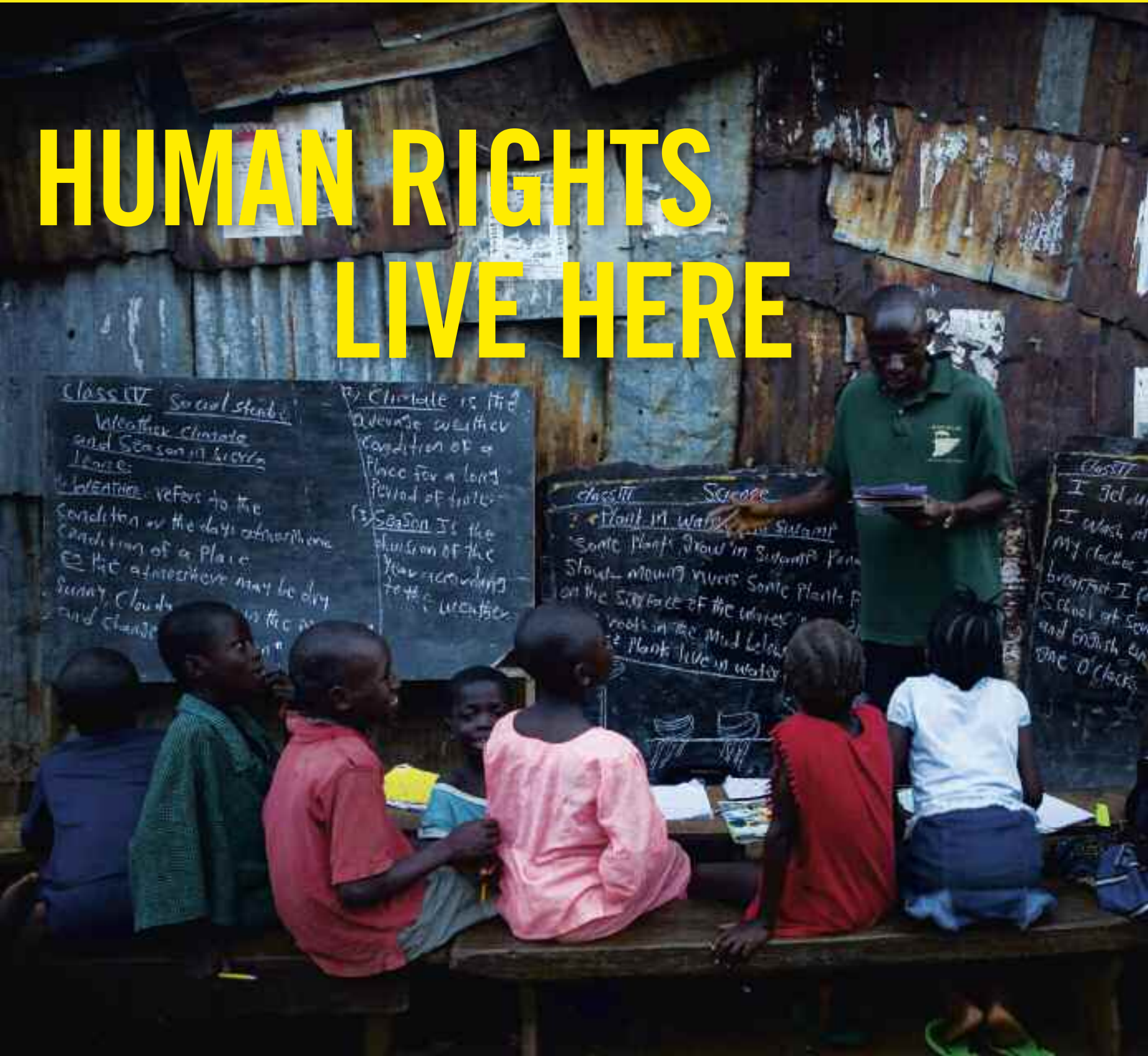
WIRED

FOR ACTIVISTS AND INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS
OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2009 VOLUME 39 ISSUE 005

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



HUMAN RIGHTS LIVE HERE





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...AND HERE

END FORCED EVICTIONS NOW

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Cover photo: A class is taught in a narrow passage in Kroo Bay slum, Freetown, Sierra Leone, 2008.
© Anna Kari/Documentography

This page: Families collect their belongings after the forced eviction of 400 families from Dey Kraham in central Phnom Penh, Cambodia, January 2009. An estimated 250 security forces and hired demolition workers evicted the families, the majority of whom were made homeless. Some were unable to retrieve personal belongings.
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GETTING WIRE

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

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

Institutions are welcome to purchase copies. The price for six copies a year for institutions is **£35/US\$54/€41**. Amnesty International sections can purchase copies for their own members. Email us on wire.subscribe@amnesty.org or call **+44 207 413 5814/5507**.

INSIDE THIS WIRE

RIGHTS IN THE RUBBLE

Forced evictions affect tens of thousands of people around the world. They are left homeless and destitute and their rights are ignored. Read their stories and take action this World Habitat Day. **PAGE 2**

DIGNITY DEMAND DIGNITY DEMAND DIGNITY ((DEMAND DIGNITY)) DEMAND



Q&A

Nobel Peace Prize winner SHIRIN EBADI talks to WIRE about her work as a lawyer and human rights defender. **PAGE 13**



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

WIRE looks at the ways poverty affects the rights of women and girls (**PAGE 7**); police torture and other ill-treatment in Moldova (**PAGE 8**); lives wrecked by violent crime in Jamaica's inner cities (**PAGE 18**); and how mining plans jeopardize Adivasi lives in India (**PAGE 19**). Find out more about these and other issues and take action now.



THE UNHEARD TRUTH: POVERTY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Read an exclusive excerpt from the new book by Amnesty International Secretary General Irene Khan. Turn it over and use the poster – pull it out – and share with others.

WORLDWIDE APPEALS
READ, DISTRIBUTE, ACT
SEE OUR INSERT

YOUNG LIVES ON DEATH ROW

Some countries are still executing juvenile offenders. This has to stop. Join our petition and find out what other actions you can take on 10 October. **PAGE 15**



WHAT ELSE?

Get the latest word from livewire bloggers (**PAGE 6**); find out how to use your email effectively in your actions (**PAGE 14**); send a postcard to Afghan President Hamid Karzai and urge him to ensure that women human rights defenders are able to carry out their work safely (**see INSERT**). And much more.

RIGHTS

IN THE RUBBLE

© Private

EVERY YEAR, TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE FACE THE THREAT OF BEING FORCIBLY EVICTED FROM THEIR HOMES. THEY ARE ALMOST ALWAYS AMONG THE POOREST AND THE LEAST ABLE TO ASSERT THEIR RIGHTS. WITH LIMITED RECOURSE TO JUSTICE AND ACCESS TO COMPENSATION, THEY END UP DRIVEN FURTHER INTO POVERTY.

At 3am on 20 July 2009, Angolan armed police, soldiers and presidential guards stormed the adjoining residential neighbourhoods of Iraque and Bagdad in the Kilamba Kiaxi municipality of Angola's capital, Luanda. They ordered residents to leave their homes shortly before bulldozers began to demolish the houses. The residents stood and watched as their homes were razed to the ground; some of those who tried to resist were beaten. By 25 July, Iraque was partially destroyed and Bagdad was completely flattened. More than 3,000 families were forcibly evicted from their homes.

During the demolitions, police harassed and threatened those who refused to leave the area. Some residents built makeshift shelters from the ruins of their homes, only to have them demolished again. On 25 July, police set fire to the last shelters still standing in Bagdad.

None of those evicted will receive alternative housing or compensation, according to the Luanda Province Vice-Governor. He claimed that residents of Iraque and Bagdad had occupied the land and built their houses illegally, in an area earmarked for development projects. Projecto Camama, a private consortium, is expected to build a luxury housing complex on the land.

Although such scale of demolitions is unprecedented, forced evictions in Luanda are not new. Since the end of the civil war in Angola in 2002, demand for land in the capital has soared; to make way for land development and other projects, the Angolan authorities have targeted the poorest neighbourhoods where residents are among the least able to assert their rights and seek recourse from the justice system.

THE POOR ARE WORST AFFECTED

Forced evictions are a violation of human rights that require urgent global attention. In 2008, between 30 and 50 million people in 70 countries lived under the constant threat of being forcibly evicted, according to the International Alliance of Inhabitants.

All over the world, governments remove people from their homes and destroy their livelihoods without observing due process of law, without respecting safeguards set out in international standards, and without offering adequate alternatives or compensation. Those most affected are marginalized people living in poverty. "It is always the poor who are evicted", notes the UN Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat. "Wealthier population groups virtually never face forced eviction, and never mass eviction."

In Cambodia, land disputes and industrial and urban redevelopment projects have seen thousands of people pushed further into poverty after being uprooted from their homes in the capital Phnom Penh. Victims are almost exclusively poor people who are unable to obtain effective remedies.

On 24 January 2009, around 400 poor urban families were forcibly evicted from Dey Kraham in central Phnom Penh. At dawn, hundreds of security forces and demolition workers moved in to flatten the neighbourhood. Some residents did not even have enough time to retrieve their belongings before their homes were destroyed, in violation of international law which



their homes, their personal possessions, social networks, and access to work and services such as schools and medical care.

In N'Djamena, the vast majority of families who lost their homes have not received alternative housing or any other form of compensation. The demolitions of thousands of houses in N'Djamena will also have serious economic and social repercussions for years to come, as many lost not only their place of business but also essential tools and materials. Women, particularly older women and widows, have been deprived of their means of subsistence as a result of the destruction.

Amnesty International is calling for an end to all forced evictions. On World Habitat Day, celebrated this year on 5 October, Amnesty International will be highlighting the issues and bringing attention to the tens of millions of families who every day face the threat of forced eviction.

ACT NOW

Please call on the Luanda Provincial Governor to put an immediate end to forced evictions in Luanda and to support a moratorium on all mass evictions until appropriate housing policies and regulations are put in place. Urge the Governor to provide immediate assistance, including adequate housing, to those who have been forcibly evicted and who remain homeless, and adequately compensate all victims of forced evictions in the neighbourhoods of Bagdad, Iraque and other areas.

Write to:

Her Excellency Francisca do Espírito Santo
Governadora Provincial de Luanda
Gabinete da Governadora
Governo da Província de Luanda
Largo Irene Cohen, (Largo da Mutanga), Luanda, Angola
Fax: +244 222 333 902 / 334 051
Salutation: Sua Excelência
Email: gepegpl@hotmail.com

Please call on the President of Chad, Idriss Déby Itno, to cease all forced evictions and legislate and enforce a clear prohibition on forced evictions and provide victims of forced evictions with necessary assistance to ensure emergency shelter, access to adequate clean water, sanitation and health services. Please also urge the President to respect the rights of all victims of forced evictions to an effective remedy, including access to justice and the right to reparations, including restitution, rehabilitation, compensation and guarantees of non repetition.

Write to:

His Excellency Idriss Déby Itno
President of Chad, Présidence de la République, BP74, N'Djamena, Chad
Fax: +235 2 51 45 01

For more information, go to www.demanddignity.org

ACT NOW

END FORCED EVICTIONS IN AFRICA

THIS WORLD HABITAT DAY, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL WILL BE LAUNCHING A CAMPAIGN TO END FORCED EVICTIONS IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES. THERE IS PLENTY YOU CAN DO.

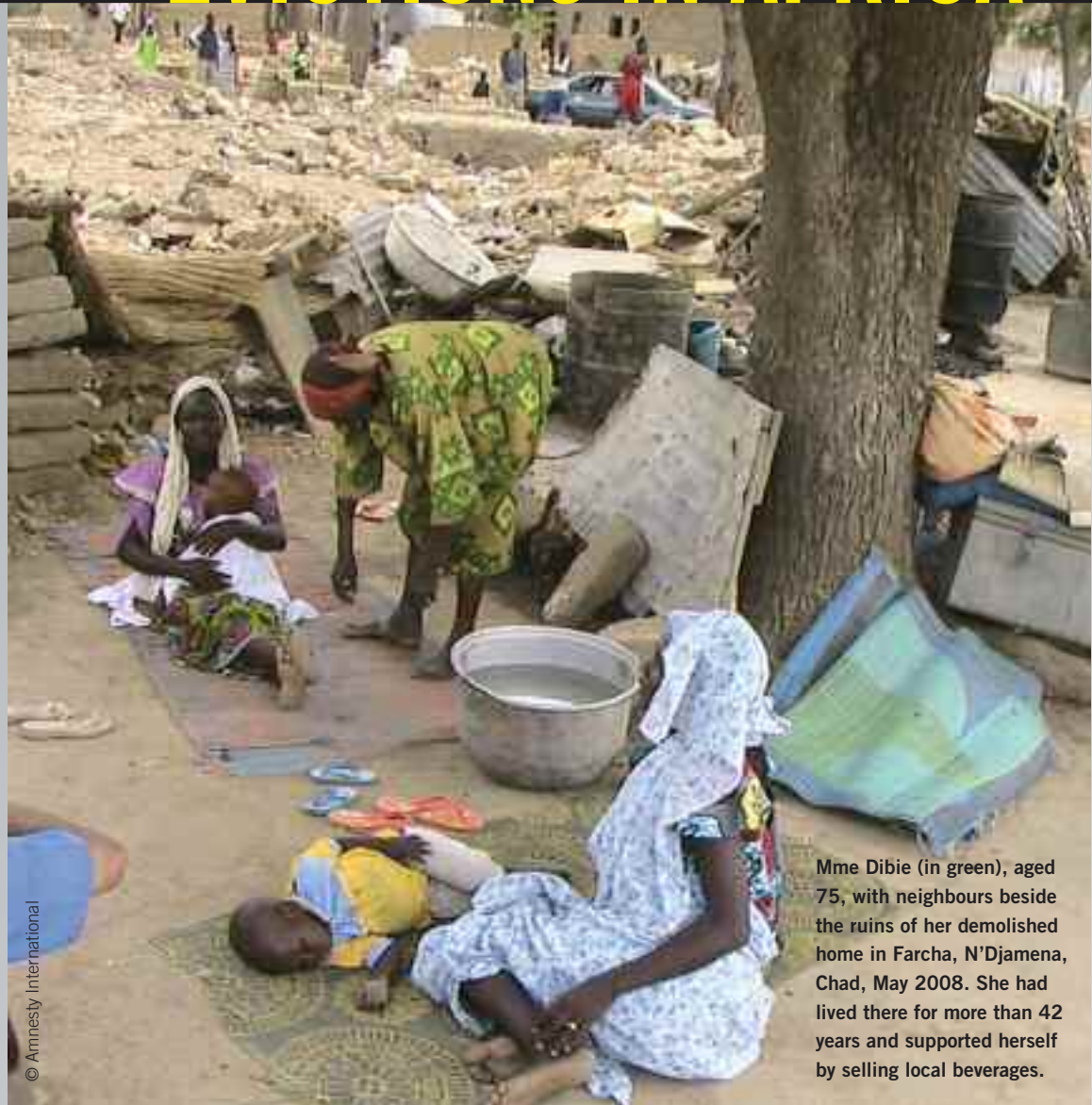
Over the years Amnesty International has documented cases of mass forced evictions in Angola, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Across the Africa region, victims are left homeless and destitute.

On World Habitat Day, 5 October 2009, Amnesty International sections in Ghana, Kenya, Senegal and Zimbabwe, together with two partner organizations in Nigeria, the Social and Economic Rights Action Centre and Social Action, are launching a campaign to end forced evictions in Africa. There will be demonstrations, photo exhibitions, film screenings, community theatre productions and press conferences in and around areas affected by forced evictions. Join the campaign. Add your voice and make a stand against forced evictions in Africa. There are various things you can do.

HIGHLIGHT THE ISSUES TO PEOPLE IN YOUR COUNTRY

You can hold your own event during or after World Habitat Day to launch the campaign and raise awareness about forced evictions in Africa. Materials available on www.amnesty.org/demand-dignity, include a photo exhibition with accompanying captions and information boards, leaflets, audio material, films and banners that can be used as petitions.

The International Secretariat of Amnesty International can support your media work around the event.



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Mme Dibie (in green), aged 75, with neighbours beside the ruins of her demolished home in Farcha, N'Djamena, Chad, May 2008. She had lived there for more than 42 years and supported herself by selling local beverages.

PUT PRESSURE ON AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS TO END FORCED EVICTIONS

Participants at the launch will be adding their signature to a large banner, creating a "house of signatures" which will then be taken to governments across the Africa region. You can download your own "house of signatures" banner from www.amnesty.org/demand-dignity and use it to collect signatures.

There are a number of different versions available, each targeting a

different African government that is responsible for forced evictions. Simply choose the banners that you would like to sign, and then download and print them. Banners are available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese.

Alternatively, you can use the text on the banners to make your own petitions.

Once you have collected enough signatures, you can either present the banner at the embassy of the country or send it directly to the government.

LET AFRICAN LEADERS KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

Send an SMS text message to +447786 200 220 (local operator charges apply) explaining why forced evictions in Africa need to end right now. Messages will be passed on to governments all over the Africa region and will also appear on www.demanddignity.org.

Safaricom or Zain subscribers in Kenya can send an SMS to 3221 free of charge.



Go to www.amnesty.org/livewire to catch up with what people around the movement are doing, watch footage and listen to audio clips from actions, missions, high-level meetings and events.

A VERY LOUD TRIBUTE TO DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI

Benjamin Zawacki blogs from Dublin, Ireland

On their massive “360” tour in their hometown of Dublin on 27 July 2009, the pop group U2 announced that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi had been recognized with Amnesty International’s Ambassador of Conscience Award for 2009. Hearing this was gratifying, but hearing – and seeing – what came next, was enough to stir the conscience as well as the senses: a full-voice rendition of U2’s “Walk On” (which they wrote for her), accompanied by photos of her on their enormous 360 Degree screen. Dozens of Amnesty International volunteers took to the circular stage with the band wearing Daw Suu Kyi masks.

And more than that: 80,000 people standing, singing, swaying, and raising their voices with the band so loudly that one wondered if Daw Suu Kyi herself couldn’t hear them in faraway Yangon.

Continue reading on www.amnesty.org/livewire

CALLING FOR MORE JUSTICE AND FREEDOM IN GAMBIA

Donnacha DeLong blogs about Gambia Day of Action on 22 July



Amnesty International Burkina Faso hosts an event calling for justice and freedom in Gambia, July 2009.

Amnesty International Burkina Faso Section organized a press conference for the Gambia Day of Action on 22 July 2009. During this event, we

denounced arbitrary arrests, impunity, migrants’ rights abuses, political harassment, and the lack of freedom of the press and urged the Gambian authorities to respect human rights.

During the press conference, a lot of questions were raised such as what kind of lobbying action Amnesty International was thinking of doing in order to lead Gambia to comply with its human rights obligations.

Continue reading on www.amnesty.org/livewire

STANDING IN SUPPORT OF ‘TISSA’

Tim Molyneux blogs from London, UK

On Wednesday 1 September 2009, the Sri Lanka Team at Amnesty International’s International Secretariat organized a vigil outside Parliament Square in London. We gathered to protest against the sentencing of Jayaprakash Sittampalam Tissainayagam, known as Tissa to his friends and family, to 20 years “vigorous imprisonment” by the Government of Sri Lanka.



Amnesty International activists at a vigil held in support of Jayaprakash Sittampalam Tissainayagam, London, UK, September 2009.

Tissa has been named a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International. We believe that he has been imprisoned simply for publishing articles critical of the Government of Sri Lanka.

Tissa’s case was noted by US President Barack Obama on World Press Freedom day as an “emblematic example” of media repression; a symbol of what has become the fate of many journalists and media workers in Sri Lanka held under sweeping anti-terrorism legislation.

Continue reading on www.amnesty.org/livewire



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A woman in the village of Soweto in Kibera, Nairobi. Around one million people live in Kibera, Kenya's largest slum.

HELP WOMEN IN POVERTY BREAK OUT

WOMEN AND GIRLS WHO LIVE IN POVERTY OFTEN SUFFER HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES. THEIR LIVES ARE AFFECTED BY SEXUAL VIOLENCE, LACK OF OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE EDUCATION AND TOO LITTLE PROTECTION AGAINST THE RISKS OF PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH. THEIR RIGHTS MUST BE PROTECTED AND THEIR VOICES MUST BE HEARD.

“These corridors are dark. There are no security lights outside, so it becomes very dangerous. Sometimes you can meet somebody who has bad intentions and [can do bad things to you]. All the shopping, buying of vegetables, we do it by the road side. So when you send your girl to get sugar, somebody can maybe go touching her breast, maybe her buttocks, and the child ends up being raped.”

These are the words of Alice Yango, a resident of Kibera, Kenya's largest slum in the centre of the capital, Nairobi. She supports her family and many other children, including orphans, by selling vegetables at the side of the road in a local market.

As she or her daughters walk to the market and back every day, they have to walk through the unlit alleyways that are the arteries of Kibera in fear of being raped or harassed. Women do not report such incidents because of the lack of policing in Kibera and the likelihood that the perpetrators will never be brought to justice.

POVERTY AND EDUCATION

Violence often prevents women from escaping poverty. Education can be a path out of poverty, increasing women's choices and reducing their dependency, but discrimination and violence impede girls' access to education. Education is a human right, yet more than 55 millions girls worldwide do not attend school.

In Tajikistan, many families cannot afford the basic essentials needed for their children's schooling – text books, clothes and transport. So rather than sending girls to school, they prioritize the education of boys, who are likely to earn more in later life. Many girls do not complete their education but instead care for family members, work in the fields or at the market, or get married at an early age. The lack of education limits women's choices in later life.

The UN Millennium Development Goals have recognized both education and health as vital to any strategies which seek to end poverty. Women and girls who live in poverty face

additional barriers to these rights because of their socioeconomic status and gender discrimination.

POVERTY AND MATERNAL MORTALITY

Peru has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the Americas region. The deep inequalities in Peruvian society are reflected in widely different maternal mortality ratios between women in rich and poor areas. According to the Peruvian Ministry of Health, women in rural areas are twice as likely as those in urban areas to die from causes related to pregnancy. Hundreds of poor, rural and Indigenous pregnant women are dying from preventable causes, because they are denied the same health services other women in the country receive. Poverty is a deciding factor in whether pregnancy leads to loss of life or not.

POVERTY AND POWERLESSNESS

There is no society in the world where women are not at risk of gender-based

violence, violence which inhibits women from taking an equal part in society and enjoying their human rights. Despite working two thirds of the world's working hours and producing half of the world's food, women earn just 10 per cent of the world's income and own less than 1 per cent of the world's property. At home and in society at large, women and girls carry out more menial tasks and their voices are less likely to be heard. Many suffer further discrimination as a result of their ethnicity, race, religion, marital status or disability.

Amnesty International's Demand Dignity campaign aims to address the human rights violations that drive and deepen poverty. Building on Amnesty International's Stop Violence against Women campaign, the Demand Dignity campaign will also focus on the barriers that many women face in realizing their human rights due to poverty, violence and discrimination.

ACT NOW

16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence is an annual campaign running from 25 November to 10 December. This year, Amnesty International will be focusing on violence against women in poverty. To take action and find out more, go to <http://snipr.com/rnyzb> www.demanddignity.org





ASSAULT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE NAME OF SECURITY IN SAUDI ARABIA

Abdul Rahim al-Mirbati, a 48-year-old Bahraini businessman, was arrested in 2003 or 2004 in Madina. His family said he had travelled to Saudi Arabia with his 13-year-old son who needed medical treatment there.

For the first three months of his detention, Abdul Rahim al-Mirbati was questioned and denied visitors. He is reported to have been tortured and otherwise ill-treated during this period. He is currently held at al-Dammam Central Prison.

Abdul Rahim al-Mirbati is said to have been accused by the Saudi Arabian authorities of planning to carry out bombings in Bahrain. However, his relatives know of no charges brought against him by either the Saudi Arabian or Bahraini authorities. They have sought clarification of his legal status but without success.

Since 11 September 2001, the authorities in Saudi Arabia have launched a sustained assault on human rights in the name of counter-terrorism, exacerbating an already dire human rights situation in the country. Thousands of people have been arrested arbitrarily and forced to face a secretive and abusive criminal justice system. Kept in solitary confinement for long periods of time, tortured and denied any contact with the outside world for months or years, they are unable to challenge the legality of their detention. Many have been sentenced to death, flogging and long prison terms after unfair trials that made a mockery of justice. Many others, whose trials are ongoing, are expected to receive similar punishments.

Such human rights abuses have been largely ignored by the world's governments, seemingly influenced by Saudi Arabia's role as a source of oil, international finance, arms contracts, intelligence and military bases, and as a leader in the Islamic world.



ACT NOW

Call on the Saudi Arabian authorities to:
 ■ bring Saudi Arabia's terrorism-related laws and practices into line with international human rights standards;
 ■ provide fair, prompt and public trials to all detainees charged or held, including on suspicion of terrorism-related offences.

Please write 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 the Interior) +966 1 403 1185
 Salutation: Your Majesty

For more information, go to
<http://snipr.com/rnyxn>



POLICE TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT IN MOLDOVA

On 5 April this year, parliamentary elections took place in Moldova and the ruling Communist party declared victory. Thousands of people took to the streets in the capital city, Chişinău, to protest against the results. Amnesty International representatives were present as the demonstrations turned violent, and on 7 April the parliamentary and presidential buildings were stormed.

According to local NGOs, as many as 655 people were detained following the demonstrations; the authorities put the figure at 300. There are reports of widespread human rights violations by the Moldovan authorities since the 7 April incidents.

Torture and other ill-treatment is systemic in Moldova, as documented in Amnesty International's report *Moldova: Police torture and ill-treatment – 'It's just normal'* (Index: EUR 59/002/2007). Following the 7 April events, people told Amnesty International that they had been beaten in the streets, during transport and in detention in police stations by uniformed officers and by plain-clothes men. Detainees reported that they had been forced to strip and do exercises while being verbally humiliated and sexually threatened by police officers. Many were denied access to a

Riot police face demonstrators outside the presidential building, Moldova, 7 April 2009.

lawyer of their choice, were not allowed to tell their families where they were, and kept in overcrowded, unsanitary conditions without access to adequate food or water.

Despite the authorities' assurances that all allegations of torture and other ill-treatment by police officers would be investigated, a culture of impunity persists in Moldova. Since the events of 7 April, lawyers have told Amnesty International that some clients have not lodged complaints because they fear repercussions from the police or they have no faith that action will be taken. One person asked Amnesty International not to publicize his case as police officers were standing outside his home.

ACT NOW

Please call on Moldova's Prosecutor General to ensure that all allegations of torture and other ill-treatment following the 7 April events are thoroughly and independently investigated, and that those responsible are brought to justice. Ask him to ensure that anyone found to be a victim of human rights violations receives full reparations and that complainants are protected from intimidation and reprisals.

Please write to:
 Prosecutor General
 26 Mitropolit Banulescu-Bodoni Str.
 MD 2005, Chişinău, Moldova

For more information, go to
<http://snipr.com/rnyz7>

THE UNHEARD TRUTH

POVERTY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

IF PROTECTED AND FULFILLED, HUMAN RIGHTS CAN SHIELD THOSE LIVING IN POVERTY FROM INSECURITY, EXCLUSION AND INEQUALITY, AND ADDRESS THE ABUSES WHICH HELP TO CREATE AND PERPETUATE POVERTY. IN THIS EXCERPT FROM HER NEW BOOK, **THE UNHEARD TRUTH**, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY GENERAL IRENE KHAN EXPLAINS WHY POVERTY IS THE WORST HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS IN THE WORLD TODAY.

MORE HUMAN RIGHTS EQUAL LESS POVERTY

Denied education, health-care, shelter or other necessities, and exposed to insecurity, poor people lack the essential elements to live a dignified life. Excluded and unheard, they are unable to improve their lot. Unable to get a fair hearing or influence events, they are left exposed to further threats and more deprivation, deepening the downward spiral of impoverishment. This experience of those living in poverty repeats itself over and over again, whether among villagers in Bangladesh, women in Ciudad Juárez, victims of violence in South Africa, the Roma minority in Europe or Indigenous Peoples in the Americas.

Taken together, they add up to a problem of power; more explicitly the powerlessness that those living in poverty feel in relation to the events and people that have an impact on their daily lives. They are powerless to obtain what they need to live a dignified life; to manage insecurity; to hold to account institutions that affect their lives, and to play an active role in society.

In the words of Professor Muhammad Yunus, my compatriot who won the Nobel Peace Prize for his pioneering work to eradicate poverty through micro-credit: “Because poverty denies people any semblance of control over their destiny, it is the ultimate denial of human rights.”

The pervasive powerlessness experienced by poor people is confirmed by the World Bank, which in 1999-2000 carried out the most comprehensive survey undertaken of poor communities, involving 60,000 participants in 20 countries. The resulting report, *Voices of the Poor*, concluded:

“From poor people’s perspectives, ill-being or bad quality of life is much more than just material poverty. It has multiple, interlocking dimensions. The dimensions combine to create and sustain powerlessness, a lack of freedom of choice and action.”

The report identified several dimensions to the experience of living in poverty, including insecurity, being shut out by official institutions and being denied a voice and ignored. The report noted:

“While each of the individual dimensions of poverty is important, it is even more important to understand that the dimensions form a powerful web. They interlock to create, perpetuate and deepen powerlessness and deprivation.”

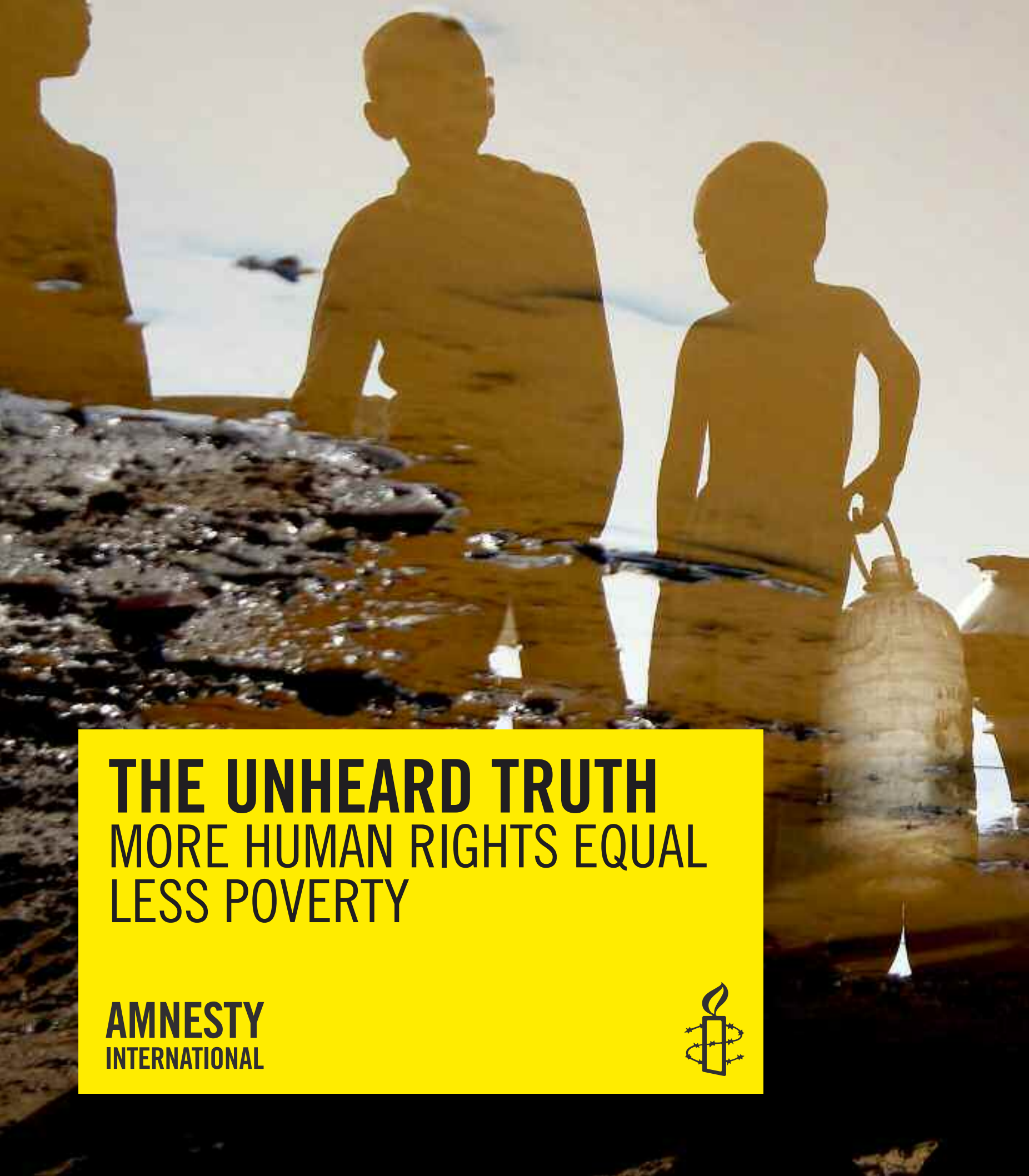
If this is a fair description of the actual, lived experience of poor people, then it should be obvious that the foremost challenge is not their enrichment but their empowerment.

This is why I insist on defining poverty as a human rights problem that can be addressed most effectively through respect for human rights. Framing poverty in human rights terms provides an empowering framework for rights holders (people living in poverty), and an accountability framework for duty holders (those who exercise power over poor people) to respect and protect rights. By asserting their rights, those living in poverty place themselves at the centre of the debate and gain the dignity to fight the conditions that keep them poor. By identifying obligations, we require the powerful to behave according to internationally recognized standards, rather than relying on market forces. It is currently fashionable to speak of government agencies as “service providers”, but they should be seen as duty bearers, entrusted with obligations to deliver on specific rights. This strengthens the link of accountability between the government and the governed. Seen in this way, the relevance of the human rights approach to poverty eradication becomes apparent: if rights were protected and fulfilled, this would address the abuses which help to create and perpetuate poverty.

Human rights give a voice to the voiceless. Individuals have a right to express their views freely, to organize, to assemble peacefully and to make their views known. Human rights demand transparent and accountable government, so that people are informed and can participate actively and effectively in decision-making. Of course, full respect for human rights requires that governments are democratically elected and truly accountable to the electorate, and when they are, as I will argue later, we are more likely to win the struggle against poverty.

Equally, however, the deprivations experienced by the poor are a denial of rights. Access to clean water, basic shelter, health-care, education and food are basic needs that every human being must have to live in dignity. But they are more than that – they are internationally recognized economic, social and cultural rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and other international instruments proclaim these rights, alongside the rights to freedom of speech and religion and to equality. The overwhelming majority of the world’s governments have entered into binding treaties that commit them to fulfilling these rights, but there are still many who deny their validity. Acknowledging economic and social rights puts meeting basic human needs

THERE IS FAR TOO LITTLE CONCRETE ACTION TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF THOSE LIVING IN POVERTY



THE UNHEARD TRUTH
MORE HUMAN RIGHTS EQUAL
LESS POVERTY

AMNESTY
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Civilians queuing for water in Mohammadpur, Dhaka, Bangladesh, May 2008.



Image: © Tanvir Ahmed/
www.majorityworld.com/Still
Pictures

AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD WITH ALL ROYALTIES GOING TO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.THEUNHEARDTRUTH.ORG

squarely within the framework of national and international accountability, and empowers people to expect and demand that their basic needs will be met.

Human rights shield people from insecurity because they provide protections and guarantees against the arbitrary exercise of power by the state. They also place an obligation on the state to protect individuals from the abuse of power by others – the employer in the workplace, the leader in the community and the partner at home. Further, rights establish equality before the law, so that the poor no less than the rich are assured of a fair hearing and their assets, however meagre, are protected against unjust seizure. There are rights to social security guaranteed in the Universal Declaration – they oblige the state to provide a social safety net to protect people's livelihoods in the event of illness and unemployment.

Finally, human rights address exclusion and inequality because they place duties on the powerful to act without bias or favour. International human rights are grounded in the premise of a common humanity – “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”, declares the first article of the Universal Declaration. What more powerful appeal could be made to challenge the bigotry and prejudice at work in the world?

It is essential, however, that action to protect rights occurs concurrently in all four areas to tackle deprivation, insecurity, exclusion and lack of voice because, just as the problems are interlinked, so too are the different elements of the response mutually reinforcing. For instance, providing security against threats to life and livelihood, and ending discrimination, provides those living in poverty with the opportunity to meet their needs, just as it creates the space for them to demand action from governments where this is needed. Action in one direction alone, however, will be insufficient. Intervening simply to create democratic space may ignore the fact that the basic needs of some people can remain unfulfilled even in a truly representative democracy. Improving the education of girls without addressing discrimination against women will do little to address the feminization of poverty. If little is done to tackle violence in poor neighbourhoods, how can those who live there work or go to school?

In arguing my case for a human rights approach to ending poverty, I lay no claim to original thinking. Many people, including in governments and the UN, would agree with me that rights are relevant to tackling global poverty. The overwhelming majority of the world's governments have ratified international treaties, committing themselves to meeting their citizens' rights to an adequate standard of living, and to basic health-care, education and shelter. The Universal Declaration proclaimed these rights as far back as 1948, and the treaties commit states to work together to progressively bring people out of poverty. Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan pledged in 1996 that the UN would

henceforth factor human rights into all its development work. UN agencies, many states, and others, including, to a limited extent the World Bank, have adopted human rights policies for addressing poverty and/or committed themselves to “rights-based approaches”. All of this is good news – so where is the problem?

In reality, the acknowledgement that rights matter in the fight against poverty isn't complete, nor is there sufficient action resulting from that acknowledgement. There is a big gap in the international consensus on human rights as the basis for fighting poverty. Neither China nor the United States of America – the two powers that wield enormous influence in setting global policy – accept the full spectrum of human rights. China refuses to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), thereby challenging the importance both of these freedoms and of accountable government. The USA refuses to ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), thereby challenging the notion of a state's duty to meet basic needs. How can the vicious cycle of abuse that entrenches poverty be overcome if rights are not affirmed in their entirety by the leading nations of the world?

Even where the full gamut of rights is acknowledged, there is far too little concrete action to protect the rights of those living in poverty. When rights are invoked, it is most often done as a moral imperative to end poverty, but with no substantial obligation to act in a different way. When rights are incorporated in development strategies, it is usually without reference to the accountability of governments, business and international institutions.

The UN Millennium Declaration of 2000 invokes the language of rights to address global poverty. But the manner in which the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – the concrete targets drawn up to give effect to the pledges made in the Declaration – have been translated into concrete action, virtually exempts states from any requirement to address discrimination, protect the rights of the poor to organize or open up the development process to meaningful scrutiny by those whose rights need to be met.

Although policies are in place, very few development strategies actually incorporate rights in a meaningful way, even 10 years after the UN Secretary-General first called for this to happen. Overplaying the rhetoric and downplaying the application of human rights means little attention is given to the accountability of governments, donors and institutions, and even less to the real empowerment of the people living in poverty.

The persistence of poverty which inhibits the lives of billions of people is an indication of human rights abuse on a massive scale. This is not only because poor people are denied those basic necessities essential to a dignified life, but equally because so often this also indicates a denial of their rights to equality, to protection against harm, and to full participation in public life. Poor people do not have greater rights than anyone else; they have equal rights, and these deserve to be respected.

HUMAN RIGHTS ADDRESS EXCLUSION AND INEQUALITY BECAUSE THEY PLACE DUTIES ON THE POWERFUL TO ACT WITHOUT BIAS OR FAVOUR

SHIRIN EBADI



Q WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE MAIN CHALLENGES IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN IRAN?

A At the moment, it is the exploitation of religion. Whenever there are human rights violations and whenever people protest against such violations, the Iranian government says – this is Islam. I have read widely about Islam in the past 30 years and I proved to the government that what they are doing is not in accordance with Islam. This continues to be my greatest challenge.

Q IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT IRAN WHAT WOULD IT BE?

A Fanaticism. People who think that their version is the only version of the truth, that their ideas are better, that their religion is better than everyone else's. It is always difficult to work with people like that. They have closed their eyes to the rest of the world.

Q WHAT IMPACT DOES YOUR WORK HAVE ON YOUR LIFE AND/OR YOUR FAMILY?

A I've always tried to keep my work and my life separated. I have two daughters and I've raised them in a traditional way, doing the house work and looking after the children. Human rights begin in one's home. I don't believe that we should neglect our families because we want to help humanity. I work between six in the morning to half eight at night [but] when I return home I am a wife and a mother. However, one of my daughters has followed in my footsteps and is now a lawyer.

Q WHAT KEEPS YOU MOTIVATED WHEN TIMES ARE HARD?

A When you believe in the path that you are treading, you tread on it with greater determination and resolution. I am also a Muslim, I believe in God, and that helps me too.

Q DO YOU HAVE A MESSAGE FOR OUR READERS?

A Human rights can be summarized like this: what you want for yourself, you should want for others. And what you don't want for yourself, you shouldn't want for others.

Q WHAT IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON THAT YOUR ACTIVISM HAS TAUGHT YOU?

A I have learned how small the world is. And how all our individual fates are interconnected. We cannot be indifferent to what is happening in other parts of the world.



“ WHEN YOU BELIEVE IN THE PATH THAT YOU ARE TREADING, YOU TREAD ON IT WITH GREATER DETERMINATION AND RESOLUTION. **”**

Shirin Ebadi is a lawyer and human rights defender. She was the first Iranian woman to have been appointed a judge, a position she lost after the Islamic Revolution in 1979. She co-founded the Human Rights Defence Centre in 2001. In 2003, Shirin Ebadi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her work promoting democracy and human rights.

ACTIVISM BY EMAIL

YOUR EMAIL ACCOUNT IS A GREAT ACTIVISM TOOL ENABLING YOU TO REACH INDIVIDUALS AND

DECISION-MAKERS DIRECTLY. EMAILING PEOPLE IS A CHEAP AND QUICK WAY TO SPREAD YOUR MESSAGE AND BUILD AWARENESS. WITH A CLICK OF A BUTTON, YOU CAN SEND AN EMAIL TO A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE, WHO CAN THEN PASS IT ON TO OTHERS JUST AS EASILY.

STRUCTURING YOUR EMAIL

- ➔ Write compelling subject lines. These lines determine whether or not people actually read your email.
- ➔ Put your main points in the first few lines of the email because this is the part that people are most likely to read.
- ➔ Break your email into short paragraphs, no longer than four lines each.

THE CONTENT OF YOUR EMAIL

- ➔ Clearly mention Amnesty International in relation to the issue you are addressing.
- ➔ Personalize your emails. Change the wording and content to suit your various audiences. Personalize your greeting line and use people's names.
- ➔ Use language that your audience can understand and respond to.
- ➔ Always provide links for more information. Provide a way for people to learn more or get involved.
- ➔ Keep it simple. Do not send large images or attachments. Try to send links to files instead.

CALL FOR ACTION

- ➔ Let your recipients know what action you would like them to take and include any key dates. Mention your call for action twice: early on in the email and at the end.
- ➔ Ask your recipients to forward your email on but ask them to send it only to friends and appropriate contacts.

SENDING YOUR EMAIL

- ➔ Protect the privacy of your recipients. Do not show all recipients in the 'to' box; use the 'bcc' line instead. This way no one can copy the email addresses and misuse them.
- ➔ Keep the list of your email addresses private and secure. Do not share them with anyone.
- ➔ Build a list of supporters/contacts. Always ask people for their email addresses and let them know what you will use them for. Only include people who have agreed to receive emails from you.
- ➔ Send a test email. Check that it is formatted correctly and that all the links work before you send it out.
- ➔ Send your email in plain text format. This format is more personal than HTML and is less likely to be screened out as spam. Do not use wide margins – the formatting will not look right in people's inboxes.
- ➔ Don't Spam. Don't send out unsolicited mass mailings and don't add people to your lists without their permission.

FOLLOWING-UP ON YOUR EMAIL

- ➔ Plan your strategy. Be prepared to answer people's questions and queries. Consider what you can do about those who did not respond to your email.
- ➔ Don't bombard people with information; email only when necessary and appropriate.

Some of the information in this section was taken from Tactical Technology's 'Message-in-a-box' resource: www.messageinbox.tacticaltech.org/

Visitors sign up as e-members at the Ekushe Book Fair, Bangladesh, February 2009. Attendees were told about this event through an email campaign.



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YOUNG LIVES ON

DEATH ROW



Amnesty International Poland flower-laying protest in front of the embassy of Iran in Warsaw, May 2009. Delara Darabi, a juvenile offender, was executed on 1 May, even though the Head of the Judiciary had granted her a two-month stay of execution.

GOVERNMENTS THAT SENTENCE JUVENILE OFFENDERS TO DEATH ARE VIOLATING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW. WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY, ON 10 OCTOBER, IS YOUR CHANCE TO ACT AND CALL FOR AN END TO EXECUTIONS OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS.

Delara Darabi, a 22-year-old Iranian woman, had been convicted of a crime she allegedly committed while aged 17 and was hanged in May 2009. Local officials ignored the two-month stay of execution ordered by the Head of the Judiciary two weeks earlier and her lawyer was denied the 48-hour notice required by Iranian law. “Oh mother, I see the hangman’s noose in front of me”, she reportedly said in a final call to her parents the day she was killed. “Please save me.”

Delara Darabi was convicted of murdering a relative in 2003 when she was 17. She initially confessed to the murder, believing she could save her boyfriend from the gallows, but later retracted her confession. During her trial, the courts refused to consider new evidence which the lawyer said would have proved she could not have committed the murder. She was detained at Rasht Prison in northern Iran after her arrest in 2003.

The use of the death penalty – the taking of life by the state – on juvenile offenders (those who are convicted for acts committed while under the age of 18) is absolutely prohibited under international human rights law. Article 37 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child clearly states, “neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without



© Amnesty International

possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age". Every country represented at the UN has signed the Convention; only Somalia and the USA have not ratified it. Four countries still execute juvenile offenders: Iran, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen.

In 2008, at least eight teenagers were executed in Iran and at least 140 others were believed to be on death row. In Sudan, four 17-year-olds are currently reported to be on trial for alleged participation in the rebel attacks on Khartoum that took place in May. If convicted, they face the death penalty. In July and August 2008, one 17-year-old and one reported 16-year-old were sentenced to death for taking part in the attacks, according to the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Sudan. In Yemen, one juvenile was executed in 2007 and another is on death row, yet Yemeni law prohibits the use of the death penalty on juvenile offenders.

As of August 2009, five juvenile offenders have been executed this year: three in Iran and two in Saudi Arabia.

IRAN: HOLLOW PROMISES

In many cases, adolescents under sentence of death in Iran are kept in prison until they reach 18. During this period, some win appeals against their conviction. Some have their sentence overturned on appeal and are freed after a retrial. Some are reprieved by the victim's family in cases of *qesas* (retribution) crimes and are asked to pay *dijeh* (blood money) instead. Some are executed.

In ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the



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Child, the Iranian government entered a broad reservation "not to apply any provisions or articles of the Convention that are incompatible with Islamic Laws." In 2000, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which monitors implementation of the Convention, stated that this reservation "potentially negates many of the Convention's provisions". In fact, Iran's objections are not legally acceptable given the absolute prohibition on executing juvenile offenders, whether before or after their 18th birthday.

Repeated promises by Iranian judicial officials that the death penalty would no longer be applied to juvenile offenders have proved hollow. At least

Amnesty International Sections take action on World Day Against Death Penalty, October 2008.

Clockwise: South Korea, Nepal, Japan and Morocco.



© Amnesty International

44 have been executed since 1990, including at least three in 2009, despite a vigorous and continuing domestic campaign against the practice by Iranian human right defenders.

Amnesty International's latest figures show that at least 140 juveniles are currently awaiting execution in Iran but the true number may be higher as the Iranian authorities do not always disclose information about pending death sentences. Also, some may have been executed since Amnesty International learned of their cases.

Three juvenile offenders were executed in the first half of 2009.

SAUDI ARABIA: SYSTEM SHROUDED IN SECRECY

Although Saudi Arabia is a state party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, it does not have unequivocal safeguards to prevent juvenile offenders from receiving the death penalty. Judges have the power to decide the age of majority for children and thus the age of criminal responsibility. This can lead to juvenile offenders being sentenced to death.

In 2001, and again in 2006, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Saudi Arabia "take immediate steps to halt and abolish by law the imposition of the death penalty for crimes committed by persons while under 18." The government is reported to be preparing a new law that will raise the age of majority to 18 but it is unclear whether this will prohibit the use of the death penalty on juvenile offenders. Meanwhile, the death penalty continues to be imposed on them.

The Atomium in Brussels, Belgium, is illuminated for the Cities for Life initiative held annually in November by pro-abolition groups. "No to the death penalty" was projected on to the sculpture in different languages.



© Sant' Egidio Community

In 2006, the government claimed that it did not impose the death penalty on juvenile offenders. However, Amnesty International has documented a number of cases of young people who were sentenced to death and, in some cases, executed. On 21 July 2007, Dahayan Rakan al-Subai'i was beheaded in the Governorate of Taif, western Saudi Arabia. He was aged about 16 at the time of the crime for which he was sentenced to death. At least seven of those on death row in Saudi Arabia are believed to be juvenile offenders, but the real number may be higher as the Saudi Arabian criminal justice system is shrouded in secrecy.

Amnesty International calls on all countries that have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child to respect their international commitment and to end all executions of juvenile offenders.

In marking the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child this year, the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty (WCADP), of which Amnesty International is a member, has launched a petition calling for an end to executions of juveniles.

WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY

The World Day this year, on 10 October, is devoted to "teaching abolition". A number of educational tools have been developed to teach abolition to high school and law students. The WCADP's aim is to get students to understand why the death penalty is an attack on basic rights, ultimately equipping tomorrow's citizens with the tools to further the campaign to abolish the death penalty.

Founded in May 2002, the WCADP is a coalition of 96 human rights organizations, bar associations, trade unions and local and regional authorities which have joined together in an effort to rid the world of the death penalty.

Since the creation of the World Day in 2003, hundreds of initiatives, including debates, concerts, press conferences, demonstrations, petitions, and educational and cultural activities, have been organized in more than 60 countries across five continents.

The World Day will be followed on 30 November by Cities for Life, organized by the Rome-based Community of Sant'Egidio. An annual event involving the illumination of public buildings and other spaces in cities and towns around the world, Cities for Life is an affirmation of the value of life and a denunciation of the death penalty. The event also marks the anniversary of the abolition of the death penalty in 1786 in the Duchy of Tuscany, northern Italy. Tuscany was the first place in the world to abolish the death penalty. Amnesty International sections and groups are invited to collaborate with Sant'Egidio in organizing events for Cities for Life in their local communities this year.

Amnesty International Hong Kong's vigil for the Cities of Life – Cities against the Death Penalty campaign, November 2005.



© Amnesty International

ACT NOW

Please join the call for an end to executions of juvenile offenders by signing the petition on www.worldcoalition.org
Please mark World Day Against the Death Penalty by helping to promote better understanding of the issues among students and young people.

Go to www.worldcoalition.org and download the following educational and campaigning tools:

1. Pedagogical guide with activities for young people aged 14 to 18, available in English, French and Italian.
2. Capital punishment curriculum for law school students, available in English.
3. Mobilization kit providing advice, examples and other information for those who want to organize an event on 10 October 2009, the World Day Against the Death Penalty.



AFGHAN WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS UNDER ATTACK

“I am receiving death threats and there was an attempt to kidnap my nine-year old son”, says Shahla, a women’s human rights defender who runs a shelter for women at risk of violence. “The people who were threatening me were clearly saying that I should close the shelter for women at risk and if I don’t I will face the consequences.”

Violence against women in Afghanistan, including child marriage, forced marriage, rape and domestic violence, remains endemic eight years after the Afghan government pledged to protect and promote women’s rights.

Women human rights defenders (WHRDs) play a key role in advancing and protecting the rights of women, for example, by running safe houses for women at risk, raising awareness of child and forced marriages, delivering education programmes and providing family planning services. Yet, despite a number of important measures at the state level, including a new Constitution that reaffirms equal rights for men and women, they find themselves under threat.

Many face intimidation and come under attack from powerful conservative elements in society, including members of the government, the Taliban and other anti-government forces that mistakenly view the work of WHRDs as challenging the religious and social order in Afghanistan. Others are attacked by family members who may be embarrassed by their outspokenness. In many instances, WHRDs face physical attacks, including acid attacks, kidnapping and death threats. Some have fled the country while others have been killed for speaking out.

The police, the courts and local *jirgas* (tribal councils) seldom address women’s complaints and perpetrators are rarely brought to justice for attacking women or violating their rights. A lack of political will reinforces this climate of impunity and legitimizes violence against women.

The Afghan government and the international community have failed to provide a secure environment for women, even in government-controlled



© Pajhwok Afghan News

Dr Sima Samar, Chairperson of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission and human rights activist, speaks out against child marriage in Afghanistan, 2007.

areas. As the security situation worsens, so does the situation for women and women human rights defenders.

ACT NOW

Take action now by signing and sending the postcard in our centre-page insert, calling on the Afghan authorities to protect women human rights defenders and promote awareness of their work among police and other officials.

PUBLIC SECURITY REFORMS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN JAMAICA

Around 200 people living in St Catherine, Gravel Heights, and Tredegar Park in Kingston fled their homes on 7 December 2008. They had received an ultimatum. Gunmen told them if they did not leave their homes they would be killed. Video footage showed police officers watching people flee without attempting to intervene. “Those who didn’t want to leave the house had their houses burnt. At least 18 houses were burnt” one resident told Amnesty International. Eventually the authorities took steps to provide some security and deployed troops in the area. By mid-March, most people had returned, many to vandalized homes.

People in Jamaica’s inner cities live with one of the world’s highest

rates of violent crime, most of which is carried out by criminal gangs. For decades inner-city communities have been caught between the reign of fear exercised by criminal gangs and violent policing. All the available evidence shows that people in the inner-cities continue to be denied effective state protection. In 2008 alone, 1,835 people were fatally shot, 224 of them by police.

Most victims of violent crime live in deprived and excluded communities where unemployment is high and basic services scarce. It has been widely acknowledged that measures to reduce violence must adopt a comprehensive approach – tackling a wide range of causes which result

in persistent patterns of violence – if they are to be effective. The Jamaican government has started a number of reform projects which address some of the most serious causes of violence. These include reform of the police and of the justice system, and the establishment of an Independent Commission of Investigations to investigate allegations of police killings.

These reforms have now reached a critical stage. With political will and commitment, they can help drive forward the changes needed to tackle entrenched human rights problems in the inner cities. Amnesty International is calling on the Jamaican authorities and donor governments to ensure

these reforms are implemented without delay and to seize this opportunity to make a real difference to the thousands of Jamaicans currently denied their human right to live in dignity and security.

ACT NOW

Sign and send the postcard in our insert to the Prime Minister of Jamaica Bruce Golding, calling on him to ensure the swift and full implementation of the reforms.

To read more on the crisis in public security in Jamaica go to <http://snipr.com/rnyxe>

MINING PLANS JEOPARDIZE ADIVASI LIVES IN INDIA

Plans to open a mine and expand a refinery in Orissa, eastern India, have thrown the lives of local Adivasi Indigenous communities into turmoil.

In April 2009, the Indian authorities gave Sterlite Industries India Ltd (a subsidiary of the UK-based Vedanta Resources Plc) and the state-owned Orissa Mining Corporation permission to mine bauxite for the next 25 years in the Niyamgiri Hills. The hills are considered sacred by the Dongria Kondh, an Adivasi community that depends entirely on the area for its economic, physical and cultural survival. The 8,000-strong Dongria Kondh are found only in and around the Niyamgiri Hills. Destroy the hills – which is what the Dongria Kondh say the proposed mine will do – and the community itself is likely to vanish.

The Indian Constitution guarantees protection of the Dongria Kondh communities and their traditional lands. However, despite a four-year-long court battle waged by environmental and other activists, India's judiciary has allowed the diversion of protected land for the mining project – a move which the Dongria Kondh say will decimate the hills and, in turn, their lives.

Meanwhile, in Lanjigarh village at the bottom of the Niyamgiri Hills, Majhi Kondh Adivasis and other marginalized communities fear the worst as Vedanta Aluminium Ltd (owned by Vedanta Resources and Sterlite) prepares for a six-fold expansion of its alumina refinery operations there. More than 800 families from the Majhi Kondh and other marginalized groups risk losing 1,340 hectares of their farmlands to the proposed expansion. Six years ago, 750 hectares of farmland belonging to more than a thousand families were acquired in order to build the current refinery.

In the two years that the refinery has been running, local communities in Lanjigarh have had to contend with

air and water pollution, and constant dust and noise from the refinery. As one resident put it: “We have lost our lands to the refinery. We were arrested for protesting against it. We can hardly breathe with the dust from the refinery which works 24 hours non-stop. And what land I have now will go for its expansion.”

ACT NOW

Please sign and send the postcard in our insert to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

For additional campaigning materials, go to <http://snipr.com/rnyy3> and <http://snipr.com/rnyy9>

WWW.DEMANDDIGNITY.ORG

A Majhi Kondh woman in Lanjigarh, Orissa, October 2008. Her family farm land was acquired for the Vedanta refinery at Lanjigarh.



© Sanjit Das/Amnesty International

POLITICAL PRISONERS INTIMIDATED AND HARASSED AFTER SERVING SENTENCES IN TUNISIA

Sadok Chourou, a 62-year-old man, spent almost 18 years of his life in prison in Tunisia. He had been tried in connection with an alleged “plot” by the banned Islamist organization Ennahda, of which he was then president, to overthrow the Tunisian government.

In November 2008 he was conditionally released. However, less than a month after his release, on 3 December 2008, Sadok Chourou was rearrested and sentenced to one year's imprisonment for “maintaining a [banned] organization”. His conditional release was subsequently suspended, leaving him to serve a two-year prison term.

Prior to his arrest, Sadok Chourou was interviewed in the Arab media about his prison experience and his views on the political situation in Tunisia. During these interviews, he also expressed his wish that Ennahda would be permitted to resume its political activities.

Amnesty International considers Sadok Chourou to be a prisoner of

conscience detained solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.

The Tunisian authorities routinely intimidate and harass former political prisoners. Most of these former prisoners are subjected to close police surveillance after their release. They are often unable to find work or obtain medical care. They face restrictions on their movement inside Tunisia and are prevented from travelling abroad; they, and sometimes their immediate relatives, are often unable to obtain passports.

Additional administrative control measures imposed on political prisoners, often as part of their sentence, require many of them to report regularly at their local police station following their release from prison. Such measures are not specified in Tunisian law. The State Security Department officials who have authority in the district where the former prisoner lives are those who determine the frequency of reporting. They sometimes apply administrative control measures that are so onerous that they prevent the former prisoner from

obtaining paid employment and obstruct his reintegration into society. Many former prisoners under administrative control orders have been questioned by security officials about their daily activities. Others have been intimidated to make them refrain from exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly. Some, like Sadok Chourou, have faced prosecution and re-arrest.

ACT NOW

Please call on the President of Tunisia, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, to ensure the immediate and unconditional release of Sadok Chourou.

Please write to:
President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali
Palais présidentiel
Tunis, Tunisia
Fax: +216 71 744 721 / 71 731 009
Salutation: Your Excellency

To find out more go to www.amnesty.org/en/region/tunisia

DID YOU KNOW?

the killings earlier this year of journalist Anastasia Baburova and human rights lawyer Stanislav Markelov, and of journalist Anna Politkovskaya in 2006.

Amnesty International calls for an end to impunity for the murder of human rights defenders, journalists and lawyers in the Russian Federation.

For more information, read Amnesty International's report *Rule without law: Human rights violations in the North Caucasus* on <http://snipr.com/mz03012/2009>

ANOTHER HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER KILLED FOR HER WORK IN RUSSIAN FEDERATION

On 15 July 2009, Natalia Estemirova, a leading member of Memorial, a Russian human rights NGO in Grozny, Chechnya, was abducted on her way to work. She was dragged into a white car and driven away. Her body was found later that day in the neighbouring republic of Ingushetia with gunshot wounds to the head and chest.



© Amnesty International

Natalia Estemirova was a courageous defender of human rights. Her work was crucial in documenting human rights violations in the region, such as torture and other ill-treatment, unlawful killings and enforced disappearances since the start of the second armed conflict in Chechnya. She also helped displaced people and other vulnerable groups. She received numerous awards for her work both in Russia and internationally, including the European Parliament's Robert Schuman medal in 2005. In 2007 she was the first recipient of the Anna Politkovskaya Award.

No one has claimed responsibility for her murder, but colleagues believe she was killed because of her human rights work. Her murder highlights the risks faced by human rights defenders in the Russian Federation. It follows

ANGOLA: JOURNALIST FREED

Former journalist José Fernando Lelo was released from prison in Cabinda, Angola on 21 August 2009 after he was acquitted on appeal by the Supreme Military Court. He had been sentenced to 12 years in prison by the Cabinda Military Court on 16 September 2008 for crimes against the security of the state and instigating a rebellion. José Fernando Lelo spent nearly two years in prison before the Supreme Military Court ruled that there was insufficient evidence to maintain his conviction. WIRE published a world wide appeal for his release in June this year.

José Fernando Lelo was arrested at his workplace on 15 November 2007 and spent four months in prison without charge, in violation of Angolan law. Amnesty International considered him to be a prisoner of conscience, arrested and unfairly tried solely for writing articles critical of the government of Angola, and campaigned for his immediate and unconditional release.



© Manuela Serrano

Since his release, José Fernando Lelo has thanked Amnesty International for the work it carried out on his behalf and encouraged the organization to continue working for the release of other prisoners of conscience.

For more information on José Fernando Lelo's case (also in Portuguese), go to <http://snipr.com/rnyzf>



Images from the International Council Meeting, Amnesty International's supreme governing body, in Antalya, Turkey, August 2009.



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL is a global movement of 2.2 million people in more than 150 countries and territories who campaign on human rights.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

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

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

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

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

Together we can make our voices heard.

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

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

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

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

To do this, please visit: www.amnesty.org/en/join where you will be able to access joining information and sign up online in Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

Or alternatively write to:
Online Communities Team, Amnesty International,
International Secretariat, Peter Benenson House, 1 Easton Street,
London WC1X 0DW, United Kingdom

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**‘ALL OUR
INDIVIDUAL
FATES
ARE
INTERCONNECTED’**

SHIRIN EBADI

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**

