



Horn of Africa new renditions hotspot

"I was never told why I was held, we never got to know what was going to happen to us, it was an eternal waiting."

A woman held incommunicado in Kenya and Ethiopia for more than three months

Scores of men, women and children arrested in Kenya while trying to escape from war-torn Somalia were unlawfully transferred to Somalia and then to Ethiopia in early 2007. They became victims of rendition – transferred in secret from one country to another outside any legal process. Some are still detained in Ethiopia. Some are missing.

At least 140 people were arrested by Kenyan authorities between 30 December 2006 and February 2007 as they tried to enter Kenya from Somalia. They were held without charge in several police stations in Nairobi and in Jomo Kenyatta International Airport. They were allowed no access to their relatives. If they wanted to claim asylum they could not, as they were denied access to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees or any asylum procedure.

After weeks in Kenyan custody, 85 detainees were unlawfully transferred to Somalia, and 81 further on to Ethiopia. While in custody in Ethiopia, many of the detainees were questioned by US agents.

Former detainees have alleged that several were tortured or otherwise ill-treated. Two women, who were heavily pregnant when arrested, gave birth behind bars. All were subject to unlawful inter-state transfers as the practice of renditions appears to be spreading.

The Ethiopian authorities have acknowledged detaining only 41 people. Four UK citizens were released in Somalia and returned to the UK. That means that 40 detainees who were unlawfully transferred are missing. In addition, 27 detainees do not appear on any of the passenger lists of unscheduled flights to Somalia. Their whereabouts are also unknown.

There is no further news about Canadian national Bashir Ahmed Makhtal, who is still thought to be detained incommunicado at the police Central Investigation Bureau (known as Maikelawi) in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. Some or all of the missing detainees may be in secret detention in Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian authorities have released 23 people, including Halima Badrouine Hussein and her children, the youngest just four years old, who were freed on 4 May. Further releases are expected.

Kenya closed its border with Somalia in early January 2007, cutting off escape routes for people fleeing the fighting that broke out in late 2006 (see *the Wire* June 2007). Conflict between militias of the Council of Somali Islamic Courts (COSIC) and Ethiopian troops supporting the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia led to hundreds of civilian deaths and a mass exodus from the Somali capital, Mogadishu. After the COSIC militias were defeated, US and Ethiopian forces continued to carry out air strikes and ground operations to "root out" any remnants of COSIC and possible al-Qa'ida fighters.



Amir Mohamed Meshal of New Jersey, USA, released from detention on 28 May. He is one of 23 people recently freed by the Ethiopian authorities.



Adivasi tribal family cooking coal in the courtyard of their home, Jharkhand state, India, 2006. Lacking title deeds for land they have worked for millennia, rural adivasi communities are being displaced to make way for new industrial developments.

Adivasi communities under fire in India

Hundreds protest against loss of Indigenous land in Orissa state

Adivasi (Indigenous) communities in Kalinga Nagar, Jajpur district, Orissa, appear to be fighting a losing battle as business interests increasingly encroach on their land. Recent talks between adivasi representatives and those of the Orissa state government ended in failure in May. Principal on the agenda was the displacement of adivasi settlements by the construction of a six million tonne steel plant by Tata Steel in the area.

In January 2006, hundreds of adivasis in Kalinga Nagar demonstrated against the creation of the steel plant. Violence erupted as the adivasis, some of whom were armed with bows and arrows, were attempting to stop the erection of a boundary wall. Detonators were set off at a ditch near the construction site as a delegation of four adivasis approached. During the resultant chaos, members of the police forces reportedly fired rubber bullets, teargas shells and live rounds at the protesters, killing 12 people, including three women and a 12-year-old boy.

The adivasi protesters belong to the Munda community and are affiliated to Bistapan Birodhi Jan Manch (People's Forum Against Displacement), a group campaigning against displacement at Kalinga Nagar.

Displacement affects millions of people across India. Between 1951 and 1990, more than 20 million people were displaced largely as a result of dam, mining or irrigation projects in the country. Estimates suggest that at least 15 million of them have not been assured adequate alternative homes or land. Around 40 per cent of those displaced are thought to be Indigenous peoples.

Kalinga Nagar is being promoted as an industrial area by the state government-owned Industrial

Development Corporation (IDCO). In the last five years, the Orissa government has signed 45 agreements to set up various industrial plants in the state. Of these, 13 major steel plants are being set up at Kalinga Nagar, where more than 100 chrome washing plants are already in operation.

The adivasis at Kalinga Nagar allege that IDCO has been acquiring their lands either through force or at a low price without their informed consent or participation and selling the same land to various companies for huge profits.

The police shooting last year occurred after months of protests from adivasis who claimed that they had received inadequate financial compensation for the land acquired from them for the proposed Tata Steel plant.

Demands for justice continue

Not satisfied with the state and national governments' offer of monetary compensation for the families of the victims of the police shooting, the adivasis have made broader demands for justice as well as addressing their land right claims.

The May talks came in the wake of the dismantling of a barricade preventing access to the proposed Tata plant site. Adivasi protesters lifted the 14-month-long highway blockade in March, following negotiations with the Orissa government. Discussions so far, however, have left little in the way of practical solutions. Questions over displacement are yet to be resolved. The judicial inquiry into the 2006 shootings is not yet over. And the protests continue. At the end of June, social movements from across India held a national convention against displacement caused by industrial projects, in Bhubaneswar, the capital of Orissa.

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Indifference fuels brutality, devastating women's lives in Guatemala and Mexico

In the past decade, thousands of women have been abducted, raped, tortured and killed in Guatemala and Mexico. But cases are often poorly – if at all – investigated, and perpetrators are rarely prosecuted.

Since 2001, more than 2,000 women and girls have been murdered in Guatemala, with a yearly rate that currently stands at about 580. The murder rate for women and men in the country is very high, but according to the

A similar kind of apathy prevails in Guatemala, where sham investigations go hand in hand with a tendency to blame the victim for the crimes perpetrated against her. "They don't care," says Jorge Velásquez, of the attitude shown by the authorities towards the murder of his daughter, Claudina. The 19-year-old law student was shot dead in 2005.

"According to them [the authorities], Claudina's death wasn't worth investigating," says Jorge Velásquez. "They identified and established four main reasons: (1) because of the place where she was found; (2) because she wore a necklace; (3) because she had a pierced navel; and (4) because she wore sandals."

Tentative improvements

In Mexico, a federal law strengthening the right of women to live free from violence was passed earlier this year. A Special Prosecutor's Office for Crimes of Violence against Women was also established. However, murders of women, in cities like Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua, continue. Although investigations in some cases appear to have improved, prosecutions and convictions remain scarce across the country.

Guatemala introduced a new National Institute for Forensic Sciences in September 2006, centralizing the forensic services of different government bodies. However, a budget has yet to be allocated to the institute – yet another example of government indifference.

"A woman in Guatemala, it is said, is dead because she was asking for it," says Jorge Velásquez. "She's dead because she was in the middle of something she shouldn't be. It's hard to say this, but perhaps they thought Claudina was a gang-member or a prostitute. So how can you solve a case if there's no interest in it? Then the only word for it is indifference, and indifference promotes impunity."



Cards of support received by Jorge Velásquez

67 per cent of women over the age of 15 have been affected by violence in the home, school or workplace in Mexico.

ENDIREH 2006 survey, National Statistics Institute (INEGI) and UNIFEM

Human Rights Ombudsman's Office (PDH), women, unlike men, are also subject to acts of gross brutality and direct physical violence, including rape. As the PDH puts it: "[T]he difference is that in the case of women they make them suffer more before being killed."

In Mexico, the situation is not much better. Domestic violence, including sexual abuse, within the home and family is widespread and is believed to be common in Indigenous communities, which are among the most marginalized and vulnerable groups in the country. However, confronted by cultural attitudes that disregard, deny or even condone violence against women, and a criminal justice system that seldom delivers justice, women in general rarely speak out against such abuses.

"Women in Guerrero have no access to justice," says Neil Arias, a lawyer with the Mexican human rights organization Tlachinollan. Guerrero state has one of the largest and poorest Indigenous populations in Mexico. "The authorities are not sensitive to the situation of women who want to denounce the violence... they just tell you to make peace with your husbands and obey your husbands... they don't want any more work."



'Now I am really scared'

Tenfold rise in women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation in Greece

Aleksa was brought to Greece from a country in Eastern Europe. She told AI in January that she was trying to escape difficulties in her life and had hoped for a job that would allow her to support her family. A family friend put her in touch with people who "would help her migrate". They were traffickers. She said they forced her into prostitution, subjected her to severe physical and psychological abuse, and sold her on to different traffickers at least three times.

The police detained Aleksa because she did not have the necessary documentation. While in detention she found that she was pregnant – she had been forced by her traffickers to have unprotected sex with clients. She had an abortion and, once back in detention, bled for several days. She only received medical treatment when another detainee put her in touch with a shelter

for trafficked women run by a non-governmental organization (NGO).

Aleksa was offered protection by the Greek authorities only if she co-operated in the daunting ordeal of testifying against her traffickers at trial. "Now I am really scared," she told AI. She is so afraid of the traffickers that she rarely ventures out of the shelter.

Some NGOs believe that trafficking for forced prostitution in Greece has increased tenfold in the last decade. Although the government has responded with a series of laws, most of the women have not been correctly identified and have therefore received no protection or other assistance. Some have been detained and deported but the vast majority remain hidden. Few traffickers have been brought to justice and the victims of their crimes remain unable to obtain justice or reparation.

Worldwide Appeals

VIETNAM

Lawyer detained in mental hospital

Lawyer Bui Thi Kim Thanh is detained in a mental hospital where she has been forcibly injected with unknown drugs which have apparently left her unable to talk.

AI considers her to be a prisoner of conscience held because of her work as a lawyer for the Democratic Party of Vietnam (XXI), an unauthorized pro-democracy organization. She also worked free of charge defending low-income families in her community who were seeking redress for property confiscated by the authorities. Like many other dissidents in Viet Nam, prior to her arrest she was subjected to threats and harassment by security officials.

Bui Thi Kim Thanh was taken from her home by police in the early hours of 2 November 2006. They drove her to a nearby hospital where they tried to have her committed. However, two psychiatric doctors reportedly assessed her and concluded that she was not suffering from any mental illness. She was then taken to Bien Hoa Mental Hospital, where she is said to have been injected with unknown drugs for no medical reason and is now detained at that hospital.

The authorities reportedly offered to release her on condition that she did not speak about her treatment. She refused. Since then all visitors and deliveries for her at the hospital have been repeatedly declined. Before this her family had been allowed to visit her.

It is not known what legal provisions Bui Thi Kim Thanh is being detained under and she is not known to have been charged with any offence or to be suffering from any mental illness. However, there are provisions in Vietnamese law for confinement to a psychiatric unit, administered locally without the need to go before a court. Other political and religious dissidents have reportedly been confined in the past to Bien Hoa Mental Hospital for non-medical reasons, and suffered ill-treatment.



Please write, calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Bui Thi Kim Thanh who is detained against her will at Bien Hoa Mental Hospital without apparent medical need.
Send appeals to: Nguyen Tan Dung, Prime Minister, Office of the Prime Minister, Hoang Hoa Tham, Ha Noi, Viet Nam. Fax: +844 823 1872 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs) Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

AZERBAIJAN

Teenagers ill-treated in pre-trial detention

Three teenagers, Ruslan Bessonov, Maksim Genashilkin and Dmitri Pavlov, have been detained since March 2005, charged with murdering another teenager, Vusal Zeynalov. All three boys allege they have been tortured and ill-treated since their arrest.

Ruslan Bessonov stated that on 14 March 2005 police investigators punched him and beat him with truncheons on his head and body. He said they hung him up by his legs, sat on his chest and stamped on his fingers. They allegedly threatened to tear out his fingernails, slam his genitals in a door, kill his mother and give him electric shocks. The other two teenagers alleged similar threats and beatings.

All three claim they were forced to sign confessions incriminating each

other for the murder of Vusal Zeynalov. They all maintain they did not commit the murder and have alibis for that time. Family members believe the boys may have been targeted because of their Russian ethnicity, allowing the crime to be explained as ethnically motivated.

Court hearings have been repeatedly postponed for two years. When two hearings eventually took place in October and November 2006, one investigator admitted forging the signature of Dmitri Pavlov's attorney on one of the protocols and of destroying documentation relevant to the case. During a court hearing on 1 June a state prosecutor asked the court to sentence the three boys to 10 years in a high-security prison. Local journalists were not admitted into the courtroom.

AI is concerned that the boys may be further tortured or ill-treated while in detention, and that their trial will fail to comply with international standards.

Please write, calling for Dmitri Pavlov, Maksim Genashilkin and Ruslan Bessonov to be given a fair trial or immediately released. Call for their allegations of torture and ill-treatment to be fully investigated and if verified, for the confessions to be declared as inadmissible evidence in court. Call for those responsible to be held accountable and the victims to receive reparation.
Send appeals to: President Ilham Aliyev, Office of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic, 19 Istiqbaliyat Street, Baku AZ1066, Azerbaijan. Fax +994 12 492 0625 Email: president@gov.az OR office@apparat.gov.az Salutation: Dear President

Awareness-raising posters produced in different countries to highlight the danger of trafficking, taken from the cover of AI's recent report on trafficking of women in Greece. Courtesy of the non-governmental organization Klimaka and the IOM (International Organization for Migration).

In the face of this modern form of slavery, protection for trafficked women is only on offer at a high price. As in Aleksa's case, it is conditional on their "co-operation", in most cases their willingness to testify in court in criminal prosecutions against their traffickers. However, such women have neither been offered an effective witness protection programme, nor relocation to another country where they might escape reprisals.

Trafficking is a human rights abuse

Trafficking of women and girls for forced prostitution is an abuse of human rights. It violates their rights to liberty and security of person, freedom from torture or other ill-treatment, freedom of movement, privacy and family life. It exposes them to a series of human rights abuses not only at the hands of traffickers, but also to subsequent violations within the criminal justice system.

AI's report, *Greece: Uphold the rights of women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation* (EUR 25/002/2007) highlights the failure of the Greek authorities to identify accurately and promptly and to protect the rights of individuals trafficked for forced prostitution. AI is calling on the government to comply with European standards by ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and to encourage women and girls to report crimes of trafficking against them. AI also urges that assistance, as well as protection laws and practices, be strengthened.

ACT NOW!

Write to the Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice calling on him to take urgent steps to ensure that the rights of women and girls trafficked into Greece for sexual exploitation are upheld.

Send appeals to: Panagiotis Panouris, Secretary General, Ministry of Justice, Mesogeion 96, Athens, Greece.
Fax: +30 210 7758742
Email: mjust2@otenet.gr

For more information and to take action go to: www.amnesty.org/actforwomen

Iran – the last executioner of children



Two weeks after his 18th birthday in 2006, Sina Paymard (left) was taken to the gallows to be hanged for murder. As he stood there with a noose around his neck, he was asked for his final request. He said that he would like to play the *ney* – a Middle Eastern flute. Relatives of the murder victim, who were there to witness the hanging, were so moved by his playing that they agreed to accept the payment of *djeh* (blood money) instead of retribution by death, as is allowed under Iranian law. Sina Paymard remains on death row pending negotiations with the victim's family.

Other young people facing execution in Iran have not been spared. Sa'id Qanbar Zahi, who was sentenced to death when he was 17, was hanged in Zahedan prison on 27 May 2007. Mohammad Mousavi was reportedly hanged a month earlier in Shiraz for a murder allegedly committed when he was 16.

Iran has the shameful status of currently being the world's sole executioner of child offenders – people convicted of crimes committed when they were under the age of 18. It also holds the macabre distinction of having executed more child offenders (24) than any other country in the world since 1990. Eleven of those sentenced to death were still aged under 18 when executed.

Today, AI knows of 71 child offenders on death row, but the true figure is probably much higher. They include Delara Darabi (right), convicted of a murder committed when she was 17, and Hossein Gharabaghloo, who was 16 when he allegedly stabbed a friend to death during a fight.

In most cases, child offenders sentenced to death in Iran are kept in prison until they reach 18, before being executed. In this period, some win appeals or are reprieved by the murder victim's family.

Elsewhere in the world, executions of child offenders have all but stopped,

reflecting the widespread recognition that because of children's immaturity, impulsiveness, vulnerability and capacity for rehabilitation, their lives should never be written off – however heinous the crimes of which they are convicted.

A growing movement has emerged in Iran that is pushing for abolition of the death penalty for child offenders. It is driven by courageous human rights defenders and activists who carry on despite threats and harassment from the authorities.

Such campaigning inside and outside Iran has made a difference. Occasionally, convictions leading to death sentences have been overturned and the person has been released.

One such case was that of Leyla Mafi, who was sentenced to death in 2004 in Arak for "acts contrary to chastity" after she was arrested in a brothel when she was 17. Following an energetic campaign by her lawyer, Shadi Sadr, and AI, the Supreme Court overturned her death sentence in March 2005.



Delara Darabi is at risk of imminent execution for a murder which took place when she was 17 years old. See *Worldwide Appeal* March 2007.

The Iranian authorities have a historic opportunity to join the world consensus against the execution of child offenders and end this unacceptable practice. It should announce an immediate moratorium on all executions of child offenders and urgently revise the law so that it explicitly prohibits the death sentence for people aged under 18 at the time of the crime, as an important step towards abolishing the death penalty altogether.

See *Iran: The last executioner of children* (MDE 13/059/2007).

UPDATES

Saudi Arabia – released after 15 years

Sarah Jane Dematera was freed from prison on 2 May after spending 15 years under sentence of death. In 1992, aged 19, she left her home in the Philippines to take a job as a domestic worker in Saudi Arabia. Four days after her arrival, she was arrested and charged with murdering her employer. She consistently denied the charges, but after an unfair trial and having been denied access to a lawyer, she was convicted and sentenced to death. Following campaigning worldwide and apparent intervention by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo of the Philippines, she was pardoned by the family of the victim. *Djya* or blood money is understood to have been paid to the victim's family. She has now returned to her family in the Philippines.

See *Worldwide Appeals* March 1998.

Viet Nam – trade unionist sentenced

Tran Quoc Hien was tried on 15 May. He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for "conducting propaganda" against the state under Article 88 of the Penal Code, plus two years' imprisonment for "disrupting security" under Article 89, followed by two years' probation on release. Accusations against him included joining "hostile elements" to issue a manifesto on freedom and democracy for Viet Nam. The other four were not put on trial at the same time. It is not known when they might be tried or on what charges.

See *Worldwide Appeals* May 2007.



Sierra Leone trial begins

The trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor before the Special Court for Sierra Leone opened, for security reasons, in the Hague, on 4 June. He is accused of 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity against the people of Sierra Leone. It is the first time a former head of state has been prosecuted in an international criminal court for crimes committed in Africa against Africans.

On the first day of the trial, Charles Taylor refused to appear, also unexpectedly he sacked his lawyer and in a letter read by his attorney he stated that he planned to represent himself. The presiding judge then ordered the remaining member of the duty council from the principal defender's office to represent him for the day. The prosecution then proceeded with their opening statement. The trial was due to resume on 25 June.

Look out for a first-hand account of the trial proceedings in the next issue of *The Wire*.

IRAN

Shi'a cleric may face death sentence

Shi'a cleric Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi and 17 of his supporters reportedly appeared before the Special Court for the Clergy (SCC) on 10 June. Despite denials, credible reports suggest that he was sentenced to death.

During a court session in March, an eyewitness said he was bleeding from the mouth, coughing up blood and unable to walk upright.

Currently detained in Evin Prison, he went on hunger strike on 19 February in protest at the appalling conditions there and at the authorities' refusal to let him visit his dying mother and later attend her funeral. He was allegedly tortured during interrogation and has been denied access to medical treatment.

He was arrested at his home in Tehran on 8 October 2006, along with more than 300 of his followers. His 80-year-old mother was among those arrested and was allegedly ill-treated while in detention. The arrests took place during violent clashes with security forces. Most or all of those arrested are thought to have been released.

Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi has reportedly been charged with 30 offences, including "waging war against God", having links with anti-revolutionaries and spies, and "acting against state security". He has had no access to legal representation and is said not

to know "what they want from him". He reportedly advocates the separation of religion from the political basis of the state, which is a central part of Iran's constitution.

The SCC operates outside the framework of the judiciary and is under the direct control of the Supreme Leader. Established in 1987 by Ayatollah Khomeini to try members of the Shi'a religious establishment in Iran, its procedures fall short of international standards for fair trial and is widely considered illegitimate. The court can hand down sentences including flogging and the death penalty.

➤ Please write, urging the authorities to clarify reports that Ayatollah Sayed Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi has been sentenced to death and, if so, to take steps immediately to overturn this sentence and release him unless he is to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and tried promptly and fairly. Call for a prompt and impartial investigation into allegations that he may have been tortured and, if so, for those responsible to be brought to justice.

Send appeals to: Leader of the Islamic Republic, His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei, The Office of the Supreme Leader, Shohadai Street, Qom, Iran.
Email: info@leader.ir OR istiftaa@wilayah.org
Fax: +98 251 774 2228 (mark "FAO the Office of His Excellency, Ayatollah al Udhma Khamenei")
Salutation: Your Excellency



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC)

No justice for murdered human rights defender

On 31 July it will be two years since Pascal Kabungulu Kibembi (pictured) was shot dead in front of his wife and children by uniformed men who broke into his home in the early hours of the morning. He was one of DRC's most prominent human rights defenders and Secretary General of *Héritiers de la Justice* (Heirs of Justice), a human rights non-governmental organization based in Bukavu, South-Kivu province, eastern DRC.

A military criminal investigation resulted in the arrest in August of a number of soldiers on suspicion of killing Pascal Kabungulu. However, shortly afterwards, the men were illegally freed from prison at gunpoint by the then commander of the Bukavu military garrison, Colonel Thierry Ilunga. He had openly threatened to kill Pascal Kabungulu in 2003 after *Héritiers de la Justice* had accused him of organizing illegal mineral exploitation in South-Kivu.

After national and international protests, the suspects were returned to prison and appeared before a military tribunal in November 2005, but the trial was halted after testimony was heard which appeared to directly implicate

Colonel Ilunga in the killing. The court placed Colonel Ilunga under arrest and ordered the transfer of the trial to a higher military court with jurisdiction over senior army personnel. Officials involved in the trial, which lasted little more than two weeks, complained of threats and political interference.

Since then, no new trial has begun. Despite the charges against him, Colonel Ilunga was released after spending less than a day in custody and was later promoted to serve as a brigade commander in the unified national army, the FARDC.

➤ Please write, calling for the prompt resumption of the trial against those suspected of involvement in the July 2005 killing of Pascal Kabungulu Kibembi. Urge that the trial meets international standards of fairness and that the possibility of the death penalty be excluded. Call for Colonel Thierry Ilunga to be suspended from duty pending completion of the trial.

Send appeals to: M. Chikez Diemu, Ministre de la Défense Nationale et des Anciens Combattants, Ministre de la Défense, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo.
Salutation: Dear Minister



Act now to protect civilians displaced by war in Darfur

In Darfur, millions of civilians continue to suffer the consequences of the conflict. In addition to 2 million internally displaced, tens of thousands have been forced from their homes in the past couple of months. Many have fled to neighbouring Chad.

In a recent meeting with Amr Musa, Secretary General of the League of Arab States, AI's Secretary General, Irene Khan, discussed the need to deploy international peacekeepers to Darfur to protect civilians and strengthen the arms embargo.

AI is calling on Sudan's government to facilitate the immediate and full deployment of a joint African Union and UN peacekeeping force to contribute to the protection of civilians in Darfur.



Arrest Now!

On 27 April the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for government minister Ahmad Harun and Janjawid leader Ali Kushayb. They are accused of crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Darfur, Sudan, including murder, rape and torture. The Sudanese authorities have refused so far to allow them to be tried by the ICC. (See *the Wire* April 2007).

Take action on International Justice Day, 17 July. Join AI's letter-writing action to ensure that those accused of the worst human rights violations are brought to justice.

Please write to the Embassy of Sudan in your home country, calling on the authorities to arrest Ahmad Harun and Ali Kushayb and surrender them to the ICC.

Sudanese Embassy addresses can be found at: <http://www.sudan.net/government/embassy.html>

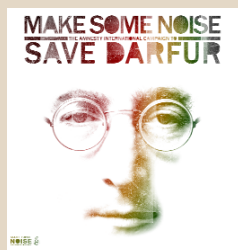


Sign AI's Global Petition

AI launched a Global Petition on 12 June, urging the government of Sudan to:

- accept and facilitate the immediate and full deployment to Darfur of the joint African Union and UN peacekeeping force
- take all effective measures to disarm the Janjawid and respect the UN arms embargo
- immediately halt indiscriminate attacks against civilians
- co-operate with the International Criminal Court and hold those responsible for human rights violations accountable through fair trials and without applying the death penalty.

Sign the petition at www.amnesty.org/noise



AI launched a double CD, featuring more than 20 John Lennon songs, to mobilize millions in response to the human rights catastrophe in Darfur. More than 30 world-class musicians have interpreted and re-recorded the song of their choice to bring listeners into the world of human rights activism.

Yoko Ono generously granted the publishing rights to Lennon's entire solo songbook to AI, to use as the centrepiece of this project. The CD, *Make Some Noise: The Campaign to Save Darfur* (labelled *Instant Karma: The Campaign to Save*

Darfur in the USA), was released in June. All tracks are available as digital downloads on iTunes and other major providers. The artists – who come from the worlds of rock, pop, hip-hop and country – include U2, R.E.M., Christina Aguilera and The Flaming Lips.

Copies of the double CD can be purchased at www.amnesty.org/noise and on iTunes. For the US version, go to www.instantkarma.org. Proceeds will go to support AI's work on Darfur and other human rights crises worldwide. Read more about Darfur at www.amnesty.org/sudan

Pictured clockwise from left: Cover of Make some Noise: The Campaign to Save Darfur CD which features more than 20 John Lennon songs; AI activists gather outside Downing Street, London, to urge the UK Government to continue to push for an effective peacekeeping force in the region on the third Day for Darfur, in April; people displaced by the conflict in Sudan make the journey from the capital, Khartoum, back south to their homeland in Bentiu, Unity State, March 2006; women in camp for internally displaced people in Goz Beida, Chad, speak to AI about their difficulties, November 2006.

Celebrating rights, taking global action in Latvia

More than 400 people demonstrated their support for the rights of Latvia's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities at the Riga Pride march on 3 June. Among them were the Latvian organization Mozaika and 70 AI activists from eight European countries. Thanks in part to AI's lobbying efforts, this year, participants could walk in safety knowing the police were there to protect them.

"This wasn't a casual stroll around central Riga," recalls Simon Desjardins, an AI activist and Pride participant. "We held the march in a park [Vermane Garden] enclosed by an iron fence and loads of policemen, reportedly as many as 1,600, many of whom were decked out in full riot gear." Counter-demonstrators surrounded Vermane Garden, screaming abuse and, according to Simon Desjardins, "launching the occasional firecracker at us."

Despite the heavy police presence, a home-made explosive device was lobbed at a group of Pride marchers as they left the park. No one was seriously injured and the Latvian police swiftly arrested those responsible. After the march, police bussed participants to safe locations in Riga.

This was a marked improvement on previous years. In 2005 and 2006, similar events in Riga had either been banned by the Latvian authorities, or attacked by counter-demonstrators. In 2006, counter-demonstrators threw eggs and human excrement at participants in Pride events. Neither in 2005 nor 2006 did the Latvian law enforcement authorities take sufficient steps to protect the rights to freedom of assembly and expression for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. This year, prior to the event, AI informed the Latvian authorities that it would attend the Pride march. It called on them to provide adequate police protection to enable the demonstration to take place unhindered.



Pride marchers (top) and counter-demonstrators at the Riga Pride march, Latvia, in June.

"This year, visibility was the main accomplishment of the march," says Simon Desjardins. "Last year, the same news reports were dominated by violent images and by a message that the march was unsanctioned and illegal... This year, the images were... of people demonstrating legally and protected by the state. I have no doubt that this will result in a bigger Pride march next year."

control arms

So far, more than 80 governments have sent their views on arms control to the UN Secretary-General following lobbying by the Control Arms campaign, a record number for this type of UN consultation.

Since February 2007 the Control Arms campaign has led People's Consultations in more than 40 countries, in parallel with the UN Secretary-General's consultation on arms control.

Activists around the world have held community, regional and national forums to give people and communities a voice. They have urged their governments to submit strong, positive recommendations to the UN to support an Arms Trade Treaty.

The outcome is due to be presented to government officials at the October 2007 meeting of the UN General Assembly Disarmament and International Security Committee.

For more information and to get involved, please visit www.controlarms.org



AI Burkina Faso organizes a People's Consultation, led by the Control Arms campaign, in March.



Opinions wanted

- Are you an international member?
- Do you live in a country that is not served by an AI office?
- Do you want to help improve the *Wire*?

If so, we want to hear from you. Many of you responded to our 2005 survey – thank you! We are now looking for individuals to take part in a readers' panel to help us improve the way we bring news stories to you.

If you are interested in being a part of this process, please email us at newslett@amnesty.org (using the subject header: "Readers' panel"), or write to *the Wire* at the address below.

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