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[photo caption]

Amnesty International's Secretary General Irene Khan meets Afghan refugees in Pakistan on International Human Rights Day 2001.

© JL Bulcao (AI/Gamma)

[end caption]

Foreword by the Secretary General

When I arrived as Secretary General of Amnesty International in August 2001, nothing could have prepared either myself or the organization for the events of 11 September and their fallout. The attacks in the USA were a crime against humanity. The developments in their wake pose major challenges to the human rights community.

Post 11 September, fearful governments responded by rushing through a wide range of legislation and other measures; new crimes were formulated, organizations banned and their assets frozen. A number of these new laws used dangerously broad definitions of "terrorism". Amnesty International recognizes the right – indeed the duty – of states to protect their citizens. We do not believe, however, that human rights need to be sacrificed in order to achieve this. Our call has been for justice, not revenge.

We are campaigning vigorously to ensure that action by governments to strengthen national security does not violate or facilitate the violation of human rights. We have taken up cases of individuals and groups whose human rights may have been violated in the course of "anti-terrorism" actions. We are pressing governments not to turn a blind eye to serious human rights abuses and repression by those they count as allies in their "war against terrorism".

Amnesty International's work continues unbowed, and we can point to some notable successes. During the last decade at least three countries each year have abolished the death penalty. Thanks to much lobbying, together with our non-governmental organization (NGO) partners, only a handful of ratifications are needed before the International Criminal Court becomes a reality, a major step towards ending impunity for some of the worst crimes affecting humanity. In close cooperation with the International Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Amnesty International worked for the adoption of the Optional Protocol to the UN Children's Convention on the involvement of children in armed conflict. This treaty, which prohibits the use of child soldiers, came into force in February 2002.

The organization's worldwide membership continued to devote much of its energy to the global Campaign against Torture, a key focus of which has been to highlight the link between identity-based discrimination and ill-treatment. Our campaigning against identity-based violations is stronger than ever, and will continue to grow with the launch of the international Violence against Women Campaign in early 2003. We will continue to work to protect human rights defenders from attack or intimidation by mobilizing support around the world, taking practical measures to help individuals and their families in danger, and forming networks ready and able to respond at short notice.

In 2002 we will launch the Russia Campaign, working against impunity for human rights violations in the Russian Federation, where there are currently few avenues of redress available to the victims of abuses; and where those who violate the law are confident that they will get away with it. This must not be allowed to prevail.

As globalization spreads, bringing greater wealth to some and destitution and despair to others, human rights activists must promote not just legal justice, but also social justice. In 2001, in response to this need, Amnesty International has revised its mission so that we can address economic, social and cultural rights as well as those civil and political rights that have formed the heart of our campaigning for decades. We must struggle not only against torture, arbitrary detention and unfair trials, but also against hunger, illiteracy and discrimination.

2001 marked the 50th anniversary of the UN Refugee Convention, yet for many governments the pledge to honour the rights and protections set out in the Convention has remained mere rhetoric. AI was deeply concerned that asylum policy was increasingly focusing on how to keep people out rather than on how to effectively protect people from war, civil upheaval and grave human rights abuses. We will continue to work to protect the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers around the world, many of whom are from the world's poorest countries and far from the scrutiny of the world's media.

The past year has presented difficult and frightening times for the world and the human rights movement. We must not let fear win. Amnesty International will continue to insist that the universality and indivisibility of human rights must be upheld. At its most simple, all human beings deserve to enjoy all human rights.

[strap]

...£10 pays for four fax messages in a life-saving Urgent Action campaign for a prisoner being tortured or facing death ...

[end strap]

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GOOD NEWS

In 2001 Amnesty International learned of the release of many prisoners of conscience, commutations of death sentences, and improvements in the situation of many other victims of human rights abuse. Countless other people are still in need of our help.

[box]

Asia: Tibet

Tibetan musicologist Ngawang Choephel, a prisoner of conscience, was released after serving six and a half years of his sentence, following sustained campaigning by Amnesty International members and others. In 1996 he was sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment for "espionage and counter-revolutionary activities", after gathering material for a film about traditional Tibetan performing arts. His trial was held in secret and the authorities produced no evidence linking him to these "crimes". His mother, Sonam Dekyi, was only allowed to visit him in prison for the first time in August 2000.

He was released in January 2002 on medical grounds – under a hitherto unknown regulation – suffering from lung and liver illnesses contracted during his time in prison. Tibetan prisons are notorious for their poor food and insanitary conditions which contribute to long-term health problems for many prisoners.

Three days after his release, Ngawang Choephel sent the following message:
“I would like to say thank you to all the people who helped me and worked so hard for my release... My three primary concerns at the moment are my health, my mother and my fellow Tibetan prisoners... I sincerely hope my release is the first of many more in the near future.”

[photo caption]

Ngawang Choephel after his release © AI

[end caption]

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Americas: Honduras

Coronado Avila, Lombardo Lacayo and Horacio Martinez, three grassroots activists campaigning to defend the land rights of peasant farmers in Honduras, had been receiving death threats. An Urgent Action was issued on 3 March 2000. In July 2001 Coronado Avila wrote the following:

“Let me tell you from the bottom of my heart how grateful I am to all of you who... [fight] for the respect of life and of the universal rights of societies around the world. I would also like to take this opportunity to tell... everyone at Amnesty International that thanks to your support on 3 March 2000, when I was being persecuted and my life was under threat, I am still alive today. I will never forget the people who supported me and my organization...”

“Finally, I would like to urge you not to become discouraged in your work to help men and women who raise their voices in protest to support their people.”

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Europe: Uzbekistan

Marat Rakhmanov’s death sentence was commuted to 15 years’ imprisonment by the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan on 24 April 2001.

According to his lawyer, Marat Rakhmanov was severely beaten by police while he was in custody awaiting trial, and confessed only as a result of torture. To Amnesty International’s knowledge, the authorities have done nothing to investigate these allegations.

Marat Rakhmanov’s sister, Mayra, told Amnesty International: “They took him out of prison and didn’t tell him anything. He thought he was taken to be shot. Only once he had arrived in the colony in Namangan, the other prisoners told him where he was and he understood that he might have been granted clemency... He said, ‘I feel as if I was born a second time’.”

In June, Mayra sent the following message:

“Your help has been priceless and our gratitude to you is immense. You helped to preserve my brother's life. We wish you good health and success in your difficult, but necessary struggle. We thank God that in such difficult and frightening times we received the support of such wonderful people. We are eternally indebted to you because life has no price.”

[photo caption]

Marat Rakhmanov © Private

[end caption]

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Africa: Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

N'sii Luanda Shandwe, president of one of the DRC's most active human rights organizations, the Comité des observateurs des droits de l'homme, was arrested in Kinshasa on 2 June 2001. His arrest was directly linked to his human rights activities. He was held with some 60 other detainees in Kinshasa's main prison in appalling conditions. He was allowed just one family visit a week, lasting no more than 10 minutes, and had no access to lawyers. He was finally released on 6 September 2001, after three months as a prisoner of conscience. One of his first acts on being released was to plead on the radio for the release of fellow human rights activist and cell-mate, Golden Misabiko.

N'sii Luanda Shandwe is convinced that the campaigning of human rights organizations was instrumental in securing his release.

Golden Misabiko was released without charge on 13 September, after seven months as a prisoner of conscience. Although relieved to be free, he requires medical treatment after being tortured. Golden Misabiko sent his thanks to all those who appealed on his behalf. He said that when he was informed that Amnesty International was campaigning for his release he said to himself: "I'm going to get out".

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About Amnesty International

Amnesty International's vision is of a world in which every person enjoys the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights standards.

Who We Are...

Amnesty International is the largest human rights organization in the world. It was launched in 1961 by a British lawyer, Peter Benenson, who was moved to act when he read about two students in Portugal who had been sentenced to seven years in prison for raising a toast to freedom.

Amnesty International forms a global community of human rights defenders with the principles of international solidarity, effective action for the individual victim, global coverage, the universality and indivisibility of human rights, impartiality and independence, and democracy and mutual respect. We have more than one million members and supporters in over 140 countries and territories. Members are encouraged to take part in the organization's activities and also play a key role in the organization's democratic decision-making processes.

What We Do...

We systematically and impartially research and publicize information about human rights abuses. We promote understanding and awareness of human rights issues to the widest audience possible. We lobby governments and intergovernmental organizations to adopt constitutions, conventions and other measures to guarantee the rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We campaign for change, including the release of individual prisoners and detainees, and reforms in laws, practices and institutions. Our campaigning activities include letter-writing, Urgent Actions and bringing public attention to human rights issues by staging high profile events, giving interviews, issuing

press releases and other media activities. We also provide relief to prisoners of conscience and victims of torture, protect human rights defenders under threat, and work on behalf of refugees.

Amnesty International's Mandate: Changing with the times...

“Our cultural diversity is the source of our strength, inspiration and determination... We need to find new ways of building international solidarity, to continue to transform despair into hope and compassion into action.”

Irene Khan, Secretary General of Amnesty International

In 1977 Amnesty International was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Since then, the international political, economic and social landscape has been transformed and the nature of the human rights community has undergone enormous changes.

At its 25th International Council Meeting in August 2001, Amnesty International found itself at a crossroads, recognizing the need to adapt in order to continue to act effectively in defence of human rights.

In response we reformulated our mandate in a new, short, flexible mission statement:

“Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.”

This mission includes everything that was previously in our mandate: we will still work to free all prisoners of conscience; to ensure fair and prompt trials for political prisoners; to abolish the death penalty, torture and other cruel or degrading punishments; to end “disappearances”, political killings and other unlawful killings in armed conflict; and to end human rights abuses by armed political groups. However, the new mission provides a framework which encompasses a broader range of human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights. It allows us to be more flexible and more adaptable to changing circumstances. It equips us to work more effectively for the protection and promotion of human rights for all in a constantly changing world.

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...£200 pays for the extra costs of running a crisis response action for one day, including setting up communication channels, collecting research and distributing information throughout the world ...

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Crisis Response

Justice Not Revenge - 11 September Crisis Response

Rapid response

Amnesty International's response to the 11 September attacks in the USA was immediate. Under the slogan, Justice Not Revenge, Amnesty International condemned the attacks, expressed sympathy for

the victims and their relatives and called for those responsible to be brought to justice in accordance with international human rights standards.

However, it was not only a question of responding to events in the USA; it quickly became clear that the attacks unleashed events with global implications for human rights. Amnesty International initiated Crisis Response, a method of action used when there is a high risk of an upsurge in human rights abuses on a very serious scale. This allowed Amnesty International to mobilize its worldwide resources to their fullest capacity.

Campaigning against the backlash

Amnesty International's members worked steadfastly to counter a racist backlash against Muslim, Asian, Middle Eastern and other minority communities in their own countries which emerged in the aftermath of the 11 September attacks. They used the report, *The Backlash: human rights at risk* throughout the world, to lobby their governments to take strong action against racist attacks directed at minority communities.

One of Amnesty International's unique strengths was shown as it highlighted human rights concerns in "forgotten countries" or those ignored by governments in the "war against terrorism".

Members in action

When governments introduced draconian security and immigration legislation, which could ultimately lead to the human rights of many people being restricted or denied, Amnesty International members raised concerns about the treatment of refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as about restrictions on civil liberties and basic freedoms.

As coalitions sprang up around the world, Amnesty International sections and structures worked with other NGOs in calling for all parties to the armed conflict in Afghanistan to exercise restraint and to respect human rights. The movement called for strict adherence to the rules of war during the US-led military campaign in Afghanistan.

The US authorities were also challenged about the introduction of special military commissions which could lead to unfair trials, and about the detention of mainly non-US nationals without basic human rights safeguards.

Making human rights the agenda

Afghanistan was the focus of intense international attention and Amnesty International actively contributed to the debate. Two major reports were published, raising concerns about the protection of refugees and civilians, as well as looking forward to what would be needed in rebuilding the country. The Human Rights Agenda for Afghanistan proved an effective tool for lobbying, publicity and outreach work. It was adapted for use on Amnesty International's Justice Not Revenge website, and was translated into many languages including Pashtu and Dari.

From Peru to Poland the Amnesty International candle proved a potent symbol during the difficult months in late 2001. On Human Rights Day, 10 December 2001, a powerful global message was relayed around the world by sections and structures including those in Finland, Australia, Japan, Tunisia, Hong Kong, South Africa, Zambia, Chile, and Sweden, all of whom held candlelight vigils and related activities.

Working for the future

Afghanistan is at a crossroads, and during its transition there is an opportunity to rebuild a government, justice system and civil society on a solid foundation of human rights for all. Amnesty International will continue to campaign for human rights to be made the agenda in rebuilding the country.

During 2002 and 2003, Amnesty International will have a sustained field presence in Afghanistan, allowing full-time researchers to remain in contact with victims of human rights violations and to feed back accurate information to the movement and the public.

We will also continue to campaign against further limitations to civil liberties and basic freedoms in all regions of the world as a result of the tightening up or introduction of security and anti-“terrorism” legislation following the 11 September attacks in the USA.

[photo caption]

A group of women at a candlelight vigil in New York, USA commemorate the victims of the attacks of 11 September 2001.

© Associated Press

[end caption]

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Israel and the Occupied Territories: One year of intifada

A day after the intifada (uprising) began on 29 September 2000, a 12-year-old Palestinian boy was shot dead by Israeli soldiers while cowering in his father's arms. The world saw pictures of his last terrified moments, yet did little to protect others like him.

In the 15 months to December 2001, more than 750 Palestinians were killed by Israeli security forces, the vast majority of them unlawfully when no lives were in danger. More than 220 Israelis, including 166 civilians, were killed by Palestinian armed groups and individuals. Many children were among the victims: more than 160 Palestinian and 36 Israeli children were killed. More than 18,000 other people were wounded, many maimed for life.

The Israeli authorities responded to the intifada and the killing of Israeli civilians by firing on Palestinians at demonstrations, checkpoints and borders, and by shelling residential areas. The Israel Defence Force openly carried out a policy of extrajudicially executing Palestinians said to be involved in attacks; more than 40 Palestinians were assassinated in incidents in which more than 20 bystanders were killed. No killing in the Occupied Territories was properly investigated and claims and counter-claims reverberated.

At least 3,000 Palestinians were arrested; many were held in prolonged incommunicado detention and tortured.

Climate of fear

Almost every Palestinian town and village has been cut off from the outside world by Israeli army checkpoints or physical barriers. Curfews on Palestinian areas have trapped residents in their homes for days, weeks or even months. In the name of security, hundreds of Palestinian homes have been demolished and Palestinians barred from travelling along certain roads. Palestinians subject to these

collective punishments are increasingly impoverished by the closures and traumatized by the killings and destruction.

Violence and fear have become part of daily life. Israeli settlers have killed Palestinians with almost complete impunity. Palestinians have shot at cars with Israeli number-plates and set off bombs in shopping malls and restaurants.

Amnesty International's work

Since the beginning of the intifada Amnesty International has sent nine fact-finding missions to Israel and the Occupied Territories. Delegates included an expert on policing riots and an independent military adviser. In an environment of distortions, accusations and counter-accusations, Amnesty International's insistence on accurate and independent fact-finding was widely acknowledged. Human rights defenders facing increasing obstacles in carrying out their work welcomed the international solidarity extended by Amnesty International.

Four major reports were issued and our worldwide membership embarked on a sustained program of lobbying, publicity and awareness raising. We have repeatedly called on the Israeli authorities to abide by their international human rights obligations, and have urged the Palestinian Authority and armed groups to act in accordance with humanitarian law.

Time for international action

The international community has made increasingly strong statements, but has failed to take the action necessary to ensure respect for human rights. Amnesty International continues to call for international human rights observers in the Occupied Territories to ensure accurate reporting and to provide protection against abuses.

International observers could investigate killings, establish the truth and recommend measures to limit the loss of life. They could stand at checkpoints and monitor the action of security forces. They could ensure the passage of ambulances and the sick. They could guarantee some normality to life in the Occupied Territories. They could patrol roads and offer protection to Israeli and Palestinian civilians who travel along them.

A permanent and durable peace can only be built on a foundation of human rights. The past year has shown more clearly than ever that if human rights are sacrificed in the search for peace and security, there will be no peace and no security.

See Amnesty International's report, Israel/Occupied Territories/Palestinian Authority: Broken Lives – A year of intifada, published in November 2001.

[photo caption]

A Palestinian boy plays by a wall sprayed with graffiti in Khan Yunis, Gaza Strip, April 2001.

© Reuters

[end caption]

Racial discrimination is an assault on the fundamental principle underlying the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that human rights are everyone's birthright and apply to all without distinction. The right not to suffer racial discrimination is one of the most basic principles of international human rights law. Virtually all the major human rights treaties prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, colour, language or national origin. Yet racism and racial discrimination persist in every European country, manifesting themselves in different ways according to the nature of the society.

Racial discrimination often remains unnoticed except when it leads to extreme violence. Those who suffer racial discrimination frequently face complex forms of racism that are hard to identify and easy to deny.

Racism and colour

Amnesty International reported on human rights abuses based on race and ethnicity in Europe throughout 2001. Racism on the basis of colour has been documented in much of Europe. In general terms, members of racial minorities are more likely than the majority population to be detained on suspicion of offences such as drug dealing, theft or not having identity papers. They also figure disproportionately in cases of excessive use of force by police, ill-treatment and deaths in custody.

Allegations of racist abuses by police are rarely investigated effectively, and few authorities adequately monitor complaints of racist treatment by the police or others administering justice. In the UK, institutional racism in the police as well as racial disparities in the rest of the justice system have been widely documented. Research has shown that police use harsher measures against the black community. For the same offence, black people in the UK face more serious charges than whites, are more likely to be imprisoned, and appear to be given longer sentences on average. In Spain, there have been a disturbing number of allegations of racist ill-treatment by police. A rising number of reported cases involve ill-treatment of people arrested in connection with identity checks.

UN World Conference against Racism

Amnesty International was an active participant in the preparations for the UN World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in September 2001 in Durban, South Africa. We sought to draw attention at the Conference to racism in criminal justice systems, including in the use of the death penalty, and discrimination against refugees and asylum-seekers. Our members also supported efforts to bring to light multiple forms of discrimination such as those relating to race and gender, sexual orientation and caste. As a contribution to the Conference, Amnesty International produced two reports, A handbook: Using the international human rights system to combat racial discrimination and Racism and the administration of justice.

Discrimination and racism

At the same time as the World Conference sought to renew the commitment of governments to eradicate racism, politicians in several countries in Western Europe were stirring up xenophobia either directly through racist and anti-immigrant rhetoric, or indirectly through policies that sought to restrict immigration and asylum applications. In Austria, rising levels of racism by officials have been clear in recent years. Reports of ill-treatment and racist abuse of detainees by police in Switzerland continue to be received. In Belgium too, black and other minorities figure disproportionately in cases of police ill-treatment.

Across Europe, there is widespread discrimination against people of Roma origin. In most countries Roma are economically deprived and socially marginalized. In many they are abused by the police. Low levels of literacy and qualifications, combined with discrimination in employment, leaves

the vast majority of Roma unemployed. The resultant poverty leads some Roma into crime, mainly theft. This is used by politicians and the media to stir up even more prejudice against them. In the Russian Federation, people coming from outside the states of the former Soviet Union and dark skinned people of non-Slavic appearance are routinely denied access to asylum procedures, are at constant risk of being detained and are often harassed and ill-treated by law enforcement officers as they are forced to live in limbo, often for years, without identity documents.

Looking ahead

We will continue our efforts in 2002 by documenting and campaigning on race-related human rights abuses in Europe and will urge the UN Commission on Human Rights to take steps to combat the rise of racism in Europe.

[photo caption]

Vigil held in Vienna, Austria, May 2000, on the first anniversary of the death of Marcus Omofuma, a Nigerian national who died on board a plane while being forcibly deported from Austria. © Semotan
[end caption]

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Combating torture in the Americas

The use of torture continues unabated in many Latin American countries, despite political and legislative change. Torture and other ill-treatment occur in police stations, in prisons and in youth detention centres. Torture is used to extract confessions, to dominate, humiliate and control detainees, or, increasingly, to extort money or benefit corrupt police officers.

Judges often accept confessions extracted under torture as evidence in prosecutions, perpetuating the practice. Torture is rarely reported, as victims fear for their safety or do not believe the authorities will investigate their allegations.

Amnesty International launched a number of reports on torture in the Americas during 2001 as part of the organization's worldwide campaign to eradicate torture – "Take a step to stamp out torture" – and members organized many successful actions to campaign for better protection in law and in practice.

"People end up dying here": torture in Brazil

Police and prison guards throughout Brazil routinely resort to torture and ill-treatment when arresting suspects or during their detention in police stations and prisons. In March, the UN Special Rapporteur on torture described the practice of torture as "widespread and systematic".

Amnesty International launched a major report on torture in Brazil in São Paulo in October. The report, which was accompanied by an eight-month membership action, focused on the failure to prosecute torturers under Brazil's 1997 torture law. There have been only a handful of convictions under this law, as a result of intrinsic failures in the criminal justice system at every stage. Amnesty International members have campaigned for necessary reforms, as well as appealing on a number of individual cases.

Peru: legislation is not enough

Despite major political changes in Peru since November 2000 when former President Alberto Fujimori was ousted, torture continues to be used by members of the security forces and prison guards to obtain information or as punishment. Amnesty International's third recent report on torture in Peru features unresolved cases from before November 2000 as well as reports of torture received in the last few months. Perpetrators of this crime often go unpunished, are charged with lesser offences or are tried in military courts. As a result, in three years, only in two cases have perpetrators been brought to justice under the anti-torture law. Many victims of torture withdraw complaints because of intimidation, harassment and threats.

Amnesty International's 2001 week of student action focused on torture in Peru. Youth and student groups worked worldwide in the run-up to presidential elections in May to gain public commitments from candidates to eradicate torture if elected. Candidates endorsed our 12-Point Program for the Prevention of Torture by Agents of the State, through which former President Valentín Paniagua voted against the use of torture in Peru and four Peruvian towns and districts were declared "Torture Free Zones".

Mexico: working for change

Arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment is commonly used by federal, state and municipal police forces and military personnel carrying out policing operations in Mexico. Legislation preventing and punishing such abuses is inadequate and seldom invoked. The courts routinely fail to challenge prosecution evidence reportedly extracted under torture, or to investigate those allegedly responsible. Amnesty International's Mexican section played an important role in strengthening the coordination of national non-governmental organizations in Mexico and achieved a high profile and wide-ranging support for the campaign against torture.

Direct campaigning actions concentrated on pressing some state governments to criminalize torture in state penal codes and several "Torture Free Zones" were declared. Decision-makers, particularly at a federal level, have begun to take the issue more seriously, and are beginning to look at the structural changes necessary to end the practice in Mexico. Ensuring that such raised awareness is cemented into real structural changes in practice is now the key challenge.

Next steps

In 2002 Amnesty International's members will continue to work to ensure that anti-torture legislation is put in place and adhered to in Latin America, and that those who commit torture – whoever they are – are brought to justice.

[photo caption]

Overcrowding in the Drugs and Controlled Substances police station, Belo Horizonte, Brazil.

© AI

[end caption]

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...£45 will pay for a researcher to conduct a three-hour interview with a victim of human rights abuse in a conflict situation ...

(it takes on average at least three hours to carry out interviews).

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Defending the Defenders in West Africa

Wherever people suffer persecution and oppression, whenever human rights are denied or human dignity threatened, human rights defenders strive to protect the weak and hold the powerful to account. In doing so, they often put their lives and liberty on the line; throughout West Africa they have been harassed, intimidated and silenced.

A vital contribution

Human rights defenders are a crucial link in the chain of human rights defence at all levels, from campaigning on behalf of the victims of abuses to lobbying at the highest levels for improved mechanisms for human rights protection. When governments persecute human rights defenders, they violate basic rights enshrined in UN treaties and declarations, as well as in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. By stifling the activities of human rights organizations, governments increase the risk that abusive human rights practices will continue unexposed and unopposed.

Human rights defenders in West Africa have contributed in a large way to the consolidation of democracy and the rule of law in the sub-region. It is the responsibility of West African governments to recognize and ensure protection for the work carried out by human rights defenders and their indispensable contribution to the promotion, observance and protection of fundamental rights and freedoms.

West Africa campaign

In April 2001, working in close collaboration with human rights groups and the UN Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders, Amnesty International launched a campaign in Senegal to draw international attention to the abuses suffered by human rights defenders in West Africa. The campaign sought to persuade West African governments and the international community to take steps to protect human rights defenders and their work.

Amnesty International's report, West Africa: "Be careful, you talk too much" – human rights defenders under attack, highlights the plight of human rights defenders in the sub-region and makes recommendations to governments on how to protect them.

National and regional coalitions have been set up to protect human rights defenders in West Africa, extending to countries where there is no Amnesty International membership structure, such as Mauritania, Guinea Conakry and Guinea-Bissau. Whenever a human rights defender is at risk, these coalitions are now alerted and asked to take action by putting pressure on the relevant government.

Providing protection

Working closely with human rights defenders in Senegal, Amnesty International is managing a placement project in West Africa for human rights defenders who have been forced to flee their homes and work places for fear of persecution. This pilot project allows human rights defenders to continue to use their valuable skills and expertise while waiting to return home, and to take the time and help they need to recover from trauma. James Torh, one of the most well-known and outspoken Liberian human rights defenders, was given protection and assistance under the program after he fled from Liberia in March 2000. He was facing charges of sedition for criticizing the government, and there were strong warnings that his life was at risk in Liberia.

Looking forward

Amnesty International's work in 2001 provided invaluable opportunities for West African human rights defenders to promote solidarity and develop protection strategies. This success paves the way for similar initiatives in other regions of Africa in the future.

In 2002, we will continue to integrate this work with Amnesty International's research and development and to increase the direct involvement of the membership (within and outside Africa) in defending human rights defenders through a variety of new techniques. We will also strengthen national plans for the protection of human rights defenders and the formation of regional, sub-regional and national networks. In extreme circumstances, we will continue to assist with the relocation of defenders at risk, working closely with relevant non-governmental organizations.

[photo caption]

Launch of the West Africa human rights defenders action, Dakar, Senegal,
April 2001. © AI

[end caption]

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Mission Highlights

During 2001 Amnesty International sent some 130 missions to more than 75 countries and territories. Mission delegates met government officials, observed trials and inquests, attended conferences, contacted local and international non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, and researched and documented human rights abuses through interviews with victims and other witnesses. These are just a few of the mission highlights from 2001.

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Pakistan

On 10 December 2001, International Human Rights Day, Amnesty International's Secretary General Irene Khan met President Musharraf of Pakistan in Islamabad and raised the plight of young offenders on death row. President Musharraf announced that some 100 juvenile offenders would have their death sentences commuted to imprisonment. Pakistan banned the death penalty for juveniles in law in July 2000, but the new law did not apply to juveniles convicted earlier. Amnesty International had lobbied the authorities on many occasions to commute their sentences. In Pakistan, the death penalty is imposed for a wide range of offences; at present well over 4,000 people are under sentence of death.

In Peshawar the delegation met UNHCR officials and visited the Jalojai refugee camp. Discussions with refugees from Afghanistan highlighted their poor conditions, and how many families had lost a relative due to the bombing of Afghanistan. In 2002, Amnesty International will redouble its presence on the ground in Afghanistan so that human rights developments in the country and surrounding region can be closely monitored.

[photo caption]

The day before Human Rights Day 2001. Refugees from the New Jalojai refugee camp stand beside Amnesty International banner. © AI

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Bahrain

Amnesty International delegates visited Bahrain in March to witness at first hand dramatic human rights improvements. In previous years Amnesty International had campaigned vigorously for an end to widespread arbitrary detention, unfair trials, torture and forcible exile, and for many years our delegates had been banned from the country. In 2001 the Amir released all political prisoners and detainees, allowed exiles to return to the country, repealed laws that facilitated arbitrary arrest, torture and unfair trials and promised wide-ranging political, administrative and judicial reforms. Amnesty International's delegates met freely with former prisoners (many of whom thanked Amnesty International for its work on their behalf), discussed future plans with newly authorized human rights organizations and were received by both the Amir and the Crown Prince to discuss reforms. Delegates returned to the country in November for a workshop with the Bahrain Human Rights Society and other new non-governmental organizations, aimed at strengthening the role of civil society in promoting and protecting human rights.

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Turkey

Amnesty International delegates visited Turkey in June 2001 to gather information about torture and impunity in Turkey. The delegates travelled to the main cities in the west (Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir) and visited the southeast, mainly inhabited by Kurds. They met representatives of a governmental human rights body in Ankara, major local human rights organizations and Bar Associations, lawyers and prosecutors.

The delegation travelled to remote areas in the southeast including Pýrnak, a border province which human rights defenders have described as a "black box" and "a republic of its own". There were numerous reports of torture in the province, leading members of the legal political party HADEP had been arrested, and two HADEP representatives "disappeared" from a local gendarmerie station in January 2001. At the last security check before Pýrnak the delegates were stopped and taken to police headquarters, where police attempted to intimidate them and discourage potential contacts. However, torture victims and relatives of the "disappeared" came forward and told the delegates of their experiences. When the delegates left Pýrnak, Bingöl and Muş, they were told that the visit from Amnesty International had encouraged local people and shown the victims of human rights violations that they were not forgotten.

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Lebanon

In December Irene Khan visited Lebanon, where she met a wide range of human rights organizations and listened to survivors of human rights violations. She spoke at a symposium on the death penalty, opened a week of human rights activities organized by Amnesty International's members in Lebanon, and visited Amnesty International's regional office for human rights education in Beirut. Irene Khan was received by President Emile Lahoud, who affirmed that Amnesty International was always welcome in Lebanon and that our findings on the human rights situation would be investigated.

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Zimbabwe

Amnesty International visited Zimbabwe in November and December 2001 in view of the deteriorating human rights situation in advance of presidential elections scheduled for March 2002. During 2001 the security forces tolerated or actively cooperated with groups such as the war veterans

and special youth brigades in a campaign of intimidation against members of civil society perceived to be part of the political opposition.

During the mission the delegates investigated political violence, torture, killings, detentions, death threats and cases of intimidation against members of civil society in urban and rural areas. After their return the findings were translated into a number of reports and actions which highlight the ongoing record of impunity, the repression of freedom of expression and association and the high number of human rights abuses in the run-up to the elections. Zimbabwe continues to fail to respect the elementary human rights of its citizens, to protect them from human rights abuses and to fulfil its obligations under international human rights standards.

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Nigeria

In August 2001 Amnesty International gained firsthand insights into the history, documentary basis and current workings of the newly introduced Sharia Penal Legislation in 12 states of northern Nigeria. Delegates met judges, lawyers, and especially women's rights organizations. They also raised Amnesty International's concerns about unfair trials and cruel, inhuman and degrading punishments with the states' Attorney Generals and the Chief Justice of Nigeria. The mission was important in developing appropriate campaigning strategies on individual cases and in generating cooperation with Nigerian lawyers and non-governmental organizations to design actions in this sensitive field.

Amnesty International's delegates also assessed progress in matters of impunity in the work of the National Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission. Interviews with Nigerian human rights organizations explored the Nigerian perception of this body's role and options for victims to obtain compensation.

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Ecuador

In June 2001, Amnesty International visited Ecuador following reports of ill-treatment, torture and attempted killings of lesbians, gay men and transvestites in custody. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) human rights defenders had also received death threats.

In Quito, the delegation took part in a press conference to raise awareness of LGBT concerns. They presented Crimes of hate, conspiracy of silence: Torture and ill-treatment based on sexual identity, issued as part of the Campaign Against Torture, and a report on ill-treatment of LGBT people in Ecuador. Several Ecuadorian members of parliament, police officials and members of the local human rights community participated in the event and in the open debate that took place.

In Guayaquil, at a meeting at the Court of Justice, the President of the Superior Court of Justice, the Prosecutor of Guayas and Galapagos province and many other officials agreed to commit themselves to the abolition of torture.

The delegation also attended the 2001 Pride Parade in Guayaquil on 28 June. This first Pride Parade in Ecuador went ahead as planned, despite attempts by the authorities to prevent it. The Friends for Life Foundation awarded their Pride Year Award to Amnesty International.

Following the mission, LGBT organizations reported that the number of complaints of arbitrary detentions of LGBT people in Guayaquil had decreased, but after the appointment of a new provincial

Chief of Police in September 2001, they rose again. Amnesty International will continue to document and campaign against human rights violations against LGBT people in Ecuador.
[end box]

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Democratic Republic of the Congo,

Missions in October and November 2001 investigated human rights abuses linked to the exploitation of the DRC's natural resources, particularly in the context of the ongoing conflict involving armed forces from different countries and Congolese factions. Delegates in the first mission gathered information on economic exploitation, especially in the field of mining and the diamond trade, and spoke to non-governmental organizations and others in the west and south of the country. Delegates met government officials and visited prisons in some areas, but were denied access to certain important sites of detention.

During the mission to eastern DRC, which is under the control of the armed opposition, Amnesty International was able to gain access to several key places for the first time, including a notorious detention centre. Delegates secured information on cases of human rights abuses linked to the mining of coltan (widely used by the mobile phone industry) and other natural resources, and met local human rights activists and organizations, as well as representatives of armed political groups. Delegates gained insight into human rights abuses during the ongoing conflict which involves troops from Uganda, Rwanda and Zimbabwe. Tensions resulting from this situation directly impinged on the course of the mission and again highlighted the international nature of this often forgotten armed conflict.

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Bulgaria

In October 2001 Amnesty International visited Bulgaria to investigate conditions in psychiatric hospitals and social care homes for children and adults with mental health problems or developmental disabilities. Together with representatives of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, Amnesty International's researcher visited seven institutions, where he collected information on conditions which amounted to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and on cases of gross neglect and medical negligence resulting in death.

One institution, Sanadinovo, houses 97 women, with a staff of only four nurses and five orderlies. At the time of the visit around 20 women were held in a filthy two-room, single storey building. Several had physical disabilities, but apparently had no recourse to any mechanical or prosthetic devices. Women who "misbehaved" were held in a cage; at the time of the visit, six women were confined there.

After the mission an Urgent Action appeal called on the Bulgarian authorities to treat women in Sanadinovo in a professional and a humane way consistent with international standards. Two days later Bulgaria's largest daily newspaper published a report on Sanadinovo which fully confirmed Amnesty International's findings. In October a joint committee of the European Parliament and the Bulgarian National Assembly called for improvements.

[photo caption]

Women held in a cage at Sanadinovo psychiatric institution. © AI

[end caption]

[strap]

...£15 is the cost of one hour's research by two people visiting a country to investigate and confirm rumours of abuses ...

[end strap]

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The Campaign Against Torture: A Few Steps More

Amnesty International launched a new global Campaign against Torture in October 2000. Under the rallying cry, Take a step to stamp out torture, members throughout the world took up the challenge, lobbying governments, intervening on behalf of people at risk of torture, appealing on behalf of hundreds of individual survivors and victims, and staging a host of events and activities aimed at bringing a permanent end to torture.

The campaign goes on, but after one year, the results are already showing that through a concerted effort of dedicated, imaginative and forceful campaigning, we can make a difference.

[photo caption]

Public action organized during the Amnesty International Youth Camp in Slovenia 2 - 8 July 2001, to stop torture in Tunisia. © private

[end caption]

Internet activity

More than 30,000 people from 188 countries have signed up to participate in anti-torture actions through the award-winning campaigning website www.stoptorture.org. The subscribers are notified within hours of cases involving torture or fear of torture. On average between 2,500 and 10,000 people send e-mail or text message appeals on behalf of the people whose cases are publicized on the site.

Eighteen Urgent Actions posted on the website featured 79 detainees in Brazil, China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Malaysia, Mexico, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. Of these, 32 were released from detention or saved from torture or imminent extrajudicial execution.

[photo caption]

Demonstration in Washington DC for the 2001 students action against torture in Peru. Amnesty International activists wrapped the Peruvian Embassy with "Torture Free Zone Tape". © AI

[end caption]

Pressure on governments

One of the key objectives of the Campaign against Torture is to put pressure on governments to ratify the UN Convention against Torture without reservations. A year after the launch, seven more countries have ratified the Convention, and four more have signed it.

In its fight against impunity for torturers, Amnesty International has been campaigning hard for governments to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Only a few more ratifications are needed to bring about the establishment of the Court, and it is expected that this will be achieved in the first half of 2002.

An important goal was achieved in April when 15 European Union (EU) foreign ministers gave the green light to EU guidelines on the prevention of torture in third countries, marking a significant advance for EU human rights policy.

Amnesty International members lobbied governments throughout the world to establish legislation and national bodies against torture. In the UK, a step was taken towards a ban on the brokering of torture equipment with the first reading in Parliament of the Strategic Export Controls Bill. Indonesia has adopted legislation recognizing that torture can be a crime against humanity. The President of Senegal has established a Human Rights Office to tackle the issue of torture in the country, while the Parliament of the Russian Federation has set up a joint working group with the Council of Europe to fight torture in Chechnya.

Shortly after the publication of Amnesty International's report on rape and sexual abuse of women prisoners in the Philippines, prison authorities issued a memo to jail wardens referring to the report and stating that personnel engaged in "sexual misconduct with inmates" would be prosecuted. The Lebanese Minister of Justice promised to investigate the cases of torture mentioned in a report on the torture and ill-treatment of women in detention in Lebanon.

[photo caption]

Malaysian women holding Amnesty International posters protest against torture and the use of the Internal Security Act. © Malaysiakini (May 2001)

[end caption]

The struggle goes on

It is difficult to say for certain how many positive developments are a direct result of the work of Amnesty International's supporters, but it is clear that the campaign has had a powerful effect in the fight to stamp out torture. Initially planned to last one year, it will now become one of the movement's ongoing campaigns. Much has been achieved by our members in the past year, yet still more needs to be done. The struggle against torture will continue, more strongly than ever.

[photo caption]

Background: Preparing "Torture Free Zone tape" in Zagreb main square.

© Dalibor Dobric for AI (Croatia)

[end caption]

[strap]

...£25 enables us to send a telegram about a prisoner being ill-treated directly to a government official or place of detention ...

(necessary when telephone lines are unreliable).

[end strap]

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Human rights and personal identity

Around the world, people suffer human rights abuses not because of what they do but because of who they are. Discrimination is an assault on the very notion of human rights. It systematically denies certain people or groups their full human rights because of their identity or beliefs.

Amnesty International's increased emphasis on identity-based human rights abuses was at the heart of the Campaign against Torture in 2001.

Women's rights

Our report *Broken bodies, shattered minds*, which attracted worldwide attention, exposed the widespread torture of women and girls, fed by a global culture which denies women equal rights with men, and which legitimizes violence against women. Often the perpetrators are agents of the state and armed groups, but frequently they are relatives, employers or members of the community. For many women, home is a place of terror.

Amnesty International sections in more than 40 countries campaigned against the torture of women. Many forged links with the women's movement in their countries. They explored how the UN Convention against Torture and other international human rights treaties can be used to support national programs demanding greater protection for women and girls.

Children's rights

Cases of children tortured by police or soldiers in Albania, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt and Chechnya featured in Amnesty International's 2001 Child Rights Action.

The cancellation of the planned UN General Assembly Special Session on Children did not stop our activists lobbying on child rights issues, in particular calling on governments to ratify international treaties, to end executions of juvenile offenders and to stop the torture and ill-treatment of children.

In close cooperation with the International Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Amnesty International worked for the adoption of the Optional Protocol to the UN Children's Convention on the involvement of children in armed conflict. This treaty, which prohibits the use of child soldiers, came into force in February 2002.

Working for freedom of sexual identity

As part of the Campaign against Torture Amnesty International launched Crimes of hate, conspiracy of silence: Torture and ill-treatment based on sexual identity. This was the first time a report on the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people had featured in one of our international campaigns, and was warmly received by groups and activists working on the issue.

During 2001, Amnesty International delegates asked the Honduran authorities to legalize local non-governmental organizations working on LGBT issues. We expressed concern to the Yugoslav authorities about the failure of Belgrade police to protect participants in Serbia's first Gay Pride celebration. We protested against the exclusion of the International Lesbian and Gay Association from the UN World Conference against Racism. Our activists around the world demonstrated support for 22 prisoners of conscience in Egypt, sentenced to long prison terms for allegedly being gay.

[photo caption]

Amnesty International at a cultural show for diversity, Santiago de Chile, June 2001. © AI Chile

[end caption]

Next steps

Our major focus during 2002 will be women and children in Russia. We will work to end impunity for violence, including rape, in custody; call on the Russian government to adhere to the UN Children's Convention when dealing with children who come into contact with the law; and strive to increase protection for women and children in prison.

Our members will use International Women's Day to focus on rape and domestic violence in Kenya, and will continue to campaign for the rights of women, children and minorities everywhere.

The International Criminal Court

During the 20th century millions of people were victims of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Shamefully, despite the extent and horrific nature of these crimes, only a handful of those responsible have ever been brought to justice. In most cases, perpetrators have been allowed to plan and commit these crimes knowing that they were extremely unlikely ever to be held accountable. Victims have been denied justice and reparations.

Since 1993, Amnesty International has campaigned for a just, fair and independent International Criminal Court (ICC) with jurisdiction over the worst crimes known to humanity, able to deliver justice when national courts are unable or unwilling to do so. Amnesty International has taken a lead non-governmental role, in close coordination with more than 1,000 members of the Coalition for an International Criminal Court.

The Rome Statute

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, adopted by the international community in July 1998, provides for the establishment of a permanent International Criminal Court to try people accused of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. In particular, the Statute obliges national courts to investigate and prosecute people accused of these crimes and, if the national courts are unable or unwilling to do so, the International Criminal Court can proceed with a case. The Statute also provides measures to protect victims and provide them with reparations. The Court will be established when 60 states have ratified the Statute.

The 60th ratification is expected in the first half of 2002. The Court could then come into being in 2003, years earlier than the most optimistic predictions.

Only one state, the USA, has actively opposed the establishment of the Court, stating that it could be used for politically motivated prosecutions against US nationals. Amnesty International believes that the fair trial guarantees and other checks and balances in the Statute preclude such an outcome. Amnesty International's US section is working hard to address these concerns.

Campaign for international justice

Following the adoption of the Rome Statute, Amnesty International members all over the world have campaigned for their governments to ratify it and to enact effective implementing legislation. The campaign has involved virtually all our sections and structures: of the 48 states that had ratified at the end of 2001, 34 had national Amnesty International campaigns. In most cases these campaigns included working in close coordination with other national and regional organizations. Our work will not stop at the 60th ratification: for the Court to have the broadest jurisdiction we will strive to ensure that all states ratify the Statute.

When it is established, the International Criminal Court will be the foundation of a system to bring to justice those accused of crimes so serious that they affect the whole of humanity. Amnesty International will continue working for a system of justice that sends a strong message around the world that these crimes will no longer be tolerated and that ensures dignity, respect and reparation for victims.

For more information about the International Criminal Court, please see the International Justice section of our website: www.amnesty.org

[photo credit]

© James Nachtwey/Magnum Photos

[end credit]

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We need your support

Amnesty International's unique strength is in its supporters: we have over a million around the world and every one is vital in our struggle to protect human rights for all.

There are many ways you can support Amnesty International – you don't need to spend a lot of time or money to really make a difference to people's lives.

Take Action

You can support Amnesty International simply by writing a letter to a prisoner of conscience or government, by sending a postcard, by signing an online petition or by attending an organized demonstration. For more information on how you can take action to support Amnesty International, please see our international website at www.amnesty.org or the website of your local section listed on the back of this publication.

Join Amnesty International

As an individual member or part of a local group, you'll join a worldwide movement of people who are united by their desire to protect and promote human rights. You will be able to take part in a wide range of activities that really make a difference to victims of human rights abuses – from letter-writing actions to organizing and supporting major campaigns for human rights. Our members are also important to our decision-making structures, so you'll be able to have a say on how we work too. To join Amnesty International in your country, please contact your local section listed on the back of this publication. If you would prefer to join online, please visit www.amnesty.org where you will find links to Amnesty International sections with online joining facilities.

Become a volunteer

Volunteers are vital to Amnesty International, and form a significant part of our workforce. We need volunteers in all areas of our work, from administration and archiving to campaign organizing and action coordination. If you have a few days a week, or a few months in which you would like to use your skills and experience to help us work for human rights, please contact your local section listed on the back of this publication, or the International Secretariat based at 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, United Kingdom, for more information.

Become a donor

Amnesty International is almost entirely dependent on the donations and subscription fees of its members and supporters around the world. We do not accept money from governments for our work researching and campaigning against human rights violations, so every donation – no matter how small – is vital to our work. You can make a donation online at www.amnesty.org – just click the “give now” button. If you would prefer to make your donation by cheque to the Amnesty International section in your own country, please see the back of this publication for contact details.

Every donation helps us to work for a world where all people can enjoy the human rights they deserve.

Make a difference.
Donate online now at
www.amnesty.org

[strap]

...2001 marked the 50th anniversary of the UN Refugee Convention. In 2001 there were believed to be some 17 million refugees worldwide. The overwhelming majority of these - more than 70 per cent - live in the south, many in the world's poorest countries, and far from the scrutiny of the world's media

...

[end strap]

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During 2001 more than 700 Urgent Action appeals were issued, concerning more than 880 individuals. We heard of improvements in 150 of those cases, including 86 in which prisoners were released. The Urgent Action technique has helped prevent 31 judicial executions, including six commutations, one pardon and three cases involving juvenile defendants where the death penalty was not applied.

[end box]

2001 - 2002 Budgeted Expenditure

Amnesty International's national sections and local volunteer groups are primarily responsible for funding the work of the IS and the movement. We do not accept money from governments for our work investigating and campaigning against human rights violations – the donations that fund this work come from the organization's many individual supporters around the world.

The international budget adopted by the International Council meeting for the International Secretariat for the financial year April 2001 – March 2002 was £20,940,000 (including contingency). This sum represents approximately one quarter of the estimated income likely to be raised during the year by the movement's national sections to finance their campaigning and other activities.

The International Secretariat of Amnesty International is also dependent on the generous support of various trusts, foundations and charitable givers. In 2000, these included the UK National Lottery Charities Board, the Ford Foundation, the Dutch ZipCode Lottery (through the Dutch World Wide Fund), the NRK (Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation) Telethon Fund, as well as other smaller funders.

The 2001/2002 international budget for operating expenses, as agreed by Amnesty International's governing International Executive Committee, was spent as follows:

[chart caption]

budgeted expenditure by activity
total 2001/2002 budget = £20,314,200

[end caption]

Research and action work represent one of the key roles of the International Secretariat. Research into human rights violations is carried out throughout all the regions of the world, the results of which are presented in reports and action materials which are then used by the membership for its campaigning activities, and to inform governments, intergovernmental organizations such as the UN, the news media, and the general public of human rights violations. This budget was spent as follows:

[chart caption]

direct research and action – budgeted expenditure by region
total 2001/2002 budget = £4,927,300

[end caption]

These figures combine the budgeted expenses of Amnesty International Charity Ltd, a registered charity under the UK Charity Act, number 294230, and Amnesty International Ltd, a registered limited company under the UK Companies Act, number 1606776. Copies of the most recent audited accounts may be obtained by writing to:

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

[box]

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

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7413 5500

Fax: + 44 (0) 20 7956 1157

Email: Amnestyis@amnesty.org

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[box]

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AI sections

Algeria

Amnesty International, BP 377, Alger,
RP 16004

e-mail: amnestyalgeria@hotmail.com

Argentina

Amnistía Internacional,
Av. Rivadavia 2206 - P4A, C1032ACO Ciudad de
Buenos Aires

e-mail: info@amnesty.org.ar

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

Australia

Amnesty International, Private Bag 23, Broadway, New South Wales 2007

e-mail: adminaia@amnesty.org.au

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

Austria

amnesty international austria,
Moeringgasse 10, A-1150 Wien

e-mail: info@amnesty.at

<http://www.amnesty.at>

Bangladesh

Amnesty International, 28 Kabi Jasimuddin Road, 1st Floor, North Kamalapur,
Dhaka - 1217

e-mail: aibd@bangla.net

Belgium - Flemish branch

Amnesty International (AI Vlaanderen),
Kerkstraat 156, 2060 Antwerpen

e-mail: amnesty@aivl.be

<http://www.aivl.be>

Belgium - francophone

Amnesty International (francophone),
rue Berckmans 9, 1060 Bruxelles

e-mail: aibf@aibf.be

<http://www.aibf.be>

Benin

Amnesty International, 01 BP 3536, Cotonou

e-mail: aibenin@nakayo.leland.bj

Bermuda

Amnesty International, PO Box HM 2136, Hamilton HM JX

e-mail: aibda@ibl.bm

Brazil

Anistia Internacional, Caixa Postal 5013,
CEP 90041-970 Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul

e-mail: aibrasil@conex.com.br

Canada - English-speaking

Amnesty International, 214 Montreal Road,
4th Floor, Vanier, Ontario, K1L 1A4

e-mail: info@amnesty.ca

<http://www.amnesty.ca>

Canada - francophone

Amnistie Internationale (francophone),
6250 boulevard Monk, Montréal,

Québec H4E 3H7

e-mail: info@amnistie.qc.ca

<http://www.amnistie.qc.ca>

Chile

Señores, Casilla 4062, Santiago

e-mail: admin-cl@amnesty.org

Costa Rica

Amnistía Internacional, 75 metros al
norte de la Iglesia de Fatima, los Yoses,
San Pedro, San José

Côte d'Ivoire

Amnesty International, 04 BP 895, Abidjan 04

e-mail: aicotedivoire@globeaccess.net

Denmark

Amnesty International, Dyrkoeb 3,

1166 Copenhagen K

e-mail: amnesty@amnesty.dk

Ecuador

Amnistía Internacional, Casilla 17-15-240-C, Quito
e-mail: ai_ecuador@hotmail.com

Faroe Islands

Amnesty International, PO Box 1075,
FR-110, Tórshavn
e-mail: amnesty@amnesty.fo
<http://www.amnesty.fo>

Finland

Amnesty International, Ruoholahdenkatu 24,
D 00180 Helsinki
e-mail: amnesty@amnesty.fi
<http://www.amnesty.fi>

France

Amnesty International, 76 blvd. de La Villette, 75940 Paris cedex 19
e-mail: admin-fr@amnesty.asso.fr
<http://www.amnesty.asso.fr>

Germany

Amnesty International, 53108 Bonn
e-mail: info@amnesty.de
<http://www.amnesty.de>

Ghana

Amnesty International, Private Mail Bag, Kokomlemle, Accra - North
e-mail: aghana@sections.amnesty.org

Greece

Amnesty International, 30 Sina Street,
106 72 Athens
e-mail: info@amnesty.gr
<http://www.amnesty.gr>

Guyana

Amnesty International, PO Box 101679, Palm Court Building, 35 Main Street, Georgetown

Hong Kong

Amnesty International, Unit B, 3/F,
Best-O-Best Commercial Centre, 32-36 Ferry Street, Kowloon
e-mail: admin-hk@amnesty.org
<http://www.amnesty.org.hk>

Iceland

Amnesty International, PO Box 618,
121 Reykjavík
e-mail: amnesty@rhi.hi.is
<http://www.amnesty.is>

Ireland

Amnesty International, Sean MacBride House,
48 Fleet Street, Dublin 2
e-mail: info@amnesty.iol.ie
<http://www.amnesty.ie>

Israel

Amnesty International, PO Box 14179, Tel Aviv 61141
e-mail: amnesty@netvision.net.il
<http://www.amnesty.org.il>

Italy

Amnesty International, Via Giovanni Battista De Rossi 10, 00161 Roma

e-mail: info@amnesty.it

<http://www.amnesty.it>

Japan

Amnesty International, Sky Esta 2F, 2-18-23 Nishi Waseda, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 169

e-mail: amnesty@mri.biglobe.ne.jp

<http://www.amnesty.or.jp>

Korea (Republic of)

Amnesty International, Kyeong Buk RCO Box 36, Daegu 706-600

e-mail: admin-ko@amnesty.org

<http://www.amnesty.or.kr>

Luxembourg

Amnesty International, Boîte

Postale 1914, 1019 Luxembourg

e-mail: e-mail@amnesty.lu

<http://www.amnesty.lu>

Mauritius

Amnesty International, BP 69,

Rose-Hill

e-mail: amnesty@intnet.mu

Mexico

Amnistía Internacional,

Calle Patricio Sanz 1104, Departamento 14,

Colonia del Valle, Mexico D.F. - CP 03100

e-mail: adm-mx@amnesty.org

Morocco

Amnesty International, Place d'Angleterre, Rue Souissra, Immeuble No. 11, Appt No. 1,

Rabat - l'Océan

e-mail: admin-ma@amnesty.org

Nepal

Amnesty International, PO Box 135, Bagbazar, Kathmandu

e-mail: ain@ccsl.com.np

Netherlands

Amnesty International, PO Box 1968,

1000 BZ, Amsterdam

e-mail: amnesty@amnesty.nl

<http://www.amnesty.nl>

New Zealand

Amnesty International, PO Box 793, Wellington

e-mail: campaign@amnesty.org.nz

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

Nigeria

Amnesty International, PMB 3061, Suru Lere, Lagos

e-mail: ainigeria@yahoo.co.uk

Norway

Amnesty International, PO Box 702 Sentrum, 0106 Oslo

e-mail: info@amnesty.no

<http://www.amnesty.no>

Peru

Señores, Casilla 659, Lima 18

e-mail: admin-pe@amnesty.org

Philippines

Amnesty International, Room 305
CRM Building II, 116 Kamia Road, 1101 Quezon City
e-mail: amnestypilipinas@meridiantelekoms.net
Portugal

Amnistia Internacional, Rua Fialho de
Almeida 13-1, PT-1070-128 Lisboa
e-mail: aisp@ip.pt
<http://www.amnistia-internacional.pt>

Puerto Rico
Amnistía Internacional, Calle El Roble N° 54-Altos, Oficina 11, Río Piedras, Puerto Rico 00925
e-mail: amnistiaPR@yahoo.com

Senegal
Amnesty International, BP 21910, Dakar
e-mail: aisenegal@sento.sn

Sierra Leone
Amnesty International, PMB 1021, Freetown
e-mail: aislf@sierratel.sl

Slovenia
Amnesty International, Komenskega 7,
1000 Ljubljana
e-mail: amnesty.slo@guest.arnes.si
<http://www.ljudmila.org/ai-slo>

Spain
Amnistía Internacional, Apdo 50318,
28080 Madrid
e-mail: amnistia.internacional@a-i.es
<http://www.a-i.es>

Sweden
Amnesty International, PO Box 4719,
SE-116 92 Stockholm
e-mail: info@amnesty.se
<http://www.amnesty.se>

Switzerland
Amnesty International, Postfach CH-3001, Bern
e-mail: info@amnesty.ch
<http://www.amnesty.ch>

Taiwan
Amnesty International, No. 89, 7th floor #1,
Chung Cheng Two Road, Kaohsiung
e-mail: aitaiwan@seed.net.tw
<http://www.aitaiwan.org.tw>

Tanzania
Amnesty International, Luther House,
3rd Floor, PO Box 4331, Dar es Salaam
e-mail: aitanz@simbanet.net

Togo
CCNP, BP 20013, Lomé
e-mail: aitogo@cafe.tg

Tunisia
Amnesty International, 67 rue Oum Kalthoum, 3ème étage, Escalier B, 1000 Tunis
e-mail: admin-tn@amnesty.org

United Kingdom

Amnesty International,
99-119 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4RE
e-mail: info@amnesty.org.uk
<http://www.amnesty.org.uk>

United States of America

Amnesty International,
322 8th Ave, New York, NY 10001
e-mail: admin-us@aiusa.org
<http://www.amnestyusa.org>

Uruguay

Amnistía Internacional, Tristan Narvaja 1624, Ap 1, CP 11200, Montevideo
e-mail: amnistia@chasque.apc.org

Venezuela

Amnistía Internacional, Apartado
Postal 5110, Carmelitas, 1010 A Caracas
e-mail: admin-ve@amnesty.org
<http://www.amnistia.int.ve>

AI coordinating structures

Bolivia

Amnistía Internacional, Casilla 10607, La Paz

Burkina Faso

Amnesty International, 08 BP 11344, Ouagadougou
e-mail: aburkina@sections.amnesty.org

Caribbean Regional Office

Amnesty International C.R.O., PO Box 1912, Grenada, West Indies
e-mail: amnestycro@caribsurf.com

Croatia

Amnesty International, Martićeva 24,
10000 Zagreb
e-mail: admin@amnesty.hr

Curaçao

Amnesty International, PO Box 3676, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles

Czech Republic

Amnesty International, Palackého 9, 110 00 Praha 1
e-mail: amnesty@amnesty.cz
<http://www.amnesty.cz>

Gambia

Amnesty International, PO Box 1935,
Banjul
e-mail: amnesty@gamtel.gm

India

Amnesty International, G13 First Floor, Hauz Khas Main Market, New Delhi, 110016
e-mail: admin-in@amnesty.org

Hungary

Amnesty International, 1399 Budapest,
PF 701/343
e-mail: amnesty.hun@axelero.hu

Malaysia

Amnesty International, Pro-tem Committee, 43A, Jalan SS 15/4, 47500 Subang Jaya Selangor Darul Ehsan

e-mail: amnesty@tm.net.my

<http://www.crosswinds.net/~aimalaysia>

Mali

Amnesty International, BP E 3885, Bamako

e-mail: amnesty-mli@spider.toolnet.org

e-mail: amali@sections.amnesty.org

Mongolia

Amnesty International, Ulaanbaatar 21 0648,

PO Box 180

e-mail: aimncc@magicnet.mn

Pakistan

Amnesty International, NEC, B-12, Shelozon Centre, Gulsan-E-Iqbal, Block 15, University Road, Karachi - 75300

e-mail: amnesty@cyber.net.pk

<http://www.geocities.com/amnestypakistan>

Palestinian Authority

Amnesty International,

PO Box 543, Khalaf Building, Racheed Street,

Gaza City, South Remal via Israel

e-mail: admin-pa@amnesty.org

Paraguay

Amnistía Internacional, Calle Juan de Salazar 488 casi Boquerón, Asunción

e-mail: ai-info@amnistia.org.py

<http://www.amnistia.org.py>

Poland

Amnesty International, ul. Jańkowska Dolina 4, 80-252 Gdańsk

e-mail: amnesty@amnesty.org.pl

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

Slovakia

Amnesty International, Staromestská 6,

811 03 Bratislava

e-mail: amnesty@internet.sk

<http://www.internet.sk/amnesty>

South Africa

Amnesty International, PO Box 29083,

Sunnyside 0132, Pretoria, Gauteng

e-mail: info@amnesty.org.za

Thailand

Amnesty International, 125/4 Sukhumvit Soi 89, Bangjak, Phrakhanong, Bangkok 10250

e-mail: admin-th@amnesty.org

<http://www.thailand.amnesty.com>

Turkey

Amnesty International, Muradiye Bayiri Sok. Acarman ap. 50/1, Tesvikiye 80200, Istanbul

e-mail: amnesty@superonline.com

Uganda

Amnesty International groups, PO Box 23966, Kampala

e-mail: augamnesty@yahoo.com

Ukraine

Amnesty International, Maydan Rynok 6, Drohobych, 82100

e-mail: officeai@dr.lv.ukrtel.net

Zambia

Amnesty International, Private Bag 3,

Kitwe Main PO, Kitwe

e-mail: mjmusonda@hotmail.com

e-mail: JMusonda@comesa.int

Zimbabwe

Amnesty International, 25 E Bible House,

99 Mbuya Nehanda Street, Harare

e-mail: amnestyzimbabwe@yahoo.com

AI groups

There are also AI groups in:

Albania, Angola, Aruba, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Cameroon, Chad, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Grenada, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Liberia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Mozambique, Romania, Russian Federation, Yemen, Yugoslavia (Federal Republic of)

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