

# **Stonewalled – still demanding respect. Police abuses against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the USA.**

## **Chicago City Profile**

### **Background information**

Chicago has taken important steps in recognizing and protecting the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. This includes adopting laws against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in basic areas of life, such as employment, housing, and education. Chicago has also taken steps to improve police relations with the local LGBT community. However, despite such progress, Amnesty International's research shows that police abuse and misconduct against LGBT people remains a serious and widespread problem in Chicago.

Reports to Amnesty International demonstrate that LGBT people in Chicago are at risk of gender-based violence, sometimes amounting to torture or other ill-treatment, taking the form of sexual, physical and verbal abuse in encounters with law enforcement officials including during arrest, searches, and detention. Furthermore, police fail to respond or respond inappropriately to domestic violence incidents and crimes targeted at LGBT individuals. There continues to be profiling and discriminatory enforcement of certain laws and ordinances against LGBT people.

### **Recent Developments**

In December 2005, Amnesty International USA met with a representative from the office of elected City Council member Alderman Tom Tunney to discuss the findings of *Stonewalled* and how his office could support Amnesty International's work. Amnesty International was told that following the release of the report a new training video has been developed by the Chicago Police Department on working with the LGBT community. Additionally, Amnesty International recently received information – still unconfirmed at time of writing – that the Chicago Police Department has assigned five new LGBT liaison officers with a view towards appointing one for each district throughout the city. Amnesty International welcomes these developments and will continue to monitor their progress.

### **TAKE ACTION! Write to the authorities.**

In all your letters, please include the following key messages:

- LGBT people in the USA continue to suffer serious police abuses, in some cases amounting to torture or other ill-treatment.
- Within the LGBT community, transgender people, members of ethnic or racial minorities, young people and immigrants bear the brunt of police abuse. The climate of prejudice which LGBT people face in the USA means that many of these abuses continue to go unpunished.
- Despite some positive initiatives by law enforcement agencies and the justice system, much more needs to be done to protect LGBT people from police abuse and misconduct.

In addition, the following points should be included in letters to the Chicago Police Department and City Mayor:

**i) To Philip J. Cline, Police Superintendent, Chicago Police Department (CPD):**

Urge him to:

- Provide comprehensive training on LGBT issues to all CPD officers at regular periodic intervals. These should cover searches of transgender individuals, LGBT domestic violence and "hate crimes" (crimes motivated by discrimination), and sexual assaults of LGBT individuals.

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- Appoint an LGBT liaison in Central Command and each district or establish a mobile LGBT Liaison Unit.
- Institute specific policies and procedures regarding police interaction with, strip searches and detention of transgender individuals, addressing the relevant concerns raised in Amnesty International's report.

### **ii) To Richard M. Daley, Mayor of Chicago:**

- As the highest elected official in the city of Chicago, please do all within your power to ensure that the Chicago Police Department respects the human rights of all city residents including Chicago's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents.
- Take steps to ensure that all cases of alleged police abuse are investigated and that perpetrators of such abuses are brought to justice.
- Ensure that the Chicago Police Department and other city departments and agencies review the recommendations made in Amnesty International's report and make all necessary changes in policies and practices.

### **ADDRESSES**

<b>Police Superintendent Philip J. Cline</b> Chicago Police Department 3510 South Michigan Avenue Chicago, IL 60653 USA F: (312) 745-6963 Email: <a href="mailto:police@cityofchicago.org">police@cityofchicago.org</a> Salutation: Dear Superintendent Cline	<b>Mayor Richard M. Daley</b> Office of the Mayor City Hall 121 N. LaSalle, Room 507 Chicago, IL 60602 USA F: (312) 744-8045 Salutation: Dear Mayor Daley
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### **COPIES TO** the Chicago Gay Officers Action League (GOAL):

Jamie Richardson – President

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Salutation: Dear President

See Amnesty International's report: *Stonewalled – still demanding respect. Police abuses against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the USA* (AI Index: AMR 51/001/2006), available from [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

Amnesty International's research focused on four very different and geographically diverse US cities – Chicago (Illinois), Los Angeles (California), New York (New York), and San Antonio (Texas). All four cities have well-documented histories of police brutality and misconduct and each has taken at least some steps to address these human rights abuses. They, therefore, provide an insight into the progress that has been made and the challenges that remain.

For more detailed Chicago city information, see [www.amnestyusa.org/outfront](http://www.amnestyusa.org/outfront)

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## **Los Angeles City Profile**

### **Background information**

Over the past 30 years Los Angeles has made significant strides in protecting the basic human rights of its lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) residents. This includes the adoption of anti-discrimination legislation that protects LGBT people from discrimination in basic areas of life such as employment and housing. There have also been improvements in police relations with the local LGBT community. Yet despite this progress, Amnesty International's research shows a continuing serious pattern of police abuse and misconduct against LGBT people in Los Angeles. This includes gender-based violence, sometimes amounting to torture or other ill-treatment, taking the form of sexual, physical and verbal abuse in encounters with law enforcement officials including during arrest, searches and detention. Furthermore, police fail to respond or respond inappropriately to domestic violence incidents and crimes targeted at LGBT individuals. There continues to be profiling and discriminatory enforcement of certain laws and ordinances, including legislation prohibiting "lewd conduct", against LGBT people.

### **Recent Developments**

Following the launch of *Stonewalled* in the USA in September 2005, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) told Amnesty International that they had developed a new brochure for officers on how to interact with transgender individuals. However, the transgender activist and author of the brochure claim that the LAPD has yet to distribute the brochure to their officers. Local LGBT activists have reported to Amnesty International that the LAPD continues to target gay men for undercover "lewd conduct" enforcement operations in the Hollywood neighbourhood of Los Angeles.

A civil suit has been filed against the LAPD for allegedly failing to implement a 1993 settlement agreement (*Grobeson v. the City of Los Angeles*), which includes the expansion of LGBT training for police officers and the establishment of a "Sexual Orientation Discrimination Complaint Procedure."

### **TAKE ACTION: write to the authorities**

In all your letters, please include the following key messages:

- LGBT people in the USA continue to suffer serious police abuses, in some cases amounting to torture or other ill-treatment.
- Within the LGBT community, transgender people, members of ethnic or racial minorities, young people and immigrants bear the brunt of police abuse. The climate of prejudice which LGBT people face in the USA means that many of these abuses continue to go unpunished.
- Despite some positive initiatives by law enforcement agencies and the justice system, much more needs to be done to protect LGBT people from police abuse and misconduct.

In addition, the following points should be included in letters to the Los Angeles Police Department and City Mayor:

#### **i) To William Bratton, Chief of Police of Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD):**

Urge him to:

- Review current policies and procedures on police interactions with transgender individuals, addressing the relevant concerns raised in Amnesty International's report.

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- Undertake comprehensive training with all LAPD staff on working with the transgender community.
- Review policing operations to ensure that they are not targeted in a discriminatory fashion against LGBT people.

### **ii) To Antonio R. Villaraigosa, Mayor of Los Angeles:**

- As the highest elected official in the City of Los Angeles, please do all within your power to ensure that Los Angeles Police Department respect the human rights of all city residents including Los Angeles' lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents.
- Take steps to ensure that all cases of alleged police abuse are investigated and that perpetrators of such abuses are brought to justice.
- Ensure that the Police Department and other city departments and agencies review the recommendations made in Amnesty International's report and make all necessary changes in policies and practices.
- Inform him that discriminatory targeted law enforcement based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression violates international human rights law and standards on policing.

### **ADDRESSES**

<b>Chief of Police William Bratton</b> Los Angeles Police Department Parker Center 150 North Los Angeles Street Los Angeles, CA 90012 USA F: (213) 847-0676 Email: <a href="mailto:lapdonline@earthlink.net">lapdonline@earthlink.net</a> Salutation: Dear Chief Bratton	<b>Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa</b> City Hall 200 N Spring St, Los Angeles, CA 90012 USA F: (213) 978-0750 Email : <a href="mailto:mayor@lacity.org">mayor@lacity.org</a> Salutation : Dear Mayor Villaraigosa
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Amnesty International's research focused on four very different and geographically diverse US cities – Chicago (Illinois), Los Angeles (California), New York (New York), and San Antonio (Texas). All four cities have well-documented histories of police brutality and misconduct and each has taken at least some steps to address these human rights abuses. They, therefore, provide an insight into the progress that has been made and the challenges that remain.

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# **Stonewalled – still demanding respect. Police abuses against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the USA.**

## **New York City Profile**

### **Background information**

New York City, scene of the Stonewall riots 37 years ago, has made great strides in recognizing and protecting the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. This includes adopting laws against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in basic areas of life, such as employment, housing and education. New York City's "hate crime" laws (laws covering crimes motivated by discrimination) include both sexual orientation and gender identity. New York City has made improvement in police relations with the local LGBT community but as Amnesty International's research shows, police abuse and misconduct against LGBT people remains a serious and widespread problem.

Reports to Amnesty International indicate a pattern of profiling of transgender women as sex workers; abuses during arrest and searches and detention of LGBT people, particularly ethnic or racial minority LGBT people. Amnesty International's research also revealed discriminatory enforcement of "quality of life" ordinances designed to create public order by aggressively enforcing laws against minor offences, for example, public drunkenness, loitering, vandalism, littering or public urination. NYPD particularly target LGBT youth and transgender ethnic and racial minority individuals in the implementation of these ordinances in West Village, the site of the historic Stonewall riots, and a neighbourhood which has traditionally provided safe space for LGBT individuals.

### **Recent Developments**

AI has continued to receive reports of discriminatory enforcement of "quality of life" ordinances against LGBT youth and transgender people in the West Village neighbourhood.

### **TAKE ACTION: write to the authorities**

In all your letters, refer to Amnesty International's report and include the following key messages:

- LGBT people in the USA continue to suffer serious police abuses, in some cases amounting to torture or other ill-treatment.
- Within the LGBT community, transgender people, members of ethnic or racial minorities, young people and immigrants bear the brunt of police abuse. The climate of prejudice which LGBT people face in the USA means that many of these abuses continue to go unpunished.
- Despite some positive initiatives by law enforcement agencies and the justice system, much more needs to be done to protect LGBT people from police abuse and misconduct.

In addition, the following points should be included in letters to the New York Police Department and City Mayor:

#### **i) To Raymond W Kelly, Commissioner, New York Police Department (NYPD):**

Urge him to:

- Take necessary steps to ensure that "quality of life" enforcement and policing practices are not discriminatory, particularly against young LGBT individuals, racial and ethnic minority LGBT people and transgender individuals.
- Institute specific policies and procedures regarding police interaction with, strip searches and detention of transgender individuals, addressing the relevant concerns raised in Amnesty International's report.

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## **ii) To Michael Bloomberg, Mayor of New York City:**

Urge him to:

- As the highest elected official in the City of New York, please do all within your power to ensure that New York Police Department respect the human rights of all city residents including New York's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents.
- Take steps to ensure that all cases of alleged police abuse are investigated and that perpetrators of such abuses are brought to justice.
- Ensure that the Police Department and other city departments and agencies review the recommendations made in Amnesty International's report and make all necessary changes in policies and practices.

## **ADDRESSES**

<b>Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly</b> New York Police Department 1 Police Plaza Police Headquarters New York, NY 10038 USA F: (646) 610-5865 Email: <a href="mailto:pcoffice@nypd.org">pcoffice@nypd.org</a> Salutation: Dear Commissioner Kelly	<b>Mayor Michael Bloomberg</b> City Hall New York NY 10007 USA F: (212) 788-2460 Email via: <a href="http://www.nyc.gov/html/mail/html/mayor.html">http://www.nyc.gov/html/mail/html/mayor.html</a> Salutation: Dear Mayor Bloomberg
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## **COPIES TO** the New York Gay Officers Action League (GOAL):

George Farrugia, President

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Email: [president@goalny.org](mailto:president@goalny.org)

Salutation: Dear President

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## **San Antonio City Profile**

### **Background information**

While some important progress has been made in police relations with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community in San Antonio, Texas, Amnesty International's research documents a continuing serious pattern of police abuse and misconduct against LGBT people in San Antonio, including sexual, physical and verbal abuse, some of which constitutes torture or other ill-treatment, in encounters with law enforcement officials including during arrest, searches, and detention; failure to respond or inappropriate response to domestic violence and crimes targeted at LGBT individuals because of their sexual orientation or gender identity or expression; and profiling and discriminatory enforcement of certain laws and ordinances against LGBT people. San Antonio is the largest city in Texas and one of the largest in the country that has failed to amend its city human rights ordinance to protect LGBT people from discrimination.

### **Recent Developments**

Since the launch of *Stonewalled* in the USA in September 2005, the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) has signed Amnesty International's pledge, committing to make the necessary changes in policies and practices to stop police brutality against LGBT people. They have also appointed an LGBT liaison officer. Activists have reported that the SAPD is currently working with them to develop LGBT-sensitivity training for its officers. Also, the San Antonio Park Police division claims that it has ceased its undercover "lewd conduct" operations. Amnesty International welcomes these developments and will continue to monitor their progress.

### **TAKE ACTION: write to the authorities**

In all your letters, please include the following key messages:

- LGBT people in the USA continue to suffer serious police abuses, in some cases amounting to torture or other ill-treatment.
- Within the LGBT community, transgender people, members of ethnic or racial minorities, young people and immigrants bear the brunt of police abuse. The climate of prejudice which LGBT people face in the USA means that many of these abuses continue to go unpunished.
- Despite some positive initiatives by law enforcement agencies and the justice system, much more needs to be done to protect LGBT people from police abuse and misconduct.

In addition, the following points should be included in letters to the San Antonio Police Department and City Mayor:

#### **i) To Albert Ortiz, Chief of Police, San Antonio Police Department (SAPD):**

- Thank him for signing Amnesty International's pledge and for taking positive first steps towards ensuring that the SAPD respect the human rights of LGBT people in San Antonio.

Urge him to take further steps:

- Implement a comprehensive program of training for all SAPD officers working with the LGBT community.
- Review policies and practices in handling domestic violence cases, including those involving LGBT individuals, and discontinue any policy or practice that could be interpreted as allowing SAPD officers to threaten those who complain of domestic violence with arrest. Urge him to provide comprehensive training to all SAPD police officers on the handling of domestic violence incidents involving LGBT people.

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- Establish an effective mechanism for reporting complaints of sexual, physical or verbal abuse by law enforcement officials so that victims, relatives and witnesses can file complaints without fear of reprisal, confident that the authorities will act properly and impartially.
- Continue to do outreach, work proactively and maintain a system for effective consultation with the local LGBT community.

### **ii) To Phil Hardberger, Mayor of San Antonio**

- As the highest elected official in the city of San Antonio, please do all within your power to ensure that San Antonio Police Department respect the human rights of all city residents including San Antonio's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents.
- Take steps to ensure that all cases of alleged police abuse are investigated and that perpetrators of such abuses are brought to justice.
- Ensure that the SAPD and other city departments and agencies review the recommendations made in Amnesty International's report and make all necessary changes in policies and practices.
- Commend SAPD Commissioner Albert Ortiz for having taken positive and essential first steps for improvement, and encourage further progress in ensuring that the SAPD serve and protect the human rights of all members of its community, including LGBT people.
- Support the efforts to amend the San Antonio human rights ordinance to bar discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

### **ADDRESSES**

<b>Chief of Police Albert Ortiz</b> San Antonio Police Department 214 W. Nueva Street San Antonio, TX 78207 USA F: (210) 207-4377 Email: czainie@sanantonio.gov Salutation: Dear Chief Ortiz	<b>Mayor Phil Hardberger</b> P.O. Box 839966 San Antonio, TX 78283-3966 USA F: (210) 207-4168 Email: phardberger@sanantonio.gov Salutation: Dear Mayor Hardberger
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