

Amnesty International Group 22 Pasadena/Caltech News

Volume XII Number 4, April 2004

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, April 22, 7:30 PM. *Monthly Meeting* 414 S. Holliston, Caltech Y Lounge. Help us plan future actions on the Patriot Act, Campaign Against Discrimination, death penalty, environmental justice and more.

Tuesday, May 11, 7:30 PM. *Letter-writing Meeting* at the Athenaeum. Corner of California & Hill. This informal gathering is a great for newcomers to get acquainted with Amnesty!

Sunday, May 16, 6:30 PM. *Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion Group.* Vroman's Book Bookstore, 695 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena. This month we discuss the Pulitzer Prize-winning "A Problem from Hell": *America and the Age of Genocide* by Samantha Power. (More info below.)

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Hi everyone,

What's new this month? I hope everyone had a nice Easter, Passover, or other holiday this spring. I took the week off work and didn't think about the job once!

April is the 10th anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda. (Please see Rwanda included in this issue.) Robert and I went to a program at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles commemorating the genocide. There was a producer from the PBS Frontline series who spoke and showed excerpts from "The Ghosts of Rwanda", a new Frontline program on the topic. A young woman survivor of the genocide spoke. It was very powerful and emotional. In May, we will read Samantha Power's book, "A Problem from Hell", where she discusses the Rwanda situation and lack of response/action from the rest of the world. She also has written an op-ed piece in the LA Times on the genocide, which ran the first week of April. The Powers book is available now at Vroman's if you wish to get started early, as it is a large book. There is a 20% discount available to readers who attend the book group. Just ask for the coupon at the Will Call Dept upstairs.

Speaking of the book group, we met again last Sunday to discuss a more fun book—an environmentally-themed mystery by Stan Jones called "White Sky, Black Ice." We will also be

continuing the environmental justice theme when we table at Caltech's Earth Day on the 23rd. You can participate by writing on behalf of the Indonesian environmentalist Bestari Raden.

Our next monthly meeting is this coming Thursday. Please join us as we discuss future plans—we may have more info on our new prisoner of conscience by then. All are welcome and hope to see you there!

Group 22 member Lucas Kamp is in Brooklyn, New York this weekend attending the Annual General Meeting for Amnesty. He will vote on our behalf on various resolutions, attend lectures and sessions on various human rights topics and we look forward to his report when he returns.

Take care,

Kathy aigp22@caltech.edu

SUDAN

Urge Sudanese Govt to Protect People in Darfur

Amnesty has issued a crisis alert regarding the situation in Sudan. Please visit www.amnesty-usa.org for more actions (including one to your congressional representatives).

The Darfur conflict, which began in February 2003, continues to escalate in severity and civilians are increasingly the primary targets. An estimated 3,000 civilians have been killed by both deliberate and indiscriminate attacks and over 600,000 civilians have been internally displaced, and 100,000 have sought refuge in neighboring Chad. The perpetrators of this violence are the armed opposition groups, government soldiers and government-supported militias. The government has also impeded access to the region for humanitarian agencies, which has exacerbated the suffering of the civilians in Darfur. The violent attacks against civilians must stop and the Sudanese government must take immediate action to protect the citizens in Darfur.

The Sudanese government is currently participating in peace talks aimed at ending the 20-year civil war between the government and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M.) This peace process has attracted a great deal of attention to Sudan; however, a growing conflict in the Darfur region has been ignored.

The Darfur conflict began in February 2003 when two new armed opposition groups emerged, the Sudanese Liberation Army/Movement (SLA/M) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and attacked government troops. These groups cited the reasons for the attacks as the government's failure to protect settled villagers from attacks by nomadic groups and economic marginalization

of the region. The government responded with force and the fighting has intensified since then.

The Sudanese government, pro-government militias and armed opposition groups are all committing grievous human rights abuses. There are reports that these parties have killed, tortured, arbitrarily arrested or detained civilians, burnt down houses and villages, stolen and destroyed crops and looted cattle. The Sudanese government has also restricted access for any agency to the Darfur region, including humanitarian and food aid. All of these factor combined are culminating into a horrendous humanitarian crisis in Darfur. Without action to stop the violence this crisis will escalate.

Sample letter:

President Omar Hassan al-Bashir
c/o H.E. Khidir Haroun Ahmed
Embassy of the Republic of Sudan
2210 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Mr. President:

I am deeply concerned by the fate of thousands of civilians who, caught in the middle of the Darfur conflict, are victims of devastating human rights abuses including, being displaced and even killed. Furthermore, I am alarmed at the Sudanese government's restrictions on access for humanitarian agencies trying to provide badly needed aid and assistance to the people of Darfur. I urge you to uphold your obligation to the people of Sudan, protect them from the violence in Darfur, and allow aid organizations unhindered access.

Mr. President, while you and your government are negotiating towards peace, you must not ignore Darfur. Sudan is party to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; both clearly state that governments have a responsibility to protect their citizens. Currently civilians in Darfur are being harmed in both deliberate and indiscriminate attacks. An estimated 3,000 civilians have been killed and there are reports of civilians being tortured, arbitrarily arrested or detained, houses and villages being torched, crops and cattle stolen and deliberately destroyed. The Sudanese government cannot stand by passively and allow its citizens to suffer such horrible abuses.

I urge you to comply with the commitments of your government, ensure that international law is upheld and that the integrity of Sudanese citizens is respected and protected. Additionally, the restriction on access for humanitarian agencies to Darfur is exacerbating civilian suffering by limiting their access to medical care and food aid and is a violation of international humanitarian law. Over 600,000 civilians have been internally displaced because of the conflict. Many have been forced to flee with little or no possessions, farmers have been forced to leave their harvests and many are wounded or

sick. The limited access for humanitarian agencies is intensifying the humanitarian crisis. Out of distress over the plight of these civilians I urge you to allow and facilitate immediate unhindered humanitarian access to Darfur.

Mr. President, in order to prevent further deterioration of the situation in Darfur, your government must act. The people of Darfur desperately need the attention and protection of their government and these are duties that the government is expected to uphold. I ask you to act and act now.

Sincerely, YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS

LETTER COUNT

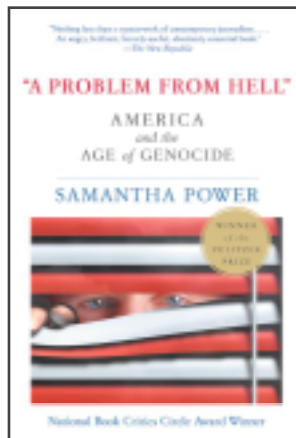
Urgent Action	12
Death Penalty	1
Haiti	3
Sudan	1
Total	14

Want to add your letters to the total? Get in touch with lwkamp@sbcglobal.net

RIGHTS READERS

Human Rights Book Discussion Group
Vroman's Bookstore
695 E. Colorado Boulevard, Pasadena

Sunday, May 16, 6:30 PM



*A Problem from Hell:
America and the Age of
Genocide*

by Samantha Power

2003 Pulitzer Prize Winner

*National Book Critics Circle
Award Winner*

In her award-winning interrogation of the last century of American history, Samantha Power -- a former Balkan war correspondent and founding executive director of Harvard's Carr Center for Human Rights Policy -- asks the haunting question: Why do American leaders who vow "never again" repeatedly fail to stop genocide? Drawing upon exclusive interviews with Washington's top policy makers, access to newly declassified documents, and her own reporting from the modern killing fields, Power provides the answer in "A Problem from Hell" - a groundbreaking work that tells the stories of the courageous Americans who risked their careers and lives in an effort to get the United States to act.

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Call on Rwandan Government to Protect Survivors of Sexual Violence

The legacy of genocide and war in Rwanda lives on ten years after the events in which as many as one million lost their lives. Compounding the trauma of being victims and witnesses of horrendous brutality, many women raped during 1994 now suffer the reality of living with sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS with little hope of legal recourse, medical care or compensation.

Background information. The legacy of genocide and war in Rwanda lives on ten years after the events in which as many as one million lost their lives.

Between April and July 1994, Rwanda was the site of a horrifying litany of human rights abuses - mass killings of unarmed civilians, rape and numerous other acts of torture. Bringing to justice those responsible has been an enormous challenge; even so, progress has been slow. For those raped or tortured, or whose family members were killed, justice and redress remain elusive.

The United Nations estimates that between 250,000 and 500,000 rapes were committed during the genocide. Degradation was integral to the physical violence, with some women being made to parade naked or perform various humiliating acts at the bidding of soldiers and militia.

Compounding the trauma of being victims and witnesses of horrendous brutality, many women raped during 1994 now suffer the reality of living with sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS with little hope of legal recourse, medical care or compensation.

For the thousands of survivors and victims, the brutal legacy of the genocide lives on because redress and justice remain elusive.

More information regarding the situation of women survivors of sexual violence in Rwanda can be found in the report Rwanda: "Marked for Death: rape survivors living with HIV/AIDS in Rwanda" at www.amnestyusa.org/countries/rwanda

Please write to the President of Rwanda, urging him to face up to the challenge of providing redress to survivors of rape and other victims of the genocide and crimes against humanity.

Appeals to:
Major General Paul Kagame
President
Presidency
PO Box 15 KIGALI
Rwanda

Copies to:
Ambassador Zac Nsenga
Embassy of The Republic of Rwanda

1714 New Hampshire Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20009

Your Excellency,

As Rwanda commemorates the tenth anniversary of the genocide we must remember all victims and I am writing to urge you to address more fully the medical and legal issues faced by women survivors of sexual violence. Thousands of these survivors have been denied effective medical care, testing for HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases and psychological counseling. On the legal front, these women require both justice and the passage of the long-overdue genocide victim compensation law.

I urge you to take all necessary measures to ensure that women survivors of sexual violence receive the medical care they require in line with Rwanda's obligations as state party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

I urge you to take all necessary measures to ensure that all crimes committed during and since the genocide are investigated and that those suspected to be responsible are brought to justice in trials which meet internationally recognized fair trial standards. As important, I ask you to ensure that genocide victim compensation bill is passed into law. Compensation constitutes an official acknowledgement of their suffering, in addition to helping survivors rebuild their lives.

Sincerely,

DEATH PENALTY

Urge Clemency for Mentally Ill Texas Inmate

Kelsey Patterson is scheduled to be executed in Texas on 18 May 2004. He was sentenced to death in 1993 for a double murder committed in 1992. He has long suffered from paranoid schizophrenia, a serious mental illness whose symptoms can include hallucinations, delusions, confused thinking, and altered senses, emotions or behaviour. He was first diagnosed with this brain disorder in 1981.

There is no doubt that Kelsey Patterson shot Louis Oates and Dorothy Harris, and there would appear to be little doubt that mental illness lay behind this tragic crime. He made no attempt to avoid arrest - after shooting the victims, he put down the gun, undressed and was pacing up and down the street in his socks, shouting incomprehensibly, when the police arrived.

In 2000, a federal judge wrote that "Patterson had no motive for the killings - he claims he commits acts involuntarily and outside forces control him through implants in his brain and body. Patterson has consistently maintained he is a victim of an elaborate conspiracy, and his lawyers and his doctors are part of that conspiracy. He refuses to cooperate with either; he has refused to be examined by mental health professionals since 1984, he refuses dental treatment, and he refuses to acknowledge

that his lawyers represent him. Because of his lack of cooperation, it has been difficult for mental health professionals to determine with certainty whether he is exaggerating the extent of his delusions, or to determine whether he is incompetent or insane. All of the professionals who have tried to examine him agree that he is mentally ill. The most common diagnosis is paranoid schizophrenia.”

A jury found Kelsey Patterson competent to stand trial. Yet his behaviour at his competency hearing, and at the trial itself – when he repeatedly interrupted proceedings to offer rambling narrative about his implanted devices and other aspects of the conspiracy against him – provided compelling evidence that his delusions did not allow him a rational understanding of what was going on or the ability to consult with his lawyers.

The setting of his execution date has led to a legal challenge that Kelsey Patterson is not competent for execution, that is, that he does not understand the reality of, or reason for, his impending punishment. This challenge is pending in the courts. The constitutional protections in this area are minimal, and other prisoners have gone to their deaths despite suffering from serious mental illness.

In an indication of his delusional thinking, since learning of his execution date, Patterson has written rambling letters to various officials. In the letters he refers to a permanent stay of execution that he says he has received on grounds of innocence. For example, in a letter to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals in February 2004, he wrote: “the McClennan County state district court Mclennan County has said stay and stay stay stay stay stay and stay stay stay always stay from execution to me my men from me Kelsey Patterson stay from murder and execution to me Kelsey Patterson...”.

Kelsey Patterson's case raises wider questions about society's treatment of the mentally ill. His family had tried unsuccessfully to get treatment for him prior to his crime. If Kelsey Patterson is put to death, it will not be first time that the Texas system has, in effect, buried its own failure in its execution chamber. Larry Robison, who was executed in 2000, had suffered from paranoid schizophrenia long before committing the crime for which he was sentenced to die. His family had tried to obtain help for him, but were turned away because he had not yet turned violent. James Colburn was also a diagnosed paranoid schizophrenic whose family had tried, unsuccessfully, to get appropriate health care before the murder for which he was sent to death row. He was executed in March last year. Last month, Scott Panetti received a 60-day stay of execution shortly before he was scheduled to be executed in Texas. He had been hospitalized for mental illness many times before the crime.

In Texas, the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP) has the power to recommend clemency. The Governor can accept or reject a recommendation for clemency. If the BPP votes against recommending clemency, the Governor cannot overrule it. The Governor can, however, issue a 30-day reprieve without the BPP's recommendation, and can use this to ask the BPP to reconsider a decision to deny clemency. The Governor can also ask the BPP to consider clemency in any case, before they make their decision. According to the Texas Administrative Code, “The board shall investigate and consider a recommendation of commutation of sentence in any case, upon the written request of the governor.”

Sample letter

Rissie Owens, Presiding Officer
Board of Pardons and Paroles
1300 11th St., Suite 520
P.O. Box 599
Huntsville, TX 77342-0599

Dear Ms Owens:

I urge the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles to recommend clemency for Kelsey Patterson (TDCJ #999065) to Governor Perry. Mr. Patterson is scheduled for execution on May 18, 2004 for the 1992 murders of Louis Oates and Dorothy Harris.

I am deeply concerned by several aspects of this case. First, I am alarmed that Texas plans to execute Mr. Patterson despite a long history of serious mental illness including paranoid schizophrenia. In 2000, a federal judge wrote that “Patterson had no motive for the killings – he claims he commits acts involuntarily and outside forces control him through implants in his brain and body... Because of his lack of cooperation, it has been difficult for mental health professionals to determine with certainty whether he is exaggerating the extent of his delusions, or to determine whether he is incompetent or insane. All of the professionals who have tried to examine him agree that he is mentally ill.”

Moreover, I am concerned that Mr. Patterson was not competent to stand trial. His behavior at his competency hearing, and at the trial itself provided compelling evidence that his delusions did not allow him a rational understanding of what was going on or the ability to consult with his lawyers. His behavior included repeated interruptions during proceedings in order to offer a rambling narrative about his implanted devices and other aspects of a conspiracy against him. The United Nations Commission for Human Rights has repeatedly called on countries which still use the death penalty not to use it against anyone suffering from a mental disorder.

While I have tremendous sympathy for the family and friends of Louis Oates and Dorothy Harris, I believe that capital punishment only perpetuates the cycle of violence.

Ms. Owens, I strongly urge the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles to recommend clemency for Kelsey Patterson to

Governor Perry. Thank you for your time and attention in this very serious matter.

Sincerely, YOUR NAME and ADDRESS

JUST EARTH

Fear of Safety for Indonesian Environmentalist

Environmental and pro-democracy activist Bestari Raden was arrested by soldiers in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam Province (NAD) on 23 March. He is said to be undergoing intensive interrogation. Torture and ill-treatment are routine in military custody in NAD, and there are serious concerns for his safety.

He was arrested by soldiers from the Aceh Tenggara District Military Command (Kodim 0108) in Lawe Pakam village, Babul Makmur Sub-district, Aceh Tenggara District. He is now held in Kodim 0108.

Bestari Raden is the coordinator of Kaukus Lingkungan (The Environmental Caucus) whose activities include advocacy and environmental and human rights education. He is also a member of the Indigenous People's Alliance of the Archipelago (Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara, AMAN) which campaigns for the rights of indigenous peoples. In the morning before his arrest, he had visited Kodim 0108 in his capacity as a member of a government team to review the controversial Ladia Galaska highway project, which is due to be built in NAD and North Sumatra and cuts through virgin rainforest in the Leuser National Park.

Bestari Raden has previously been accused of being a leader of the armed opposition group Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, GAM), and his name was reportedly included on a list of wanted persons issued by the police in 2000. There is concern that he may not actually be a member of GAM, but has been detained because of his activities in opposing government policies in NAD.

Background. Thousands of civilians have been killed in the 27-year conflict between GAM and the Indonesian government in NAD. The Indonesian security forces have carried out grave human rights violations, including unlawful killings, "disappearances" and torture during operations against GAM. GAM has also been responsible for human rights abuses.

The government declared a military emergency on 19 May 2003, following the breakdown of a ceasefire agreement. Grave human rights violations, including extrajudicial executions of both adults and children, have since been reported. Around 1,300 people are reported to have been killed since the military emergency was declared.

The military has announced that it will arrest people it claims support or are connected to GAM. The Military Emergency Authority claims that some 2,000 members of GAM have been arrested or have

surrendered since mid-May 2003. There is concern that some of those arrested may not be actual members of GAM, but merely sympathetic to its aims, or opposed to the military operations. The military has itself acknowledged that it has difficulty distinguishing between GAM members and civilians. Among those arrested are members of political organizations which campaign for independence for NAD, and members of human rights organizations.

According to Indonesian media reports, as of January 994 people had been put on trial since the military emergency was declared. Local human rights organizations have expressed concern that the trials have fallen short of international standards for fair trial. Anyone detained by the police and military in NAD is at risk of torture, ill-treatment and other human rights violations.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible:

- expressing concern for the safety of Bestari Raden, who was arrested by soldiers from Kodim 0108 on 23 March, and asking the authorities to guarantee that he will not be tortured or ill-treated;
- expressing concern that Bestari Raden may have been arrested solely because of his legitimate campaigning activities in defence of environmental protection, and urging the authorities to release him immediately and unconditionally unless he is to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- urging them to give him immediate access to lawyers of his own choosing, his family, and adequate medical treatment;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that all members of the police and military are made aware of the legitimate role of human rights defenders and their responsibility to protect human rights defenders under the UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental freedoms.

APPEALS TO:

Military Emergency Operational Command Chief:
Penguasa Darurat Militer Daerah (PDMD)
Mayor Jenderal Endang Suwarya
Markas Komando Daerah Militer Iskandar Muda
Jl Ahmad Yani, Simpang Lima
Banda Aceh, Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam
Indonesia
Salutation: Dear Major General

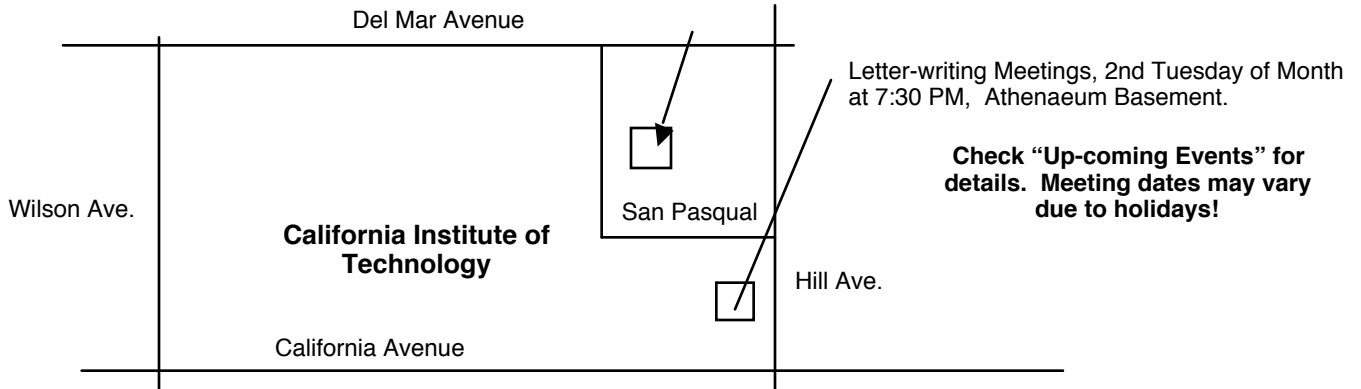
Copies to:

Ambassador Soemadi Djoko M. Brotodiningrat
Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia
2020 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington DC 20036

EDITOR'S LAST WORD:

Read us on line: <http://www.cco.caltech.edu/~aigp22>
Martha Ter Maat, 626-281-4039 / rightsreaders@yahoo.com

Monthly Meetings, 4th Thursday of Month, 7:30 PM,
Caltech Y Lounge, 414 S. Holliston.



From the 210 exit on Lake Avenue, head south, turn left on Del Mar
From the 110 continue on Arroyo Parkway north, turn right on California
Street parking is generally available.

Amnesty International Group 22
P.O. Box 50193
Pasadena, CA 91115-0193



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.