

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, January 26, 7:30 PM. *Monthly Meeting*
Caltech Y is located off San Pasqual between Hill and Holliston, south side. You will see two curving walls forming a gate to a path-- our building is just beyond. Help us plan future actions on Sudan, the War on Terror, death penalty and more.

Tuesday, February 14, 7:30 PM. *Letter-writing Meeting*
at the Athenaeum. Corner of California & Hill. Look for our table downstairs in the cafeteria area. This informal gathering is a great for newcomers to get acquainted with Amnesty!

Sunday, February 19, 6:30 PM. *Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion Group.* Vroman's Book Bookstore, 695 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena. This month we read Lorraine Adams' novel about Algerian immigrants, *Harbor* (More below.)

Monday, February 20. Vigils and Demonstrations on the eve of the scheduled execution of Michael Morales. See www.deathpenalty.org for a list of events.

Thursday, March 9, 7:00 PM. *Conscientious Projector Screening of "Deadline."* Metro Gallery, 64 North Raymond Avenue, Old Pasadena. Save the date for this film, doubly important as we strategize for a moratorium on executions in our state: What would you do if you discovered that 13 people slated for execution had been found innocent? That was exactly the question that Illinois Governor George Ryan faced in his final days in office. He alone was left to decide whether 167 death row inmates should live or die. In the riveting countdown to Ryan's decision, *Deadline* details the gripping drama of the state's clemency hearings. Documented as the events unfold, *Deadline* is a compelling look inside America's prisons, highlighting one man's unlikely and historic actions against the system.

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Hi everyone! Hope you had a good and restful holiday. Now it's a new year. Hope your new year's resolutions include becoming more involved with Amnesty. Mine includes spending more time with family (including cat!) as well as making time for personally meaningful activities such as amnesty activism, reading and art classes.

Speaking of reading, has everyone checked out Martha's "book blog", at <http://www.rightsreaders.blogspot.com>? It is really neat, with all kinds of fun links to topics related to the books we are reading. You can purchase the books via a link to amazon.com on the site, but please remember to support Vromans Bookstore, one of the few remaining independent bookstores in the Los Angeles area, for

allowing us to use the store to hold our meetings! In December, we read *Persepolis* (# 1), a "graphic novel" about a young woman in Iran during the Islamic revolution and Iran-Iraq war. I received *Persepolis 2* for Christmas, and am currently reading it. It is also a graphic novel. I haven't finished it yet. This book is the continuation of the story of Marjane leaving Iran to live in Austria with relatives at the age of 14. The drawings are very expressive.

December 11th, Group 22 held a letter-writing marathon at Café Culture in Altadena for Human Rights Day. A total of 123 letters and cards were written and the ambience was very relaxing in the café. Their food is very good too! We hope to hold more letter writing events at Café Culture or other venues in the future.

Group 22 members attended 2 vigils at All Saints Church in Pasadena in December and January as California executed 2 death row inmates. Unfortunately, the proposed moratorium on executions in California did not make it through the State Assembly according to today's LA Times (1-20-06) and we also face another execution on February 21—see inside for details.

Finally, as we approach Bush's State of the Union speech, tell the President how you feel about torture by signing this Amnesty online petition at: <http://www.tellthetruthabouttorture.org>.

Hope to see you in 2006.

Kathy aigp22@caltech.edu

DEATH PENALTY

California Execution set for February 21

California death row inmate Michael Morales faces execution on February 21. Please send letters and emails requesting clemency for him to the Governor and the Parole Board:

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-445-2841
Fax: 916-445-4633
To send an Electronic Mail please visit:
<http://www.govmail.ca.gov>

Board of Parole Hearings
1515 K Street
Suite 600
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 445-4072
http://www.bpt.ca.gov/about_us.asp

Some background from Death Penalty Focus follows which you can use for your letters:

Michael Morales, 45, grew up in San Joaquin County. Morales is a 4th generation American, devoutly religious, and the father of three adult children. He was sentenced to death for the 1981 rape and murder of 17-year old Terri Winchell. Morales was 21 years-old at the time of the crime. Morales's co-defendant, Ricky Ortega, who is also

his cousin, orchestrated the murder; yet Ortega received a sentence a life without the possibility of parole. Michael Morales's request for relief was denied by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in March 2005. The U.S. Supreme Court rejected his appeal on Oct. 11, 2005.

This case depends on the testimony of an unreliable informant witness. According to an article published in the Daily Journal on March 29, 2005:

"The Morales case prominently featured the testimony of a jailhouse informant who claimed that Morales had confessed to him. This purported confession was the only evidence to support the special circumstance; it was crucial to securing Morales' death sentence. It was later discovered that, prior to trial, Morales' prosecutor ...entered into a secret agreement with

jailhouse informant Bruce Samuelson. In exchange for Samuelson's testimony, the prosecutor agreed to dismiss four of six felony charges pending against Samuelson in another case. The prosecutor also secured court approval of a minimal county jail sentence for Samuelson, and then hid this deal from Morales's attorney, the judge and the jury. Even more disturbing, the prosecutor promised Samuelson these benefits before Morales allegedly confessed to him. When asked on the stand whether he had received anything in return for his testimony, Samuelson falsely stated that the prosecutor would be making only a "recommendation" on his behalf. The prosecutor let this false testimony stand in front of the jury, without correction or clarification."

"The circumstances surrounding Morales' so-called confession to Samuelson are questionable at best. Samuelson was never housed in the same jail cell with Morales. Given the physical layout of the jail, in order for Morales to confess to Samuelson, other inmates would have heard the conversation. Yet no other inmates ever corroborated Samuelson's story. Inmates also knew that guards monitored all of their conversations with an intercom system. In 1993, the California Attorney General's Office confronted Samuelson with these facts. Samuelson stated that he and Morales spoke together in Spanish so others would not listen in. Unbeknownst to Samuelson, however, Morales does not speak Spanish."

"An FBI expert who examined Samuelson's polygraph test years later concluded that the test unequivocally established that Samuelson was lying when he said Morales confessed. But the polygraph report that the prosecutor gave Morales' attorneys at the time of the trial claimed that Samuelson was telling the truth."

Race is a factor in this case. The first state-wide study on the impact of race and place on death sentencing in California was just released showing that the race and ethnicity of the victim and the location of the are key factors in determining who will be sentenced to death. The study found that those who murder whites are four times more likely to receive a death sentence than those who murder Latinos and three times more likely to receive a death sentence than those who murder African-

Americans. The victim in this case, Terri Winchell, is white. In addition, the study finds that those convicted in rural, predominately white counties like Ventura, where this crimes was tried, are up to three times more likely to be sentenced to death as those convicted of similar crimes in diverse, urban communities. In addition, the California Attorney General does not dispute that in this case, during the 1980s, the San Joaquin District Attorney's Office engaged in discriminatory charging practices, seeking the death penalty in white victim cases 20 times more often than in Latino victim cases. Further, the Office was 57 times more likely to seek a death sentence for a white female victim. Finally, one California Supreme Court justice concluded that Morales's death sentence should be reversed based on evidence that Ventura County systematically excluded Latinos from serving on juries.

Morales had an ineffective, poorly qualified lawyer. This case was tried long before standards were put in place for defense counsel. Morales's attorney was not sufficiently trained to handle a death penalty case.

Other serious mistakes were made. Several legal mistakes were made in this case. For example, the judge failed to give any cautionary instructions about the unreliability of testimony from informant witnesses.

How can we execute Morales while the Justice Commission investigates these issues? The California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice has been established to study exactly these kinds of mistakes. The Justice Commission must report its recommendations to the Governor and Legislature by Dec. 31, 2007. No one should be executed while the Justice Commission is conducting this in-depth study.

The Co-defendant. It has never been clear whether Michael Morales or his co-defendant, Ricky Ortega, played a greater role in causing the death of Terri Winchell. What we do know is: a) that Morales was sentenced to death and Ortega was sentenced to life without parole; and b) that more than \$80,000 was spent during the penalty phase to defend Ortega, while next to nothing was spent on the penalty phase of Morales's trial.

CORPORATE ACTION NETWORK *Pass Resolution to Review Ken Saro-Wiwa case*

Use this sample letter to urge Senators Boxer and Feinstein to support a resolution urging the Nigerian government to review the Ken Saro-Wiwa case.

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0505

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0001

Dear Senator _____

I urge you to cosponsor Senate Resolution 303, introduced by Senators Leahy, Kennedy, Feingold, Obama, Dodd and

Durbin. The resolution calls on the Nigerian government to conduct a thorough judicial review of the Ken Saro-Wiwa case. In addition, it calls upon the State Department to ensure that oil companies operating in the Niger Delta comply, at a minimum, with the Voluntary Principles for Security and Human Rights, and calls upon the Nigerian government to ensure that all members of the security forces receive training in international standards for the use of force and firearms.

Senate Resolution 303 offers a small but meaningful step forward in addressing these issues. A completed review of the Saro-Wiwa case could help bring closure to the survivors of the former Abacha regime's brutality. In addition, passage of this resolution will signal that the United States respects and supports the struggles of the Niger Delta people and expects the Nigerian government to reform its policies and practices in those communities.

I urge you to actively support Senate Resolution 303 and recognize the contribution that it can make to the human rights of the Ogoni and other ethnic groups in the Niger Delta.

Sincerely, Your NAME and ADDRESS

LETTER COUNT	
Death Penalty	13
Urgent Actions	6
Total:	19
To add your letters to the total contact lwkamp@sbcglobal.net	

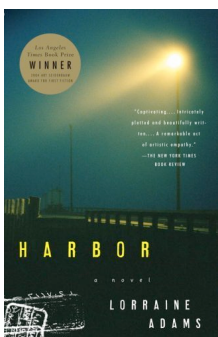
RIGHTS READERS

Human Rights Book Discussion Group

Vroman's Bookstore

695 E. Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena

Sunday, February 19, 6:30 PM



Harbor

by Lorraine Adams

A powerful first novel that engages the tumultuous events of today: at once an intimate portrait of a group of young Arab Muslims living in the United States, and the story of one man's journey into—and out of—violence.

We first meet Aziz Arkoun as a 24-year-old stowaway—frozen, hungry, his perceptions jammed by a language he can't understand or speak. After 52 days in the hold of a tanker from Algeria, he jumps into the icy waters of Boston harbor and swims to shore. Seemingly rescued from isolation by Algerians he knew as a child, he instead finds himself in a world of disillusionment, duplicity, and stolen identities, living a raw comedy of daily survival not unlike what he fled back home.

As the story of Aziz and his friends unfolds—moving from the hardscrabble neighborhoods of East Boston and Brooklyn to a North African army camp—Harbor makes vivid the ambiguities of these men's past and present lives: burying a murdered girl in the Sahara; reading medieval Persian poetry on a bus, passing for Mexican. But when Aziz begins to suspect that he and his friends are under surveillance, all assumptions—his and ours—dissolve in an urgent, mesmerizing complexity. And as Harbor races to its explosive conclusion, it compels us to question the questions it raises: Who are the terrorists? Can we recognize them?

UNITED NATIONS *Reform Human Rights Council*

Urge the US to take a leadership role in the creation of the new UN Human Rights Council. Sample letter follows:

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500-0003

Mr. President,

A strong and effective Human Rights Council is essential for the future protection of human rights and for the success of efforts to reform the United Nations. The engagement and leadership of the United States are crucial at this final stage of the negotiations if the UN is to create a strong and effective Human Rights Council. We fully share the views expressed by your representative at the United Nations, John Bolton, to the General Assembly that merely recreating the UN Commission on Human Rights under a different name would be entirely unsupportable. We are also encouraged by the emphasis your representative has placed on the need for the United States to show flexibility in the negotiations to create the Council, as will be required in the coming weeks.

Historically, the United States has been a leader in setting the agenda for human rights work in the United Nations. Immediately after the Second World War, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt was instrumental in the creation of the Commission on Human Rights and in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Sixty years later, you and the United States government have the rare opportunity, once more, to shape the UN's principal human rights body. We urge you to maintain the rich human rights tradition of the United States in the process of the Council's creation.

To be effective the Human Rights Council must protect all human rights in all countries. No country has a claim to membership. The Council's membership will be improved if all members are required to be elected through genuine contested elections which exclude regions determining Council membership in disregard of a country's human right record. As your representative indicated, the Council must meet frequently and regularly to deal more effectively with human rights situations in countries, including unfolding crises. It is crucial that the Council retain the current level of NGO participation as well as the

system of independent human rights experts known as the Special Procedures. We urge the US government to work to ensure that these essential elements become part of a Human Rights Council.

We also urge you to use the influence of the United States at the highest level to dissuade countries that wish simply to recreate the Commission on Human Rights under a different name or even less, and instead encourage them to work for a strong and effective UN Human Rights Council that includes the above elements. Amnesty International is encouraged by your government's efforts to improve human rights in countries such as North Korea and Burma. We hope that the same determination and effectiveness can now be brought to bear on creating a new human rights institution that will inspire confidence in the United States and throughout the world and that will have a longstanding impact on the protection of human rights everywhere.

Mr. President, we urge you not to miss this historic opportunity and to demonstrate, with you representative in New York, the leadership of the United States in the creation of a strong and effective Human Rights Council. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Your NAME and ADDRESS

SUDAN/EGYPT

Prevent Forcible Return of Refugees

The Egyptian authorities announced on 4 January that they will be delaying the deportation of up to 650 Sudanese nationals for 72 hours (up to the morning of 8 January), and have allowed the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) access to them for this period. The UNHCR is visiting the three detention centers where they are held in order to identify those who may be refugees or asylum-seekers and therefore, in accordance with international law, should not be deported.

On 3 January, the Egyptian authorities had announced that they intended to forcibly return up to 650 Sudanese nationals, who have been detained, to Sudan on 5 January. The group is believed to include asylum-seekers and refugees recognized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) who were not carrying their residency documents when they were arrested. Some would be at risk of torture if returned to Sudan.

There are serious concerns that 72 hours may not be long enough for the UNHCR to identify all those who are refugees or asylum-seekers. No one should be deported except as a result of a decision reached in accordance with law, with access to appeal procedures. It is feared that the Egyptian authorities may simply expel the entire group of Sudanese nationals at the end of the 72 hour period.

Egypt is a state party to the Convention Against Torture and other international agreements which expressly prohibit the forcible return of anyone to a country where they would be at risk of torture or ill-treatment. An

Egyptian government spokesperson said on 3 January that the individuals would be sent back because they had "broken the law of the host country." However, under customary international law and international human rights law, the prohibition on forcibly returning people to countries where they would be at risk of serious human rights violations is absolute in all cases, regardless of whether the people in question have broken any laws. The use of torture against certain individuals and groups by the Sudanese authorities is widely documented by Amnesty International. Deporting the entire group, without giving each member of the group access to adequate procedural guarantees, would violate Article 13 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states that non-citizens may be expelled "only in pursuance of a decision reached in accordance with law."

BACKGROUND. Tens of thousands of Sudanese nationals have sought asylum in Egypt since the late 1990s, many of them fleeing the civil war in the south of the country and the conflict in Darfur, in the east. The UNHCR has recognized a large number of them as refugees, and large numbers have been resettled in other countries. At the beginning of 2005, there were over 14,000 Sudanese in Egypt whom the UNHCR had recognized as refugees, and thousands more whose asylum applications had been rejected.

The 650 are part of a group of over 2,500 Sudanese nationals who had been involved in a peaceful protest in the Egyptian capital, Cairo, since 29 September 2005. Their demands included improvements to their work and educational opportunities, protection from forcible return to Sudan, and resettlement in third countries. The police broke up the protest violently on 30 December, in an action that left at least 27 protesters dead and dozens of protestors and police injured.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals:

- welcoming the Egyptian authorities' decision to delay the deportation of the 650 Sudanese nationals, but expressing concern that the 72-hour period they have allowed may not be long enough for the UNHCR to identify all those who may be entitled to refugee status, and calling on the authorities to give the UNHCR as much time as it needs to carry out its assessment;
- calling on the Egyptian authorities to immediately release all those identified by the UNHCR as refugees or asylum-seekers, or otherwise of concern to the UNHCR, unless charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that those Sudanese nationals not identified as refugees or asylum-seekers, or otherwise of concern to the UNHCR, are only expelled on the basis of a decision reached in accordance with law, in compliance with Egypt's obligations under Article 13 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

APPEALS TO:

H.E. Muhammad Hosni Mubarak
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

'Abedine Palace, Cairo, EGYPT
E-mail: webmaster@presidency.gov.eg

General Habib Ibrahim El Adly
Minister of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior
Al-Sheikh Riham Street, Bab al-Louk, Cairo, EGYPT
E-mail: moi@idsc.gov.eg, moi1@idsc.gov.eg, moi2@idsc.gov.eg

COPIES TO:

Ambassador M. Nabil Fahmy
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
3521 International Ct NW
Washington DC 20008-2023
Email: embassy@egyptembdc.org

MEXICO

Protect Dam Protestors in Guerrero

On 16 December, at least eight people were injured during clashes between police and inhabitants of the town of Dos Arroyos in the municipality of Acapulco, Guerrero State, who are opposing plans to flood a large area of farmland in order to construct a hydroelectric dam. The authorities have reportedly failed to consult local communities fairly and transparently about the plans, leading to an atmosphere of increasing tension and violence in the area. It is feared that the lives of people in these communities may be at risk.

The clashes occurred after the state and federal authorities convened a meeting at short notice in the neighboring town of Tierra Colorado, at which community representatives voted on the plans to construct the "La Parota" dam. Some 300 police officers reportedly attempted to stop inhabitants of Dos Arroyos opposed to the dam from attending the meeting by blocking the roads leading out of the town. According to reports, those opposing the dam barricaded a bridge in the path of the police in order to stop them entering the town. The community members were reportedly carrying machetes and catapults. When police, also carrying machetes, attempted to cross the barricade, the inhabitants allegedly threw stones at them. The police reportedly responded by throwing stones and using tear gas. At least eight people were injured, including Marco Antonio Suastegui, the leader of the Consejo de Ejidatarios y Comuneros Opositores a la Parota (CECOP), a group opposed to the construction of the dam. Four community members were detained as a result of the clashes, and charged with causing harm, damage and resistance to the authorities. They were released on bail the following day.

According to reports, the authorities had provided buses to take those who approve of the dam's construction from Dos Arroyos to the meeting in Tierra Colorado, in order to secure a favorable vote. The meeting lasted for no more than 15 minutes and resulted in a unanimous vote in favor of the construction of the dam. However, according to the CECOP and other human rights organizations, this vote did not represent the views of all the people affected. The CECOP claims that 15 similar meetings with local community representatives from the area which would be affected by the dam have deliberately excluded those opposed to the dam, and that others attending the meetings have been misled, resulting in an unfair process

lacking transparency. It is feared that this may increase resentment among communities in the area, and thus the two remaining consultation meetings, scheduled to take place in December, could be flashpoints for further violence.

In September 2005, Tomas Cruz Zamora, who lived in the hamlet of Huamuchitos, was killed by someone from the same community. He had reportedly expressed his opposition to the dam. In November, Cristino Cruz Hernandez, who was allegedly in favor of the dam, was also killed. In 2004, Marco Antonio Suastegui was threatened and intimidated after campaigning against the dam.

BACKGROUND. The CECOP and other human rights organizations claim that the construction of La Parota dam could lead to the flooding of some 140,000 square kilometers of farmland, affecting 17,000 inhabitants, and threatening the livelihood of 20 farming communities. The project has divided local communities, with some accepting compensation for the destruction of their land, and others strongly opposed.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals:

- calling on the authorities to take measures to ensure the safety of members of the communities affected by the construction of the dam according to their wishes;
- expressing concern at the apparent lack of effective steps carried out by the authorities to prevent the climate of violence from increasing surrounding the construction of the dam, and urging them to ensure the two remaining consultation meetings are conducted peacefully, fairly and transparently;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that all criminal complaints against the four people released on bail are investigated according to the law and adhere to international fair trial standards;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that a genuine consultation is carried out, including all who are affected by the construction of the dam.

APPEALS TO:

State Governor:
Lic. Zeferino Torreblanca Galindo
Gobernador Electo del Estado de Guerrero.
Horacio Nelson numero 15 Fraccionamiento Costa Azul
C.P. 39850, Acapulco, Guerrero, Mexico

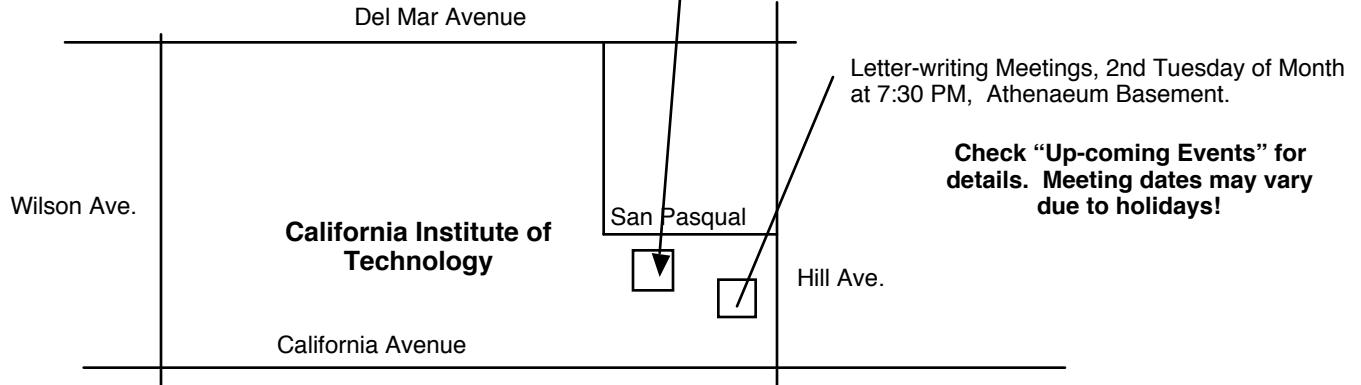
Minister of the Interior:
Lic. Carlos Abascal Carranza
Secretario de Gobernacion
Secretaria de Gobernacion
Bucareli 99, 1er. piso, Col. Juarez
Delegacion Cuauhtemoc, Mexico D.F., C.P.06600, Mexico

COPIES TO:

Ambassador Carlos Alberto De Icaza Gonzalez
Embassy of Mexico
1911 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington DC 20006

NEW Postage Rates	Postcards	Airmail Letters
Within the US	\$0.24	\$0.39
To Mexico/Canada	\$0.55	\$0.63
Other	\$0.75	\$0.84

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



Letter-writing Meetings, 2nd Tuesday of Month
at 7:30 PM, Athenaeum Basement.

**Check "Up-coming Events" for
details. Meeting dates may vary
due to holidays!**

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.