

Amnesty International Group 22 Pasadena/Caltech News

Volume XIX Number 6, June 2011

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, June 23, 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, July 12, 7:30 PM . Letter writing meeting. We will meet at the "Rath al Fresco" of the Caltech Athenaeum, NW corner of Hill and California, in Pasadena. This is on the lawn behind the building. Look for the table with the Amnesty sign. This informal gathering is a great way for newcomers to get acquainted with Amnesty!

Sunday, July 17, 6:30PM. Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion group. This month we read "A China more Just" by Gao Zhisheng.

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Hi everyone

It's been a quiet peaceful weekend...nice cool weather. One more week of school left! But who's counting, right?!

Next month's book on our POC, Gao Zhisheng, looks really interesting. I look forward to reading his autobiography and learning more about his life and work.

Robert, myself, and Joyce attended the 22nd annual Tiananmen Square commemoration dinner in Chinatown Memorial Day weekend. This was the first time I have gone. The food was good, the speakers interesting, and we saw some old friends from other AI groups that we hadn't seen in awhile.

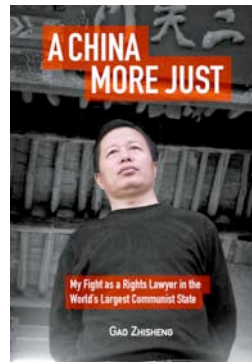
Speaking of other AI groups be sure to read Lucas Kamp's account of the OCLA (Organizing City Los Angeles) event held recently. Four Group 22 members attended, including myself. It was a very enjoyable day. Kala is a very dynamic organizer and made it fun for all.

Con cariño, Kathy

RIGHTS READERS

Human Rights Book Discussion Group

Keep up with Rights Readers at
<http://rightsreaders.blogspot.com>



Next Rights Readers meeting:

Sunday, July 17,
6:30 PM

Vroman's Bookstore
695 E. Colorado Blvd.
In Pasadena

A China More Just
by Gao Zhisheng

About the Author

Group 22 adopted the case of human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng (pronounced Gow Jir-sheng) in March of 2010. Gao is the author of *A China More Just*. In 2001, Gao Zhisheng was named one of China's "top 10 lawyers" by the



Ministry of Justice. But since his human rights advocacy angered the authorities, he and his family have seen their lives torn apart. After Gao Zhisheng wrote a series of "Open letters for Justice" in late 2005 calling on China's leaders to stop the persecution of the spiritual group Falun Gong, he lost his lawyer's license and he and his family faced constant harassment by security forces.

In early 2006, he organized a hunger strike to draw attention to human rights abuses and later that year received a suspended three-year prison sentence for "inciting subversion", with one year deprivation of political rights. The authorities have kept Gao Zhisheng and his family under constant surveillance ever since.

On 13 September 2007, Gao Zhisheng wrote an open letter to the US Congress saying he did not support the country's staging of the 2008 Olympics. Nine days later, plainclothes police officers came to his home, stripped him naked and beat him unconscious. He was held incommunicado for nearly six weeks and subjected to beatings and repeated electric shocks to his genitals. After he was released his acquaintances described him as "a broken man".

In February 2009, shortly after his wife and children fled China, Gao Zhisheng was taken away by security agents and disappeared completely. International pressure for information about him elicited confusing answers from Chinese officials, claiming first that he had gone missing and then that he "was where he was supposed to be".

On March 31, 2010, he suddenly reappeared in northern China. During his brief contacts with the outside world, he said that he was giving up activism and now wished only to be reunited with his family. But only a few weeks later, before his wish could be realized, he again disappeared, reportedly into police custody. Enquiries from his family and friends have met with no answers from Chinese authorities.

For more information and to take action on Gao's case please visit Amnesty International Group 22's [Gao Zhisheng page](#).

From:
<http://rightsreaders.blogspot.com/p/gao-zhisheng.html>

COURAGEOUS FIGHTER

By Kerry Brown

**A review of *A China More Just: My Fight as a Rights Lawyer in the World's Largest Communist State* By Gao Zhisheng
Broad Press USA, 2007
255 pages, US\$14.95**

China has received reasonably positive press over the last few years. Part of this is due to the energy and focus that the Chinese government, and its officials and diplomats, have given to soft diplomacy campaigns. Soft diplomacy has in turn been backed up by generous amounts of aid to and investment in the developing world. China is keen to make friends. This approach is likely to intensify in the build up to the Beijing Olympics. China will want to extract every ounce of goodwill and positive news coverage it can from the Games. Thus, in its reaction to the resignation of Steven Spielberg as an artistic advisor for the opening and closing ceremonies, China was both defensive and irritated. This demonstrates that reminders of the other China—the hidden China, or, to be more accurate, the dark side of modern China—are not welcome, at least by the central government.

Self-trained lawyer Gao Zhisheng's account comes from this "other China." His is a tale of a Communist Party member who came from the poorest groups of Chinese society. He lost his father as a child and was dependent on the work of his mother, growing up in the hinterland of China in the 1960s and 70s in the midst of widespread poverty and deprivation. But Gao, through hard work and dedication, was to enjoy at least some education, and during a period of work in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, discovered a talent for law. He qualified as a lawyer in the 1990s, and started practicing on some of the most difficult, sensitive cases. His inspiration, originally, was the sight of injustices perpetrated in the work place where he was based in his early career. This exposure motivated him to empower himself through the study of law, and to become active in cases that he felt involved exploitation of others. For this his reward has been harassment by agents of the state, and, most recently, imprisonment. His current whereabouts and situation remain unclear.

A China More Just consists of autobiographical writings, letters, and diary entries. An additional piece is written by Gao's wife. Gao describes how he came to be interested in law, how he gained qualifications, and what drew him to the difficult cases he has taken on. In the past, Gao has defended Falun Gong practitioners, those harassed or imprisoned by the state for property repossession disputes, and individuals like the blind activist Chen Guangcheng, who is currently imprisoned on trumped-up charges for criticizing forced abortions.

In one case in Liaoning Province, Gao dealt with Falun Gong believers who had been severely beaten and detained without due legal process, and received a beating himself for getting involved. He has also taken up cases in both Beijing and provincial China involving people whose property was taken from them without proper compensation. As Gao points out, China's legal system sets out clear rules in all of these cases. These rules were simply not followed by the so-called officers of the state in specific regions. Arbitrary arrest, perverse decisions, lack of transparency, and blatantly political decisions all seem par for the course in Gao's description of the underbelly of modern China.

As a result of Gao's activities, as many as 70 security police have been posted outside his apartment in Beijing, and he has been followed by cars and army vehicles, one of which almost killed him. His friends and associates have been

intimidated and his legal practice shut down. Gao's description of this sort of intimidation and psychological pressure—including one attempt in Beijing to run his car off the road—is particularly disturbing. As has happened so often in the past, the agents of the darker reaches of the state have proved adept at isolating their targets and making them feel of the weak. This book gives first hand descriptions of that. It is written from the unique perspective of a person trying to change China from the inside out, rather than the other way around. And Gao's account of the punishments meted out to practitioners of Falun Gong, whatever one might think of their beliefs or practices, offers plenty of food for thought for those trying to make sense of the new, bold China put on display.

As Gao himself makes clear, he is intensely proud of his country, and of its culture and history. In his view, however, China will only really stand up, as Mao Zedong promised in 1949, when it becomes a country where the law is respected above politics.

It is important, therefore, to read the sobering reminders of books like these. China has come a long way in the last three decades. No one disputes its economic success. A middle class is thriving and its members are increasingly flexing their muscles. In last year's National Party Congress, China's leaders clearly mentioned the "importance of people's welfare," and the need for the Party to serve society. Chinese people enjoy freedoms they never imagined in the grim Maoist period before 1976, and increasing numbers are suing the government over grievances ranging from environmental pollution to miscarriages of justice. But there are still creaking contradictions in this system. All too often, the strong—largely those in the Communist Party—are able to ride roughshod over the rights of the weak. This book gives first hand descriptions of that. It is written from the unique perspective of a person trying to change China from the inside out, rather than the other way around.

Gao's fundamental point is surely right: until China has a credible rule of law, and Chinese citizens have better access to justice—and, for that matter, confidence that the security apparatus of the state won't be turned against them—it is hard to take seriously China's claims to be a modern, developing society. Despite China's modernization, the bottom line in 2008 is that when there is a conflict between the

political power of the Communist Party and China's legal system, the Party always wins.



Lawyer Gao Zhisheng with his family before he was detained. Courtesy of Broad Press USA.

http://hrichina.org/sites/default/files/oldsite/PDFs/CRF.1.2008/CRF-2008-1_Courageous.pdf

**PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE
GAO ZHISHENG
by Joyce Wolf**

Gao Zhisheng, Group 22's adopted Prisoner of Conscience, was named in House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi's statement marking the 22nd anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Massacre on June 4. She said, "Today, as the heroes of Tiananmen are remembered, the Chinese government intensifies its crackdown on those calling for democratic reform. In recent months, an alarming number of Chinese religious leaders, artists, lawyers, bloggers and workers have disappeared, been harassed and intimidated, forcibly detained and imprisoned." She called for the immediate and unconditional release of "those imprisoned for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, assembly, and religion including ... Gao Zhisheng: a human rights lawyer who has been missing for two years".

<http://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/2011/06/pelosi-statement-on-the-22nd-anniversary-of-the-tiananmen-square-massacre.shtml>

Human Rights Watch researcher Phelim Kine compared the current crackdown to Tiananmen:

"At least back then, there was a veneer of due legal process. What we've seen more and more is the lawless and thuggish use of forced disappearances to silence the forces of dissent." <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/06/03/us-china-tiananmen-idUSTRE7522HB20110603>

An article by Tom Doctoroff in the Huffington Post offers interesting insights into China's worldview. "Everything that registers on China's international -- and, for that matter, domestic -- radar does so because it, directly or indirectly, impacts stability. Pragmatic to the core, the PRC cherishes one thing above all else: order." He mentions "defense attorney Gao Zhisheng" as one of those arrested because of their public criticism of the Communist Party. He concludes, "In China, pragmatism (i.e., incremental progression towards attainable objectives) is golden. Stability is sublime." http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tom-doctoroff/chinas-worldview-imperati_b_868706.html

Changes in China's legal system are discussed in this article:

<http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2011/05/31/civil-litigation-being-quietly-harmonized/>.

"During the 1980s and 1990s, Chinese authorities substituted court procedures for much of the Maoist-inspired practices ... while new rules added procedural formality to trials. Legal education was less politicized." Now, however, "the Chinese leadership is allowing social tensions, real or feared, to reverse its earlier commitment to legal reform."

Gao Zhisheng wrote about his legal career in his 2006 book, "A China More Just", which is Group 22's book selection for July. Please join us for the book discussion and take action for Gao at <http://www.its.caltech.edu/~aigp22/GaoPOC/GaoZhisheng.html>.

VIOLATIONS AGAINST WOMEN

by Cheri Dellelo

Fighting the Ban on Women Driving in Saudi Arabia

(sources: from NPR.org, Change.org, and EqualityNow.org, and *The Guardian*)

In Saudi Arabia, there is no written ban against women driving. However, it is illegal for

women to obtain a driver's license in the country, making it effectively illegal for them to drive. Most families have at least one driver, or if they can't afford one, they have a male family member do the driving. Some of the women have learned how to drive and have received licenses to drive in other countries, but these licenses are not honored in Saudi Arabia. It would be not only timesaving but also extremely cost-effective for women to do their own driving. However, conservatives against this form of progress have launched campaigns encouraging people to beat women who attempt to drive.



Manal Alsharif

On, May 19, Manal al-Sharif posted a Youtube video of herself driving and encouraging others to do the same (<http://youtu.be/-8MROOGba94>) and was arrested for her rebellion. Al-Sharif, who has been compared by some activists to Rosa Parks, has inspired more women to defy the ban on driving. June 17

marked the date that, urged by Alsharif, roughly 50 women got behind steering wheels to drive around in Saudi Arabia in protest.

On June 17, one of the themes that emerged throughout the day was that many of the women drivers were accompanied by men—fathers, husbands, brothers and sons—to ensure their protection. And, thankfully, there were no reports of mass arrests, and except for two women who were stopped and then let go after signing a pledge, it seemed that the police largely decided to ignore the female drivers. Most of the country's national press did not cover the story.

Manal al-Sharif was freed from the women's prison in Dammam after being held for nine days. Before her release, she had said she hoped that her action would encourage women to demand more rights, but upon her release, Sharif's lawyer, Adnan al-Salah, said "she wrote a pledge that she will not drive a car, and after what has happened she has decided to give up the campaign and not be part of the protests."

Please show your support of a repeal of the ban against women driving in Saudi Arabia by

going to EqualityNow.org's website and signing a petition that will go to His Majesty, King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud and Minister of Justice Dr. Muhammad bin Abdul El Karim Abdul Azziz El Issa - <http://tinyurl.com/4xz9mub>. You can also sign a petition asking Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to make a public statement supporting Saudi women's right to drive at Change.org's website- <http://tinyurl.com/3p8s5pg>.

Belarusian Human Rights Journalist Iryna Khalip Imprisoned

(adapted from FrontlineDefenders.org)



Iryna Khalip is a Belarusian journalist and correspondent for the Russian newspaper 'Novaya Gazeta.' In 2009, she won the International Women's Media Foundation "Courage in Journalism" Award, and, in 2005, she was nominated by *Time Magazine* as a "Hero of Europe." On May 16,

2011, she was found guilty of "taking part or organizing the actions that violate public order" and was sentenced to 2 years in a penal colony. The court decided to suspend the sentence for 2 years, and she was released in the courtroom. Then she was arrested on December 19, 2010, after a protest rally in Minsk following the presidential elections.

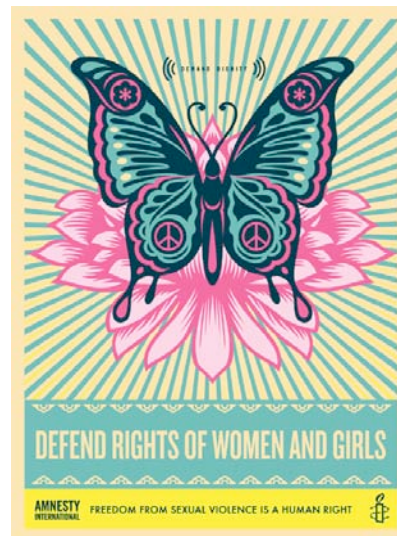
Following her December arrest, Khalip was detained at a KGB (State Security Agency) pre-trial detention facility where she had very limited access to her lawyer. On January 29, 2011, she was placed under house arrest, denied any contact with the outside world, and forbidden from having any contact with her relatives apart from her parents and three-year-old son. On May 14, 2011, she was condemned to 5 years' imprisonment for organizing "mass disorder." It is believed that the sentencing is directly related to Khalip's legitimate and peaceful work as a journalist in defense of human rights, particularly with regard to freedom of expression.

Please consider sending a letter to Belarus President Aleksandr Lukashenka asking that he

overturn Khalip's sentence; guarantee her security and physical and mental health; and ensure that all human rights defenders in Belarus be able to carry out their legitimate and peaceful human rights activities without fear of reprisals or harassment. A sample letter and address can be found at FrontlineDefenders.org's website - <http://tinyurl.com/3q6yz35>.

Online Butterfly Action for Women and Girls in Nicaragua at Risk

(adapted from: AIUSA Human Rights Now blog)



In Nicaragua, girls are especially vulnerable to rape and sexual violence. Two thirds of rape victims are under 18, and the most common cases are for girls between the ages of 13 and 15. These devastating acts of sexual

violence and rape are part of a broader trend of the devaluation of women and girls in Nicaragua. Since 2008, the government has enforced a total abortion ban, criminalizing abortion in all circumstances; there are no exceptions for rape, incest, or when a woman's life is at risk. The government's refusal to lift the total abortion ban, its refusal to increase steps to prevent sexual abuse and rape of women and girls, and its refusal to provide adequate care and support to survivors is a failure to ensure women and girl's freedom from violence, freedom of autonomy, and freedom from discrimination, and it violates their fundamental human rights.

In Nicaragua, those who speak out against such discrimination are at risk: women human rights defenders in Nicaragua working to promote women's rights and sexual and reproductive rights have been increasingly harassed by officials. Despite this, the women of Nicaragua will not be silenced. On September 28, they are planning a march in Nicaragua to demand the

repeal of the total abortion ban and an end to violence against women and girls. You can join them by sending a message of solidarity through the online butterfly action - <http://tinyurl.com/4xgvsxf>.

Join the AI USA Women's Human Rights Network on Facebook

The AI USA Women's Human Rights Network on Facebook is network of women's human rights defenders made up of AI USA supporters and volunteers. Led by the Women's Human Rights Coordination group, a small team of activists serving as experts and strategists in support of AIUSA's efforts to promote and defend women's human rights, the Women's Human Rights Network takes action and promotes awareness in collaboration with AI USA staff, country specialists, and experts in other areas of human rights. If you are interested in joining their action network, 'like' their page at <http://tinyurl.com/3c8aga3>.

ALL FOR CHURCH ACTION - FAITH RISING: THE DEATH PENALTY AND THE QUEST FOR COMMUNITY JUSTICE

BY STEVI CARROLL

On Sunday, June 5, 2011, people from the Los Angeles Valley filled the Paul Schrade Library at the Robert Kennedy Community Schools, formerly the Ambassador Hotel, to discuss the death penalty and our justice/prison system. This discussion, mediated by James Clark of the ACLU, included Professor Charles Ogletree, Bishop Charles E. Blake, the Reverend Eugene Rivers, and Aqeela Sherrills. Dolores Huerta, who worked with Cesar Chavez and the Farmer Workers Union and is currently the president of the Dolores Huerta Foundation, also spoke as well as Paul Schrade, formerly the regional director of the United Auto Workers Union who was the labor chair of RFK's presidential campaign, who attended meetings with RFK, including a meeting with Cesar Chavez in Delano, and who was with RFK, and also injured, at the Ambassador when Mr. Kennedy was assassinated on June 5, 1968.

Paul Schrade worked for 23 years to see that a school was erected on the site of Robert F. Kennedy's murder. He understood the importance of education for all youngsters in the

United States played in RFK's life. Regarding the school, which Mr. Schrade believes will help youngsters realize the potential of their lives, he says, "Art is really a part of our humanity" and the school will allow kids to explore their talents, whatever they may be, so that they will have meaningful lives and not end up in our judicial and prison system.

Much of the afternoon's discussion revolved around the inordinate number of black and brown brothers and sisters who are incarcerated, what challenges brought them to the prison doors, and what, especially the church, can do about these situations.

Professor Ogletree told us about the murder of his sister, and his internal conflict about his being a public defender and his desire to have that crime prosecuted. After searching his soul, he realized the death penalty for the person who killed his sister would bring him no solace. He also came to understand that poverty, abuse, neglect and mental illness are at the core of so much of the crime committed in our country. Now that the US Supreme Court has ruled that California prisons are overcrowded and that overcrowding is 'cruel and unusual' for inmates with serious mental and serious medical conditions, the California prison system's population must be decreased by 46,000 inmates within the next two years to relieve this overcrowding. Professor Ogletree noted that the written opinion of the court includes photographs to illustrate the situation (see <http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/10pdf/09-1233.pdf> pages 51 and 52). This influx of freed convicts will present challenges for the communities into which they will return.

The Reverend Eugene Rivers said the brothers and sisters returning from prison offer members of faith communities the opportunity to address the former inmates' needs. Faith communities, as living examples of the gospel message, can address the needs of the returning convicts while developing methods for aiding children whose parents have been incarcerated. According to Rev. Rivers, seven out of 10 children of imprisoned parents end up incarcerated themselves. These youngsters need adults to guide them. His plan includes people who can 'mentor, minister, and monitor' these children through this difficult time and help them opt for more productive, peaceful lives.

Rev. Rivers believes prisoners suffer the effects of mental, psychological, and sexual abuse and until these injuries can be addressed, deep, long-lasting healing cannot occur.

Aqeela Sherrills has lived through the kind of violence that has filled the lives of many of the people who fill our more than two million prison beds in the United States. After a number of his friends died from gang violence in the 1980s, Mr. Sherrills worked to broker a peace treaty between the Bloods and the Crips. Sadly his oldest son, Terrell, was shot to death in 2004 after his first year at Humboldt State University. Despite the violent deaths that have punctuated Mr. Sherrills life, he is an outspoken opponent of the death penalty. He believes that we human beings have the capacity to change. Transformative change is what he lives for as he works to address the injuries Rev. Rivers thinks must be dealt with for those who commit these crimes to become penitents.

Dolores Huerta underscored the sentiments of the other speakers when she agreed that nobody is present to help especially young people when they get out of prison. They need education and jobs. If a person is convicted of murder and released, he or she can get food stamps and money for schooling; if that same person is convicted of a drug crime, no food stamps or education money will be available. She also said people should work to have the three-strikes law overturned.

Actions we can undertake include educating ourselves about the prison system and the death penalty as well as alternatives to them; working with young people and former inmates; evaluating our attitudes toward crime, punishment, our children, and our inmate population; and working to abolish the death penalty.

DEATH PENALTY NEWS

BY STEVI CARROLL

As I write this, I've just finished up the Netroots Nation Conference in Minneapolis. Tomorrow morning, our dear friend and master of the reading world, Martha TerMaat, is driving from Wisconsin to show me the town, or at least down the street, over the bridge, and to an arts fair. What a joy!

In the small world department, I was surprised to see James Clark at the NN Conference. He was hawking death penalty abolition for the ACLU in coalition with a number of other groups. As you know, James is the coordinator for the Los Angeles Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty. During his outstanding speech today, Van Jones gave a succinct definition for coalitions: a fast track to therapy. Even with that in mind, I am still happy Amnesty supported the LACADP at the Faith Rising event (see column in this issue). A couple of actions we can take are to end death sentencing in LA county
<http://enddeathpenaltyla.org/>
and the Cut the Death Penalty from California's Budget campaign
http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/1265/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=4602.
If anyone else would like to get involved in this coalition, let Lucas or me know.

Shawn Hawkins

On a happy note, Governor John Kasich commuted Shawn Hawkins' death sentence to life without possibility of parole, and while life without parole will be harsh, he will still be alive if in the future he's found to be innocent. Governor Kasich's decision was influenced by his inability to 100% sure of Mr. Hawkins guilt. You can contact Governor Kasich to thank him by going to
<http://governor.ohio.gov/ShareYourIdeas.aspx>

Troy Davis

Just in case you haven't recently spoken out regarding Troy Davis's impending execution, go to
<http://takeaction.amnestyusa.org/siteapps/advocacy/ActionItem.aspx?c=6oJCLQPAJiJUG&b=6645049&aid=12970>.

Reggie Clemons

At the Amnesty Annual General Meeting this past March, we had the opportunity to hear Reggie Clemons mother and nephew discuss Mr. Clemons' case. Amnesty continues to advocate to have his sentence commuted. To take action, go to
<http://takeaction.amnestyusa.org/siteapps/advocacy/ActionItem.aspx?c=6oJCLQPAJiJUG&b=6645049&aid=14230>.

Peculiar Institution: America's Death Penalty in an Age of Abolition

To see an interesting discussion about the death penalty go to <http://video.pbs.org/video/1886658561> and of course, feel free to share it with others!

Execution Drugs

As I looked at our recent executions, I noticed the last eleven of them were carried out using pentobarbital. In two cases, it was the only drug used and in the other nine, it was used in a three-drug 'cocktail'. The shortage of sodium thiopental no longer will stop the State murder machine.

Stays of Execution

Shawn Hawkins	Ohio
John Balentine	Texas
Ricky Gray	Virginia
Frank Williams, Jr.	Arkansas

Executions

May 2011

19	Jason Williams	42
	Alabama	Lethal Injection
25	Donald Beaty	56
	Arizona	Lethal Injection

June 2011

1	Gayland Bradford	42
	Texas	Lethal Injection
16	Lee Taylor	32
	Texas	Lethal Injection
16	Eddie Powell III	41
	Alabama	Lethal Injection

REPORT ON THE OC:LA MEETING ON JUNE 11.

- LUCAS KAMP

Kathy, Robert, Stevi and I attended this event, which was held from 10am to 3pm in the ACLU headquarters in downtown LA (same venue where the DP coalition meets). The name stands for "Organizing Cities: LA" and represents a concept that is still evolving inside AIUSA. Currently, it is an opportunity for all the AI groups in the greater LA area to send representatives to meet, discuss recent events, and make plans for the future. If I recall correctly, the following groups were represented: four Local Groups (Pasadena, South Bay, Long Beach, Sherman Oaks), two

Student Groups (UCLA, Roosevelt High School) and YPAI (= Young Professionals with AI); there were about 20-25 people present (some came late or left early). You can see photos of the event on the Amnesty West Facebook page.

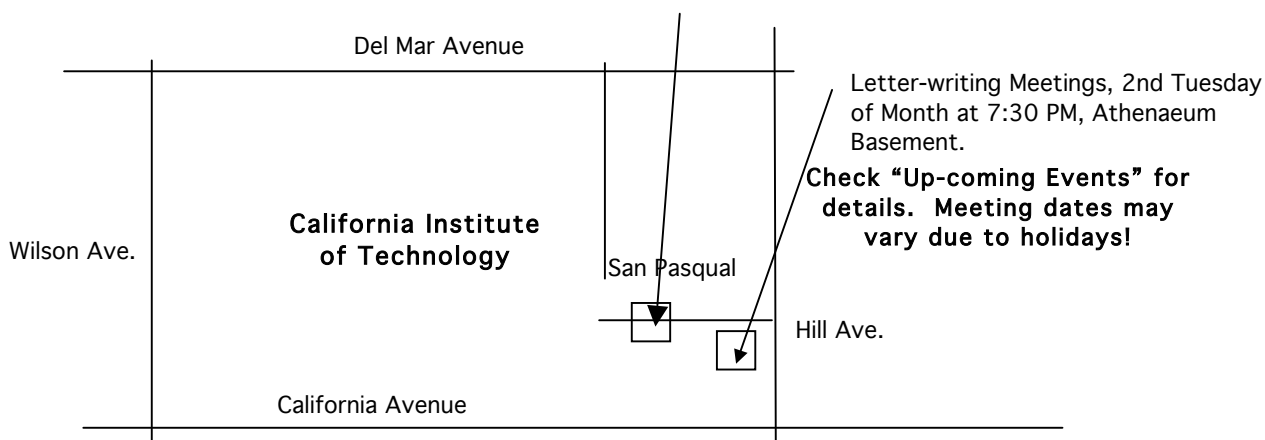
The first third of the meeting was taken up by a "Plusses and Deltas" exercise, in which we broke up into our respective groups and each selected one or more significant events of the past year and wrote down the main positive aspects and the things that could be improved on a large poster, after which these were presented to the whole assembly. Then we broke for lunch, after which there was a long discussion of recent developments in AI, focusing mostly on the issue of supporting ESC (economic/social/cultural) rights vs. the traditional defense of individuals under oppression. There were two more interactive rounds, in which each person in turn had to respond based on his/her personal experience. The first was about fundraising, and each person had to say what the best and worst experiences were in this connection. The second was about recruitment/retention of members, and each person had to answer three questions: what first drew you into AI; why are you still here; and why did you leave some other organization for AI? Both of these sessions yielded some interesting comments and discussions.

At the end, we were meant to discuss plans for the Western Regional Conference that will be held in LA on 4-6 Nov, but this was pretty short as we ran out of time. The venue for this conference will probably be the Sheraton Hotel at LAX and it will feature a "human rights summit" in which other organizations will also participate. There was also some discussion of a large multi-group fundraiser around Dec.10, probably to be held at Roosevelt High School. All in all this was another productive and interesting experience, very ably led by our Southern California Field Organizer, Kala Mendoza.

GROUP 22 MONTHLY LETTER COUNT

DP	6
Other UAs	18
LGBT	4
POC	8
Total	36
To add your letters to the total contact lwkamp@gmail.com .	

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



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
The Caltech Y
Mail Code 5-62
Pasadena, CA 91125
www.its.caltech.edu/~aigp22/
<http://rightsreaders.blogspot.com>



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.