

# Amnesty International Group 22 Pasadena/Caltech News

Volume XII Number 11, November-December 2004

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Thursday, December 2, 7:30 PM.** *Monthly Meeting* Caltech Y has moved. **New Location!** **Just around the corner from our old meeting place, we move to 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 Tibet, the Patriot Act, Campaign Against Discrimination, death penalty, environmental justice and more.

**Tuesday, December 14, 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, December 19, 6:30 PM.** *Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion Group.* **Special Location!** 187 S. Catalina Ave. No. 2, Pasadena. Contact Lucas at 626-795-1785 / lwkamp@sbcglobal.net for more info In December we discuss Nobel winner Naguib Mahfouz's novella *The Day the Leader was Killed*. (More info below.)

**Tuesday, January 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, January 16, 6:30 PM.** *Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion Group.* Vroman's Book Bookstore, 695 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena. In January we discuss Russell Martin's *Picasso's War*, and exploration of *Guernica* (More info below.)

## COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Hi all,

I'm writing this on Thanksgiving Day while waiting to drive to my dinner destination! We have a lot to be thankful for in this country, even though many were disappointed on Nov 3rd. Hopefully we can all work together to preserve the freedoms we cherish here and abroad.

Several AI group 22 members and friends participated in the Doo-Dah Parade in Pasadena this past Sunday, Nov 21. Our Colombian friend, Hector Aristizabal, threw

together a skit at the last minute. The crowd loved the dancing letters trying to free the prisoners--all to the beat of drummers! Thanks to Veronica Raymond for the great props, the walking/dancing letters, the giant pencil, the mailbox on wheels and thanks to Donna Seron for the great poster with the map of the world and human rights on it. Cheri Dellelo did wonderful postcards with the AI logo advertising Group 22 meetings/info to hand out to the crowd. Thanks to Lucas Kamp, our co-coordinator, for coordinating everything with Veronica. Afterwards, we feasted at Zankou chicken and made kazoos out of straws, much to the amusement of the other patrons!

Group 22 has unique handcrafted holiday cards for sale. The cards are red or green and can be used for the winter holiday season but are also suitable for other occasions. Please come to one of our meetings if you'd like to buy some cards. Only \$6 for a pack of five. Help keep our group going!

Dec 10 is Human Rights Day and Amnesty has its annual Global Write-a-thon. Group 22 will participate through our regular letter writing meeting on Dec 14 (see upcoming events for more info). Local groups 467 and 96 (West LA and Santa Monica) are holding a Café Letter Writing Marathon Saturday Dec 11 from noon to 6 PM at Downbeat Café, 1202 N. Alvarado St. in LA. For info, contact Kimberly Yang at 310-709-2379 or kimberly.yang@verizon.net. Info re other writeathons in the LA area can be found on <http://www.amnestyusa.org/writeathon/events.html>.

Happy Holidays to all.

Kathy

aigp22@caltech.edu

## IRAQ

### *Urgent Action to Prevent War Crimes*

Recent reports from Falluja raise serious concerns that grave violations of the laws of war protecting both civilians and combatants who are no longer taking part in hostilities (hors de combat) are taking place. According to the US television network NBC, US Marines left five wounded Iraqi men in a mosque after a battle. The next day, last Saturday, another group of Marines entered the mosque, and an NBC reporter saw one Marine shoot in the head, one of the wounded Iraqi men who was lying on the ground, with no visible weapons near him. The fate of the four other Iraqis is unclear.

US authorities have stated that that they have removed from the battlefield one soldier and that they will conduct an investigation into this incident. However, urgent measures must also be taken to prevent any violations.

Unequivocal orders for the proper treatment of unarmed and wounded insurgents must be issued or reinforced to all US and Iraqi military and civilian personnel. US and Iraqi

forces should be clear that under international law they have an obligation to protect and provide necessary medical attention to wounded insurgents who are no longer posing a threat, as well as to civilians.

The deliberate shooting of unarmed and wounded fighters who pose no immediate threat is a war crime under international law and there is therefore an obligation on the US authorities to investigate all such reports and to hold perpetrators of such crimes accountable before the law. Such investigations should be open and transparent and the findings should be made public. Any potential witnesses should be protected.

Amnesty International had already called on US authorities to investigate an earlier incident, reported on the UK's Channel Four News, in which a US soldier appeared to have fired one shot in the direction of a wounded insurgent who was off screen. The soldier then walked away and said "he's gone".

Amnesty International is also calling on the US and Iraqi forces to ensure that all those wounded in fighting in Falluja, both civilians and fighters, receive prompt and effective medical treatment. In addition, urgent measures must be taken to address the drastic humanitarian situation in the city. There is currently no water, electricity or organised evacuation of the wounded, who have no access to proper healthcare. The Iraqi Red Crescent Society have been able to reach the hospital on the outskirts of the city, but are still not allowed to deliver humanitarian relief or assistance to those in need inside the city. Most of the civilians in the city are reportedly trapped in their homes or hiding places. There is no information of civilian casualties or injuries.

"There are acute humanitarian needs within Falluja. Measures should be taken urgently to allow the Iraqi Red Crescent Society and other humanitarian organizations into the city."

Insurgents are also reported to have violated rules of international humanitarian law: "Commanders and fighters of armed groups in Falluja also have an obligation to respect fundamental rules of international law. Acts such as booby trapping dead bodies are also war crimes," Amnesty International said.

Please write:

- expressing concern that war crimes may have been committed in Falluja;
- stating that US and Iraqi forces have an obligation to protect and provide necessary medical attention to wounded insurgents who are no longer posing a threat, as well as to civilians;
- urging that humanitarian organizations, including the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, be given access to the city to provide humanitarian help to the civilian population-

Address for appeals:

The Honorable Donald Rumsfeld  
Secretary of Defense  
Office of the Secretary  
The Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301, USA

## DEATH PENALTY *Pending Executions in Iraq*

Ten people have reportedly been sentenced to death by Iraqi courts and are thought to be at imminent risk of execution.

The names of the 10 individuals and the charges against them are not known, but they are said to have been sentenced in connection with "criminal activities". The death sentences were upheld by an appeal court, and are reportedly with Iraqi President Ghazi al-Yawar and Prime Minister Dr. Iyad 'Allawi for ratification.

The reintroduction of the death penalty on 8 August was said by the country's authorities to be a response to a deteriorating security situation. The state of emergency declared within Iraq on 7 November was described in a similar manner, raising fears that the 10 individuals are at imminent risk of execution.

Amnesty International strongly believes that, as with the reintroduction of the death penalty, the resumption of executions will do nothing to restore security for the people of Iraq. The death penalty, a cruel and inhuman punishment, has never been shown to deter crime more effectively than any other method.

The former Iraqi government frequently resorted to the use of the death penalty. Following the invasion of Iraq by a US-led coalition in March 2003, the death penalty was suspended by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in June 2003. On 28 June 2004 power was transferred to an Iraqi interim government led by Prime Minister Iyad 'Allawi, a former exile.

On 8 August, the interim government reinstated the death penalty for certain crimes such as murder, drug trafficking and kidnapping. Although the authorities justified the reimposition of the death penalty as a measure to deal with the deteriorating security situation, there are indications that this was done reluctantly and that some Iraqi officials opposed its use. For example the Human Rights Minister, Bakhtiar Amin, who is on the record of opposing the death penalty, is said to have declared, "this is the most difficult day of my life".

On 7 November a 60-day state of emergency was declared throughout Iraq except in the Kurdish controlled areas of northern Iraq. This came as a consequence of a serious security situation that has seen widespread bomb and suicide attacks killing scores of members of security forces and civilians.

Amnesty International deplores the re-imposition of the death penalty in Iraq, and has repeatedly raised its concerns with Iraqi authorities, including in submissions to the Iraqi Minister of Human Rights and Minister of Justice.

Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible:

- expressing concern that 10 people are reported to have been sentenced to death in Iraq, and urging that their sentences be commuted;
- requesting that the full names of the 10 people and the charges against them are made public;
- acknowledging the seriousness of the security situation, but pointing out that the death penalty has never proved to be an effective deterrent to combat crime, and calling for the death penalty to be abolished in law and practice.

APPEALS TO:

Please send appeals via the Iraqi embassy, asking them to forward your appeals to:

- Ghazi al-Yawar, President of the Republic of Iraq
- Dr. Iyad 'Allawi, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq
- Bakhtiar Amin, Human Rights Minister

Ambassador  
Embassy of Iraq  
1801 P St. NW  
Washington DC 20036

## JUST EARTH *Anniversary of Bhopal Disaster*

The anniversary of the Bhopal chemical disaster is fast approaching and we need your help!

December 3, 2004 marks 20 years since a catastrophic gas leak from a pesticide plant in Bhopal, India exposed half a million people to toxic chemicals, killing more than 7,000 people within days, and a further 15,000 in the following years. Around 100,000 people continue to suffer from chronic and debilitating illnesses for which treatment is largely ineffective. The disaster shocked the world and raised fundamental questions about corporate and government responsibility for industrial accidents that devastate human life and local environments. Yet 20 years on, the survivors still await just compensation, adequate medical assistance and treatment, and comprehensive economic and social rehabilitation. The plant site has still not been cleaned up so toxic waste continues to pollute the environment and contaminate water that surrounding communities rely on. And, astonishingly, no one has been held to account for the leak and its appalling consequences.

Starting in December and continuing throughout the year, Amnesty will be calling on Dow Chemical/Union Carbide Corporation and the Indian government to take responsibility for the devastating consequences of this disaster.

Visit <http://www.amnestyusa.org/business> on November 29 to take immediate action ONLINE and to download the **official Bhopal report**, where you can

find details on letters you can write to the Indian government. A few good places to start for more information:

International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal  
<http://www.bhopal.net>

Greenpeace International  
[http://www.greenpeace.org/international\\_en/](http://www.greenpeace.org/international_en/)

Students for Bhopal  
<http://www.studentsforbhopal.org>

## CAMPAIGN AGAINST TORTURE *AIUSA on Gonzales Nomination*

While Amnesty International USA (AIUSA) takes no position on the appointment of individual nominees, the organization believes that during the nominations process for the office of Attorney General, the opinions produced by Mr. Alberto Gonzales during his tenure as White House Counsel and the resulting policy decisions deserve close and careful scrutiny.

In particular, AIUSA urges that the confirmation process include a detailed examination of the nominee's views on human rights and humanitarian law, with particular reference to the Administration's misguided approach to these in the course of its declared "war on terror." It is important that any future Attorney General uphold US and international law and seek to ratify, implement, and abide by international treaties.

As part of the confirmation process, Amnesty International calls for the full disclosure of any unpublished measures, directives or memoranda authored by Mr. Gonzales or his staff that discuss the legality of "disappearances," torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, or extrajudicial executions. The organization would also welcome an absolute and unequivocal statement by Mr. Gonzales, that in accordance with US and international law, he opposes torture and ill-treatment under any circumstances, including war and any other public emergency.

Additionally, Mr. Gonzales should publicly support the establishment of an independent commission of inquiry, wholly separate from the Department of Justice, which would investigate all aspects of the United States' detention and interrogation policies and practices. Such a commission should consist of credible independent experts, have international expert input, and have subpoena powers and access to all levels of government, all agencies, and all documents whether classified or unclassified.

"The confirmation process is an opportunity to examine US policy and practice that helped lead to the scandal of Abu Ghraib, seek testimony on unanswered questions regarding the development of those policies from a key participant, and seek assurances that the future Attorney General will vigorously enforce the universal prohibition on the use of torture," said Dr. William F. Schulz, Executive Director of Amnesty International USA. "Without such questions being asked of the nominee, the US risks perpetuating a disregard for its international legal obligations that at a minimum

sowed confusion among interrogators and at worst gave the green light to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Since 9/11, the Administration has proclaimed its opposition to torture in public, while in private discussing how the President can order torture and how government agents can escape criminal liability for torture. That must now come to an end."

## SUDAN

### *Press for Arms Embargo*

Here's a letter to send re the Darfur crisis in Sudan:

The Honorable Colin L. Powell  
Secretary of State  
United States Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to request that you press the United Nations Security Council to amend Resolution 1556 to include the Government of Sudan in the Arms Embargo.

On several occasions the government of Sudan has made promises to disarm the Arab militia formally known as the Janjawid and, to date, they have failed to deliver on these promises. Instead, they reportedly are supporting the Arab militia in an attempt to quell opposition from the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) who are fighting for their civil rights. As a result, tens of thousands of people have died and hundreds of thousands of people continue to be affected. Innocent lives are lost everyday and people continue to suffer from malnutrition, disease and sexual violence. Despite this somber condition in the state of affairs in Sudan, the government has refused to acknowledge any allegations that imply it supports the Janjawid.

Mr. Secretary, between the years of 1998 and 2002, various countries including Iran, Saudi Arabia, China, Russia, Austria, Cyprus, the UK, Ecuador, and Switzerland were reported to have exported close to USD \$14.5 million worth of small arms and light weapons to Sudan. Given this dire situation, I urge you to call on the Security Council to include the Sudanese government in the arms embargo; stop the flow of arms into Sudan; support and facilitate the increase of protection forces in Darfur to help shield civilians; and establish a system of accountability to ensure that the government of Sudan takes responsibility for its actions. I appeal for you to act and help bring an end to this conflict.

Sincerely, YOUR NAME and ADDRESS

## RIGHTS READERS

*Human Rights Book Discussion Group*

**Special December Location!**

187 S. Catalina Ave. No. 2, Pasadena

Contact Lucas at 626-795-1785 /  
lwkamp@sbcglobal.net for more info

**Sunday, December 19, 6:30 PM**



*The Day the Leader was Killed*

by Naguib Mahfouz

The time is 1981, Anwar al-Sadat is president, and Egypt is lurching into the modern world. Set against this backdrop, *The Day the Leader Was Killed* relates the tale of a middle-class Cairene family. Rich with irony and infused with political undertones, the story is narrated alternately by the pious and mischievous family patriarch Muhtashimi Zayed, his hapless grandson Elwan, and Elwan's headstrong and beautiful fiancée Randa. The novel reaches its climax with the assassination of Sadat on October 6, 1981, an event around which the fictional plot is skillfully woven.

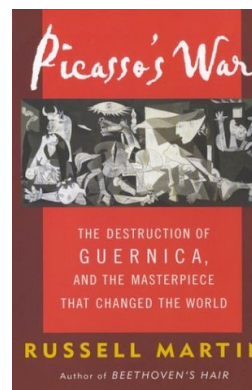
## RIGHTS READERS

*Human Rights Book Discussion Group*

**Vroman's Bookstore**

695 E. Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena

**Sunday, January 16, 6:30 PM**



*Picasso's War:*

*The Destruction of Guernica and the Masterpiece that Changed the World*

by Russell Martin

In *Picasso's War*, Russell Martin weaves politics, history, art, and science into a stirring narrative of the monumental canvas that was to become the most important artwork of the 20th century. Pablo Picasso, enraged by Hitler's bombing of Guernica in Northern Spain on April 26, 1937, responded to the devastation in his homeland by beginning work on Guernica. In *Picasso's War*, Martin follows Guernica, the renowned masterwork, across decades and continents, crafting an engrossing story of its impassioned creation and the struggle to find hope in the face of unspeakable acts of terror.

## LETTER COUNT

Urgent Actions

19

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

## BURMA

### *Sample Letter for Prisoner of Conscience*

Lieutenant General Soe Win  
Prime Minister  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Theinbyu Road  
Botataung Township  
Yangon  
UNION OF MYANMAR

Dear Prime Minister:

I am concerned about the fate of Thet Win Aung, a student and human rights activist, currently serving a 59-year prison sentence on politically motivated charges. He was arrested in October 1998 for participating in peaceful demonstrations protesting the poor quality of education and the deplorable human rights situation in Myanmar. Amnesty International reports that he was tortured during interrogation by military authorities following his arrest and was held for six months in solitary confinement in Insein Prison.

As a member state of the United Nations, Myanmar is expected to uphold the tenets of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Yet government officials have persistently punished the people of Myanmar for peacefully exercising rights guaranteed by the UDHR. Freedom of expression and freedom of association are severely restricted, and it has become impossible for non-violent political opponents of the government to act without risk of arrest and imprisonment.

Thet Win Aung reportedly suffers from malaria, which he apparently contracted in Khanti Prison. He was transferred to Mandalay Prison on February or March 2004, and soon thereafter was admitted to Mandalay Hospital. He reportedly was also suffering from depression at the time.

Amnesty International considers Thet Win Aung to be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for exercising his fundamental right to freedom of expression. Due to Thet Win Aung's delicate medical condition, it would be a significant act of humanitarianism to release him from custody. I urge you to grant his immediate release.

Sincerely,

copy to:

Ambassador U Linn Myaing  
Embassy of the Union of Myanmar  
2300 S Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20008

## CHILE

### *Sample Letter for Indigenous Leader*

Regional Governor, IX Region  
Intendencia Región Araucanía  
Sr. Ricardo Patricio Celis Araya  
Bulnes 590 piso 2  
Temuco  
CHILE

Dear Sir:

It is disturbing to learn that Juana Calfunao Paillalef and her family continue to suffer death threats following an apparent arson attack that destroyed their home and killed a family member.

Juana Calfunao Paillalef is a lonko (community leader) of the Juan Paillalef indigenous community in the municipality of Cunco. In the early hours of 26 June 2004, a fire burned her house to the ground. The charred body of her uncle, Basilio Coñoenao, was found afterward at the house. For days before the fire, unfamiliar cars had been seen near the house at night, and Basilio Coñoenao and his nephew had received threats from landowners calling on the family to abandon their property. Local landowners have long disputed the demarcation and fencing of the community's property.

On 26 September 2004, an official from the National Commission for Indigenous Development (Corporación Nacional de Desarrollo Indígena) reportedly threatened Juana Calfunao Paillalef and her 17-year-old daughter, Carolina, saying, "Do you want me to burn you alive?" ("quieres que te quemé viva ahora") and "I'm going to get my gun to kill you" ("voy a buscar el arma para matarlos"). Later that day, several shots were fired at the makeshift dwelling where she and her family have been living since the alleged arson attack.

I urge you to ensure that a prompt, impartial and conclusive investigation is conducted into the attacks and intimidation suffered by the family of Juana Calfunao Paillalef. I ask you to make public the findings of the investigation into the alleged arson attack on their home and the death of Basilio Coñoenao and to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice. Finally, I urge you to take immediate measures to provide Juana Calfunao Paillalef and her family with adequate protection from future threats or attacks.

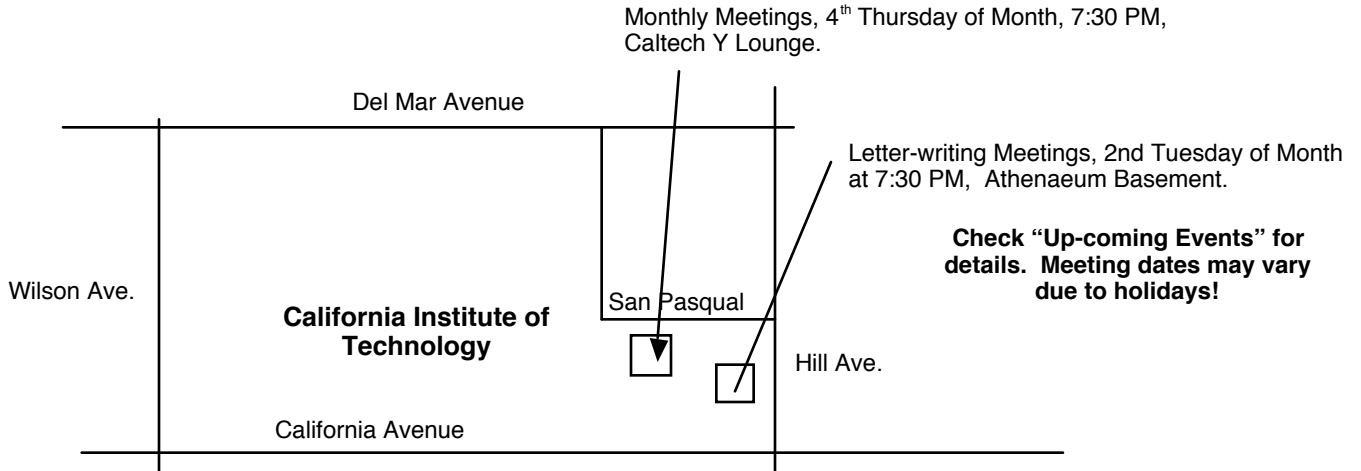
Sincerely,

copy to:

Ambassador Andrés Bianchi  
Embassy of the Republic of Chile  
1732 Massachusetts Avenue N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

#### **EDITOR'S LAST WORD:**

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



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.*