

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Thursday, July 28, 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, environmental justice and more.

**Tuesday, August 9, 7:30 PM.** *Letter-writing Meeting* at the Athenaeum. Corner of California & Hill. **The Rathskellar closes in summer so look for us and our sign, outside at a table on the lawn!** This informal gathering is a great for newcomers to get acquainted with Amnesty!

**Sunday, August 21, 6:30 PM.** *Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion Group.* Vroman's Book Bookstore, 695 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena. This month we commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Watts Riots by discussing Walter Mosley's mystery, *Little Scarlet*. (More info below.)

## COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Hi everyone. Hope you are staying cool as the hot weather has arrived! I have been busy working on my organizing projects at home and catching up with watching (Inspector Lynley Mysteries on PBS!) and reading Elizabeth George as well as making an attempt (a few pieces every day) to complete a giant crossword puzzle that I received for Christmas!

We all were shocked by the July 7th bombing in London. Irene Khan, Amnesty's Secretary General, sent an email message to AIUSA that all AI personnel in the UK were (as far as can be ascertained) safe. She has issued public statements expressing AI's deepest sympathy and solidarity with the people of London. "The IS will continue to monitor developments and send out appropriate messages and actions that emphasize the need to protect people and justice for the victims in the framework of international standards and human rights", Ms. Khan said.

Two hours later on July 7th, a memorial service for Peter Benenson was held in London. The late founder of AI passed away recently. Over 500 people attended the service, including AI

representatives and members, dignitaries and diplomats, representatives from NGOs and former prisoners of conscience. The Peter Benenson Memorial Fund has been established to aid Amnesty's work with young people. To contribute, go to <http://www.justgiving.com/kateandrosi>.

On a positive note, have you seen the PBS series, "The New Heroes"? It was a 4-hour program shown on two Tuesday nights, starting June 28th on KCET. Several people from all over the world were profiled who have made a difference by helping others. They ranged from a woman in India who runs train platform schools to teach street children, an American optical manufacturer and an Indian ophthalmologist who have teamed up to provide free cataract surgeries for the poor in India, and a man who works with young girls to prevent them from becoming child prostitutes in Thailand. These are just a few of the people featured. To find out more, go to <http://www.pbs.org/opb/thenewheroes>. You can get specific info and make a donation if you wish.

We are still active during the summer. Please join us at one of our meetings.

Take care,

Kathy

## DEATH PENALTY

*Moratorium Bill Introduced in California Assembly!*

The death penalty has been a legal method of criminal punishment in California for over a hundred years. Although California's Supreme Court declared the death penalty an inhumane punishment in violation of the state constitution and outlawed it in both 1972 and 1976, the death penalty was soon brought back into practice again. Since 1977, eleven people have been executed in the state of California, even those having evidence of innocence in their case. There are currently 630 people on death row in the state. Amnesty International has always been opposed to the use of the death penalty in any circumstances, as it is a cruel and inhuman punishment that has never been shown to deter crime more effectively than any other method.

Assembly Bill 1121

On June 14, 2005, California State Assembly members Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) and Sally Lieber (D-Mountain View) introduced the California Moratorium on Executions Act, or AB 1121. The act would suspend all executions in California until January 1, 2009 while the California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice conducts a fair and thorough study of the state's criminal justice

procedures, to ensure that innocent people are not sentenced to death and that there is not an disproportionate amount of minorities being sentenced. A sample letter follows:

Assemblyman/woman \_\_\_\_\_  
 State Capitol  
 Sacramento, CA 94249

Dear Assemblyman/woman \_\_\_\_\_:

I am writing to urge you to support for Assembly Bill 1121, the California Moratorium on Executions Act. I support a moratorium on executions in California because I believe: 1) there is a risk of executing innocent persons; 2) there is discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, geography, or economic status, and 3) unfair and unreliable death sentences are caused by inadequate representation by defense counsel and/or improper and arbitrary conduct by the police and prosecution. I urge you to actively seek passage this important legislation to ensure a fair and just legal system.

Sincerely, YOUR NAME and ADDRESS

To look up your state representatives visit:  
<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html>.

LETTER COUNT	
Urgent Actions	2
Summer Postcard Action	48
Vietnam POC	6
Total:	54
Want to add your letters to the total? Get in touch with <a href="mailto:lwkamp@sbcglobal.net">lwkamp@sbcglobal.net</a>	

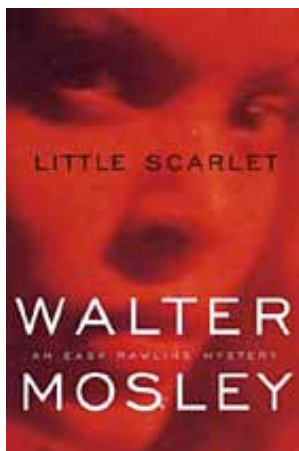
## RIGHTS READERS

*Human Rights Book Discussion Group*

### Vroman's Bookstore

695 E. Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena

Sunday, August 21, 6:30 PM



### *Little Scarlet*

by *Walter Mosley*

Set during the Watts riots of 1965, this eighth entry in Mosley's acclaimed Easy Rawlins series demonstrates the reach and power of the genre, combining a deeply involving mystery with vigorous characterizations and

probing commentary about race relations in America. Easy Rawlins, 45, is—like the rest of black L.A.—angry: "the angry voice in my heart that urged me to go out and fight after all the hangings I had seen, after all of the times I had been called nigger and all of the doors that had been slammed in my face." But Easy stays out of the fiery streets until a white cop and his bosses recruit him to identify the murderer of a young black woman, Nola Payne... This is Mosley's best novel to date: the plot is streamlined and the language simple yet strong, allowing the serpentine story line to support Easy's amazingly complex character and hypnotic narration as Mosley plunges us into his world and, by extension, the world of all blacks in white-run America. Fierce, provocative, expertly entertaining, this is genre writing at its finest.

## SUMMER POSTCARD ACTION

*Support the Russian-Chechen Friendship Society*

For many people, summer is a time for vacations, picnics and recreation. But for prisoners of conscience or those who defend human rights in many countries, summer brings no relief from the potential danger and sense of isolation they may face. By simply sending a postcard, however, you can help support these women and men. Information on several cases of concern to Amnesty International is available on the AIUSA website ([www.amnestyusa.org](http://www.amnestyusa.org)). We include one here. Send cards expressing your support and encouragement. Some suggestions:

- Keep messages simple, such as: "We are thinking of you, and hope you are well."
- Don't discuss the politics of the country or the accusations against any prisoners.
- Please be sensitive to different cultural and religious mores. Picture postcards are good to use, but revealing pictures of men or women or references to alcoholic drinks could be offensive.
- International Airmail postage is generally 70 cents for standard size postcards and 80 cents for 1-page letters. Mark cards/letters "AIR MAIL."
- You may send cards until August 31, 2005.

### Send cards to Russian-Chechen Friendship Society

The Russian-Chechen Friendship Society (RCFS) is a non-governmental organization that monitors human rights violations in Chechnya and other parts of the North Caucasus, producing daily press releases on "disappearances" and other serious human rights violations. The Society, which has offices in Nizhnii Novgorod and in the North Caucasus, also produces a newspaper jointly with the Nizhnii Novgorod Human Rights Society. Russian authorities seem to be waging a campaign of harassment and intimidation against the RCFS in response to the Society's work for human rights. Since the organization was officially registered

in 2000, RCFS members in the North Caucasus have been subject to torture, ill-treatment, "disappearances," and alleged extrajudicial executions. On January 9, 2004, Russian federal forces reportedly entered the home of RCFS activist Aslan Davletukaev, a 29-year-old father of young children, and threatened to kill him and his wife if he didn't go with them. When Davletukaev's father asked if his son had committed a crime, one of the armed men allegedly replied, "He is guilty of being Chechen." Seven days later, Aslan Davletukaev's mutilated body was found near the town of Gudermes in Chechnya. In 2005, the campaign of harassment has extended to include a criminal investigation into articles allegedly published by RCFS, an examination of the Society by the tax authorities, and moves by the Ministry of Justice to close the organization. RCFS staff member Oksana Chelysheva has been the subject of threatening leaflets. Please send cards of support to:

Society of Russian-Chechen Friendship  
ul. Admirala Vaniunina, dom 2,  
komnata 27  
603106 Nizhnii Novgorod  
RUSSIA

### **VIETNAM: POC** *Brother Nguyen Thien Phung*

Group 22 recently adopted the case of Vietnam prisoner of conscience Brother Nguyen Thien Phung (Huan). Please join us as we learn about his case and begin educating ourselves about human rights in Vietnam.

The Vietnam government has made significant progress regarding religious freedom, according to U.S. Dept. of State reports. (<http://usinfo.state.gov>) On May 5, 2005, spokesman Richard Boucher said that Vietnam "enacted significant legislative reforms that hold the promise of major improvements in religious freedom in the near future....These new laws and policies provide increased latitude and protection for religious belief and practice."

Prime Minister Phan Van Khai visited President Bush at the White House on June 21, 2005. A report at [msnbc.com](http://msnbc.com) (title: Bush, Vietnam leader sign religious accord) says " 'We signed a landmark agreement that will make it easier for people to worship freely in Vietnam,' Bush told reporters, without elaborating."

Since President Bush accepted an invitation to visit Vietnam in 2006, the issue of religious freedom in Vietnam will probably continue to be prominent throughout the next year. We should take this into consideration as we plan our group's future work for our POC. What better way for Vietnam to

demonstrate commitment to religious freedom and human rights than to release Brother Nguyen Thien Phung!

This month let's write to the Prime Minister in care of the Embassy. Here is a sample letter that you can copy or use as a guide.

Prime Minister Phan Van Khai  
c/o Embassy of Vietnam  
1233 20th Street N.W., Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20036

Your Excellency,

As a member of Amnesty International, I welcomed the release earlier this year of Father Nguyen Van Ly and other prisoners of conscience. I hope these releases demonstrate a renewed commitment by your government to honor and protect the rights of all Vietnamese to peacefully express their opinions.

I am especially concerned about Brother Nguyen Thien Phung (Huan), in prison camp Z30A, Xuan Loc, Dong Nai province. He was arrested in 1987 during raids on Thu Duc Monastery near Ho Chi Minh City, for holding training courses and distributing religious books without government permission. He was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment plus 5 years of house arrest.

I urge you to ensure that in accordance with international standards Brother Nguyen Thien Phung receives adequate food and necessary medical care.

I believe that Brother Nguyen Thien Phung was imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of religion and expression by his activities as a member of the Congregation of the Mother Coredemptrix. The Vietnamese government has the responsibility to uphold the right of freedom of expression and religion for everyone in Vietnam, and I therefore respectfully urge you to release Brother Nguyen Thien Phung immediately and without condition.

Sincerely, (your name and address)

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Postage for overseas letters is 80 cents.

### **JUST EARTH NETWORK** *Mexican Environmentalists Threatened*

Once again, peasant environmentalists in Guerrero state are under attack:

Felipe Arreaga (m) - environmental activist

Thirteen other former members of the Organización Campesina Ecologista de la Sierra de Petatlán (OCESP), Peasant Environmentalist Organization of the Sierra de Petatlán

Celsa Valdovinos (f), wife of Filepe Arreaga and leader of Organización de Mujeres Ecologistas, Women's Environmentalist Organization

New names: Albertano Peñalosa Domínguez, (m) environmental activist and founder member of OCESP

Adalí Peñalosa, aged 15 ] his sons

Isaac Peñalosa, aged 19 ]

Albertano Peñalosa Domínguez is one of the founders of Organización Campesina Ecologista de la Sierra de Petatlán (OCESP), Peasant Environmentalist Organization of the Sierra de Petatlán along with prisoner of conscience, Felipe Arreaga. He and his family have been attacked by gunmen resulting in the murder of two of his sons.

On 19 May, Albertano Peñalosa Domínguez and his four sons were ambushed by unknown individuals as they were arriving home in the community of Banco Nuevo in the municipality of Petatlán, Guerrero State. Twenty-year old Armando and nine-year old Adatuel were killed, while fifteen-year old Adalí and nineteen-year old Isaac were seriously wounded along with their father. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for their safety and that of other environmental activists in Petatlán.

Albertano Peñalosa Domínguez is one of the 14 OCESP leaders against whom arrest warrants have been issued in connection with the murder of Abel Bautista committed in 1998 for which fellow environmental activist Felipe Arreaga has been detained and is on trial. Amnesty International believes these legal procedures to be politically motivated, in an apparent reprisal for the local environmentalists' role in peaceful protests against the excessive and illegal logging of forests in the mountains Guerrero State. Albertano Peñalosa Domínguez is reportedly unwilling to go to the nearest town to receive medical treatment for injuries he suffered during the ambush for fear of being detained.

Amnesty International continues to fear for the safety of Celsa Valdovinos, Felipe Arreaga's wife and leader of Organización de Mujeres Ecologistas, Women's Environmentalist Organization.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of environmental activist Albertano Peñalosa Domínguez and his family following the attack against him that led to the deaths of Armando and Adatuel Peñalosa;

- urging the authorities to ensure the protection of Albertano Peñalosa Domínguez and his family and other environmental defenders in the region, such as Celsa Valdovinos;
- calling for an impartial, prompt and full investigation into the ambush that resulted in the deaths of Armando and Adatuel Peñalosa and for those responsible to be brought to justice;
- calling for arrest warrants issued against founder members of the OCESP in relation to the murder Abel Bautista in 1998 to be suspended pending a review of the original murder enquiry, and for them and their families to be protected;
- reminding the authorities that the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties recognizes the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders and their right to carry out their activities without any restrictions or fear of reprisals.

APPEALS TO:

Attorney General of Guerrero:

Lic. Eduardo Murueta Urrutia

Procurador General de Justicia del Estado de Guerrero

Carretera Nacional México-Acapulco Km. 6+300

Tramo Chilpancingo- Petaquillos

Chilpancingo 39090

Guerrero, México

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/Señor Procurador

COPIES TO:

Ambassador Carlos Alberto De Icaza Gonzalez

Embassy of Mexico

1911 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

Washington DC 20006

## **SREBRENICA MASSACRE**

### ***10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Plea: Arrest All Suspects!***

On the tenth anniversary of the Srebrenica Massacre we offer this sample letter thanking the Bosnian government for its efforts steps taken to pursue justice in this matter and urge the release of all relevant information and the arrest of all suspects indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal.

The Honorable Pero Bukejlovic

Predsjednik Vlade Republike Srpske

Vuka Karadzica 4

51000 Banja Luka

Republika Srpska

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

e-mail: kabinet@vladars.net

Dear Prime Minister:

As you know, this July marks the tenth anniversary of the massacre that occurred at Srebrenica, where at least 8,000 Muslim men and boys were killed by Bosnian Serb forces in the span of several days. A decade later, the families who lost husbands, sons and brothers at Srebrenica are still awaiting justice for their loved ones. Information on the fate of the men who "disappeared" has not been made public, and although suspects such as Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic have been indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal, they still remain at large.

I welcome the steps you have taken toward giving these families closure, including issuing an official apology in November 2004 for the massacre at Srebrenica, publishing reports in June and October 2004 about the participation of Republika Srpska police and armed forces in the events at Srebrenica and forwarding a list of 892 suspects to the State Prosecutor in March of 2005.

I urge you to continue in such a positive direction by releasing all available information to the family members of those who "disappeared" in July 1995 after the fall of the Srebrenica "safe area" so that they can know the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones, in accordance with the decision of the Human Rights Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Moreover, I urge you to work closely with the State Prosecutor to ensure that all those found guilty are brought to justice and that all new information on what took place at Srebrenica is made public. Finally, I respectfully urge you to arrest all suspects indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal and to transfer them to the custody of the Tribunal. Thank you.

Sincerely, YOUR NAME and ADDRESS

copy to:

Ambassador Igor Davidovi\_  
Embassy of Bosnia-Herzegovina  
2109 E Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20037  
email: [ambassador@bhembassy.org](mailto:ambassador@bhembassy.org)

## **GUATEMALA** *Maintain Ban on Military Training*

Here is a sample letter concerning the impending Senate consideration of the ban on military training and aid to Guatemala:

Senator Barbara Boxer  
United States Senate  
112 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-0001

Dear Senator Boxer,

I am writing to express my deep concern for the human rights situation in Guatemala and to urge you to maintain the ban on regular IMET and FMF funding to Guatemala.

In 1990, the US Congress instituted a ban on military training (IMET) and military aid (FMF) to Guatemala following the murder of US innkeeper Michael Devine allegedly by members of the Guatemalan military. The Department of State has stated its intention to ask Congress to lift the ban citing reforms of the Guatemalan army and government efforts to improve human rights.

Amnesty International believes such reforms to the army fall short of meeting commitments the Government of Guatemala made in the 1996 Peace Accords. While the Government has reformed the military doctrine, neither the Constitution nor the governing laws of the army have been reformed to prohibit military involvement in internal security. In addition, the army continues to have a role in internal public security with a program of joint police patrols in population centers being carried out during 2004.

Actual government efforts to improve human rights have also fallen short of President Óscar Berger's public commitments. Amnesty International remains concerned at the apparent lack of political will of the present government to take concrete and effective action to eliminate impunity and to ensure the rule of law prevails in Guatemala.

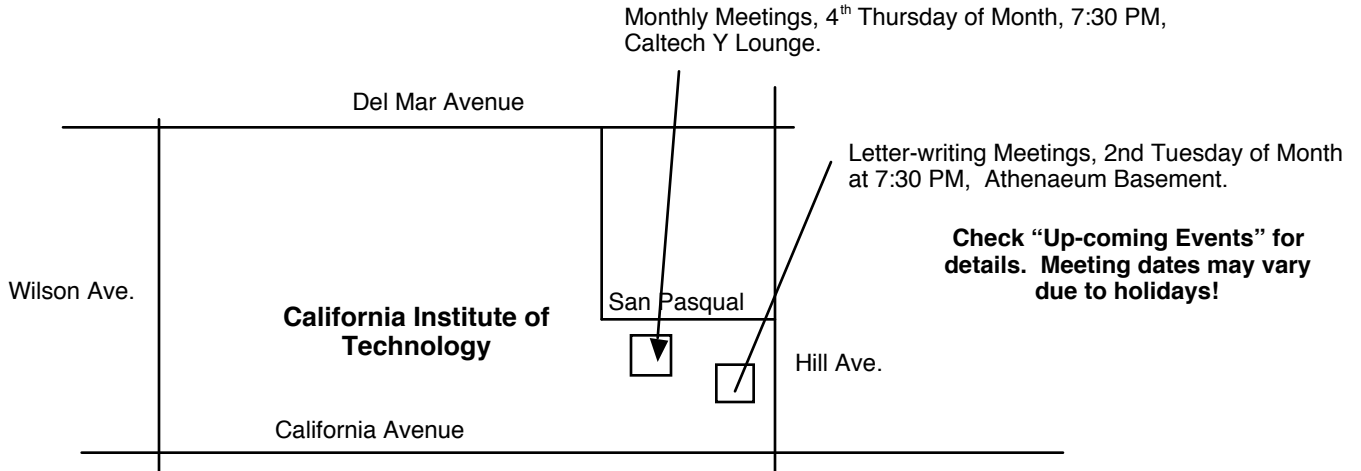
Attacks against human rights defenders have continued with no real response to date from the government. Amnesty International has received information that during 2004 there were 122 attacks against human rights defenders. In the first eight weeks of 2005 there were 26 such attacks. Some international organizations operating in Guatemala have also been subject to harassment during the first year of President Berger's administration. Many of these attacks are believed to be linked to clandestine and illegal armed groups which still operate with impunity in Guatemala.

As the Congress considers a renewal of IMET and FMF funding for Guatemala, I hope you will consider the lack of improvement for respect of human rights and the lack of military reforms. I urge you to maintain the ban on regular IMET and FMF, until the Government of Guatemala demonstrates clear progress on fully implementing military reforms, and investigating and prosecuting clandestine groups, including former and current military members.

Sincerely, YOUR NAME and ADDRESS

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.*