

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Thursday, September 22, 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.

**Sunday, September 25, 1:00-4:00 PM.** "Redemption" Film Screening and Discussion. All Saints Church, 132 N. Euclid Ave, Pasadena (in the Forum). This film details the life of California death row inmate, Stanley "Tookie" Williams. (More info below.)

**Tuesday, October 11, 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, October 15, 6:30 PM.** *Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion Group.* Vroman's Book Bookstore, 695 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena. This month we read Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk's, *Snow*. (More info below.)

## COORDINATOR'S CORNER

*(Martha stepping in for busy Kathy this month!)*

Watching the drama surrounding Hurricane Katrina unfold, I naturally thought back to my visit to **New Orleans** for Amnesty's Annual General Meeting in 1997. The theme of the conference? Refugees. As usual, a public demonstration was incorporated into the gathering and for this occasion, we paraded through the city as part of a traditional New Orleans jazz "funeral." We ended up holding a ceremony at the federal building where we symbolically "buried" human rights violations in a coffin presided over by Father Roy Bourgeois, the priest-activist most famous for his work on torture and the School of the Americas. Someone snapped a picture of me holding a "Refugees have Rights!" sign that wound up on the cover of an AIUSA publication, much to the amusement of friends and family in faraway places. Today, going back over my own photos from that trip, the one that stands out is of an elderly African-American man dressed neatly in a candy-stripe shirt pushing a cart heaped full of black plastic

trash bags of recyclables -- and hoisting a "Refugees have Rights!" sign. Of course I wonder, where is he now?

As many African-Americans objected to the use of the term "refugee" as implying that hurricane survivors were less than American, I recalled that the correct term under international law for persons seeking refuge in their own country would be "internally displaced persons" or IDPs. Quite a mouthful and not likely to come into common parlance! From my long-ago training as a Refugee Issues Coordinator for Amnesty, I remembered that refugees generally get more protection under international law than IDPs as its difficult for the UN to intervene in a country's internal affairs no matter how severe the crisis. Just look at Sudan. **We include an action on an IDP case from Sudan in this newsletter.** Certainly, Amnesty advocates on behalf of refugees and IDPs alike, working to protect the human dignity of all survivors of disasters, natural or manmade, no matter what term they choose to describe themselves.

In the aftermath of the Katrina, Amnesty issued a press release-- noting the vulnerability of the storm's victims due to prevailing conditions of poverty-- calling for a **full, independent inquiry** into whether authorities could have done more to ensure the safety of evacuees, as well as their access to shelter, water, food and medical attention, and what should be done to facilitate their recovery. At the same time Amnesty expressed concern that a "shoot-to-kill" policy authorized by Louisiana's governor could lead to disproportionate and unlawful use of lethal force, for example, in the case of unarmed "looters", who may have been trying to seek supplies to survive. Another pressing human rights concern is ensuring that all those in custody, including the thousands of prisoners reported to have been evacuated out of New Orleans, have access to their families and attorneys at the earliest opportunity.

In fact, among the casualties of Katrina is the essential human rights work of the **Justice Center** (<http://www.thejusticecenter.org/>), a non-profit working on behalf of death row inmates in Louisiana which may have lost precious files and evidence to be used for the exoneration and sentence mitigation of their clients. Similarly, pre-eminent death penalty abolitionist, **Sister Helen Prejean** ([www.prejean.org](http://www.prejean.org)), author of *Dead Man Walking*, is looking to carry on from Baton Rouge.

This month our chapter turns its attention to the death penalty in our own state. Several California death row inmates may see their appeals run out in the next few months. We focus on one such case,

that of **Stanley "Tookie" Williams** at our screening of the film based on his life, *Redemption*, starring Jamie Foxx, on September 25 (See Upcoming Events or article below for details). We will be joined by Barbara Becnel, Tookie's collaborator in his anti-gang work who will share her insight into the man and the prospects for his legal appeals. Eric DeBode of California People of Faith Working Against the Death Penalty will join us to outline the strategy for passing the new death penalty moratorium legislation in the California State Legislature. We are pleased to be co-sponsoring this event with All Saints Church's anti-racism group, COLORS.

Our book discussion group continues to stimulate in a very topical way. As Katrina unfolded, I found myself thinking back to our August discussion of the racial and class disparities exposed in the wake of the Watts Riot as depicted by **Walter Mosley** in *Little Scarlet* (Mosley speaks about his latest book at Vroman's on September 26 at 7:00 PM). September's book, *Catfish and Mandala* by Andrew X. Pham, about the difficult journey of Vietnamese refugees to the US resonated all the more when I read news accounts of the plight of Gulf-coast Vietnamese-Americans displaced once by war and now by natural disaster. In October we read **Orhan Pamuk's** *Snow* just as the author finds himself in legal trouble with the Turkish government for his position on the Armenian genocide. The Los Angeles Times was moved to editorialize about his plight and you can learn more by visiting the PEN website: <http://pen.org/page.php/prmID/980>. Looking ahead to November, we will be reading Ken Wiwa's moving memoir, *In the Shadow of a Saint*, of his father, author-environmentalist **Ken Saro-Wiwa**, executed by the Nigerian government ten years ago. A Los Angeles area event focusing on Saro-Wiwa's legacy is tentatively scheduled for October 5 (we'll bring you details via email) and vigils may also be scheduled around the November 10 anniversary of Saro-Wiwa's death. Look for more information in our next newsletter on a report and actions Amnesty will issue on human rights in Nigeria in conjunction with this mini-campaign. Please join us for some great events!

Finally, Amnesty is collaborating with the makers of the newly-released film, *Lord of War*, starring Nicolas Cage, which deals with the frightening consequences of global arms-trafficking. If you go to the movie, be sure to check out the Control Arms action in this newsletter and visit [www.amnestyusa.org/lordofwar](http://www.amnestyusa.org/lordofwar) to learn more!

Take care and hope to see you soon,

Martha Ter Maat      aigp22@caltech.edu

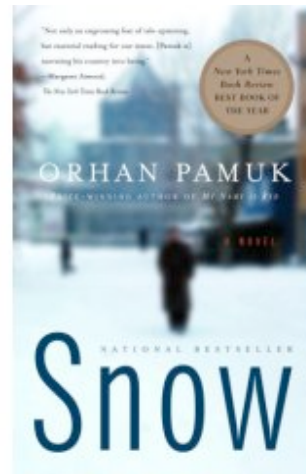
## RIGHTS READERS

*Human Rights Book Discussion Group*

### Vroman's Bookstore

695 E. Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena

Sunday, October 15, 6:30 PM



*Snow*

by Orhan Pamuk

Dread, yearning, identity, intrigue, the lethal chemistry between secular doubt and Islamic fanaticism—these are the elements that Orhan Pamuk anneals in this masterful, disquieting novel. An exiled poet named Ka returns to Turkey and

travels to the forlorn city of Kars. His ostensible purpose is to report on a wave of suicides among religious girls forbidden to wear their head-scarves. But Ka is also drawn by his memories of the radiant Ipek, now recently divorced. Amid blanketing snowfall and universal suspicion, Ka finds himself pursued by figures ranging from Ipek's ex-husband to a charismatic terrorist. A lost gift returns with ecstatic suddenness. A theatrical evening climaxes in a massacre. And finding god may be the prelude to losing everything else. Touching, slyly comic, and humming with cerebral suspense, *Snow* is of immense relevance to our present moment.

"A major work... conscience-ridden and carefully wrought, tonic in its scope, candor, and humor... with suspense at every dimpled vortex... Pamuk [is Turkey's] most likely candidate for the Nobel Prize."  
—John Updike

## REFUGEES: SUDAN

*Children's Edition UA for El-Amin Kuku, age 13*

Another special Urgent Action designed for children to write on behalf of children. Adults can write too!

El-Amin Kuku, 13, who is disabled, is in serious danger at police headquarters in Sudan. El-Amin lived at Soba Aradi Internally Displaced Persons Camp in the capital city Khartoum before he was arrested. Amnesty International has learned that many of those arrested at that camp are being held by police and are being beaten every day.

BACKGROUND:

In May, 19 policemen were killed at Soba Aradi Internally Displaced Persons Camp while trying to

forcibly relocate internal refugees to a distant camp. Internal refugees are persons who have had to leave their homes, villages, and farms in one part of the country, to seek safety in another part of the country. Reports indicate that there were violent clashes between police and internal refugees. The United Nations said that the refugees were not consulted about the move and were not assured of places to live and basic services in the new camp.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

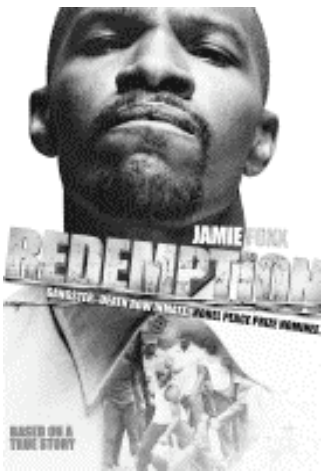
Please write a short, courteous letter before October 31, 2005, to the Ambassador from Sudan, Khidir Ahmed, asking him to ensure the safety of E I-Amin Kuku in police detention in Khartoum. Tell the Ambassador that you have learned that many internal refugees held by the police are being beaten. Explain to Ambassador Ahmed that you believe that E I-Amin Kuku 's basic rights under international law are being violated, especially the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which is supposed to ensure young people's health and safety. Thank Ambassador Ahmed for reading your letter and urge him to let you know exactly what he will do to make sure that E I-Amin Kuku is safe.

The address for the Ambassador of Sudan is:

[Salutation: Your Excellency,]  
Ambassador Khidir Ahmed  
Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan  
2210 Massachusetts Ave. NW  
Washington DC 20008

## DEATH PENALTY

*Stan "Tookie" Williams Event on Sept 25*



Group 22 invites you to a screening of "Redemption" a film based on the life of California death row inmate Stanley "Tookie" Williams. The event is co-sponsored by All Saints Church's anti-racism group, COLORS and their Prison Ministry and will be held Sunday, September 25 1:00 - 4:00 PM at All Saints Church, in the Forum (132 N Euclid Ave, Pasadena). A light lunch will be available for \$5.00

donation. The film stars Jamie Foxx and details Williams' journey from notorious gang leader to gang-prevention advocate and author of anti-gang children's books. Williams has neared the end of the appeals process and it is anticipated that an execution date may be set for him this fall, along with as many as four other California death row

inmates. The film will be followed by a discussion of the Williams case, lead by Barbara Becnel, Williams' collaborator in his anti-gang activities, as well as a briefing on the status of the anti-death penalty efforts in California from our guest Eric DeBode of California People of Faith Working Against the Death Penalty.

## DEATH PENALTY

*Oppose Increased Use in Palestinian Authority*

His Excellency Mahmoud Abbas  
President of the Palestinian Authority  
Office of the President  
Ramallah  
West Bank  
PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY  
VIA ISRAEL

Dear President Abbas:

I am very troubled to learn that you authorized the execution of four men on 12 June 2005 - the first executions to be carried out by the Palestinian Authority since August 2002. The resumption of executions reportedly came in response to increased crime and lawlessness in areas of the Occupied Territories that fall under Palestinian Authority jurisdiction. I am very concerned that more executions will be carried out in the near future.

Between 30 and 50 prisoners held on death row in Palestinian Authority prisons are at risk of execution at any time, according to Amnesty International. Most were convicted of murder, abduction or rape, while others were convicted of collaborating with Israeli intelligence agents to assassinate other Palestinians. Amnesty International has declared that many of those on death row were sentenced to death after unfair trials in the State Security Court, military courts or other courts.

On 22 June 2005, a retrial was ordered for all those sentenced to death by the State Security Court. I join with Amnesty International in welcoming this decision, but I am concerned that these prisoners could be executed even after a retrial and that prisoners sentenced by other courts remain at risk of execution.

Amnesty International believes that resuming executions will not solve the problem of increasing crime and lawlessness in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and is a step backwards for human rights. I urge you not to ratify any more death sentences, and I ask you to impose a moratorium on executions. I further urge you to ensure that those sentenced to death after unfair trials will be retried in compliance with international standards for fair trials.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME and ADDRESS

copy to:

Hasan Abdel Rahman  
PLO Mission  
1320 18th Street N.W.  
Suite 200  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
email: plomission1@aol.com

## **CONTROL ARMS CAMPAIGN** *Arms Trafficking in Central Africa*

Sample Letter:

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary,

I urge you to use your influence on the governments of Rwanda, Uganda and the DRC to help stop arms trafficking to armed groups in the DRC. The DRC conflict has cost the lives of nearly four million people since 1998, and abusive armed groups in the DRC continue to commit grave human rights abuses with high-powered weapons, endangering the fragile peace agreements.

According to Amnesty International and UN Panel of Experts research, the governments of DRC, Rwanda and Uganda, assisted by an international network of clandestine arms brokers and shippers, have facilitated or turned a blind eye to arms transfers to armed groups on all sides of the conflict. These transactions are in contravention of a UN arms embargo, UNSC Resolution 1596, which requires all States to restrict arms transfers to all "foreign and Congolese armed groups and militias" in the DRC. A U.S. airline company operating in the DRC also appears to be involved in illegal activities in the DRC and connected to arms trafficking.

In the case of the Rwandan government, for example, documents reveal that the Rwandan military approved an illegal transfer of arms and ammunition to the ANC (military wing of the armed group RCD-Goma) in South Kivu, eastern DRC in August 2003, in violation of the UN arms embargo. In May 2004, dissident elements of RCD-Goma are reported to have killed more than 60 people and raped more than 100 women and girls in South Kivu, eastern DRC. Arms in the possession of RCD-Goma have included weapons such as rocket launchers and mortars manufactured in many countries such as the United States, most likely from black market transactions.

As the United States provides development aid and foreign military training to the governments of Rwanda, Uganda, and the DRC to support peace and

development efforts, I urge you to initiate investigations into alleged breaches of the UN arms embargo, including by U.S. companies. I also encourage you to push other governments to better regulate arms brokers that fuel conflicts by supporting a strong global agreement on arms brokering. If unchecked, arms trafficking to armed groups in eastern DRC will continue to fuel grave human rights abuses and endanger the fragile peace agreements.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME and ADDRESS

## **WAR ON TERROR**

### *Urge Adoption of Senate Version of Patriot Act*

The House and Senate recently passed bills reauthorizing the Patriot Act and the two bodies are now working to reconcile the two versions. Although AIUSA opposed both versions, the Senate's bill is preferable. Write to all your representatives and urge them to push for the Senate version.

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

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

Representative Adam B. Schiff  
United States House of Representatives  
326 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

As a constituent, I urge you to vote to bring the Patriot Act in line with human rights and Constitutional standards. I understand the House of Representatives and the Senate will soon have to reconcile competing Patriot Act reauthorization bills, and--although not perfect--I urge you to support the Senate reforms. I join close to 400 communities, including seven states that have passed resolutions calling on Congress to bring the Patriot Act in line with international and Constitutional law by including appropriate checks and balances to prevent abuse.

I also urge you to support the SAFE Act, and other appropriate steps to reform the Patriot Act. Given the recent revelations that the FBI is targeting a member of the American Library Association with the Patriot Act, it is clear that new safeguards are needed. I ask that you insist that there be some factual connection between any private records

sought--library records, medical records, financial records, computer records--and a foreign terrorist as well as judicial approval, among other important reforms.

Congress should promote efforts to amend the Patriot Act and bring it in line with the principles of the US Constitution and international human rights law, not to expand it. The law must be fixed. Together, the reforms in the unanimously approved Senate bill and the SAFE Act would go a long way towards giving law enforcement the tools to investigate criminal activity without infringing on the human rights and civil liberties of general populations.

I look forward to hearing from you on this important matter.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME and ADDRESS

| <b>LETTER COUNT</b>   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Refugees (Haiti)  | 10        |
| Children's UA (Mexico)  | 10        |
| War on Terror   | 10        |
| Vietnam POC   | 6         |
| Death Penalty   | 4         |
| Urgent Actions  | 19        |
| <b>Total:</b>   | <b>59</b> |
| Want to add your letters to the total? Get in touch with <a href="mailto:lwkamp@sbcglobal.net">lwkamp@sbcglobal.net</a> |           |

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

Group 22 now has a page on our website for our newly adopted prisoner of conscience, Brother Nguyen Thien Phung (Huan). You can visit it at <http://www.its.caltech.edu/~aigp22/nguyen.html> . Our POC is a member of the Congregation of the Mother Co-Redemptrix, a Roman Catholic order. He has been imprisoned since 1987, when he was arrested along with 22 other monks and priests because they were distributing religious books and holding training courses without government permission. You will find more information at the link above, along with suggested actions and addresses.

Some of you may have attended the AI Southern California Mini-Conference in March 2003, where one of the featured speakers was Nguyen Thanh Trang, the founder and Chairman of the Vietnam Human Rights Network. This organization is located in Garden Grove, just south of L.A. in Orange County, and they have a very comprehensive site at <http://www.vietnamhumanrights.net> . This may

prove to be a valuable resource in our work for Brother Nguyen Thien Phung.

To learn how the Vietnam government views matters, you can read their White Paper on Human Rights, issued August 18, 2005. <http://www.vietnamembassy-usa.org/> The document is a 47-page PDF, but the section on religious freedom is only a few pages long and is easy to locate.

This month let's write to the President of Vietnam. Here is a sample letter that you can copy or use as a guide.

Tran Duc Luong  
President  
Office of the President  
35 Ngo Quyen  
Ha Noi  
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Your Excellency,

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 Coredeptrix. 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.

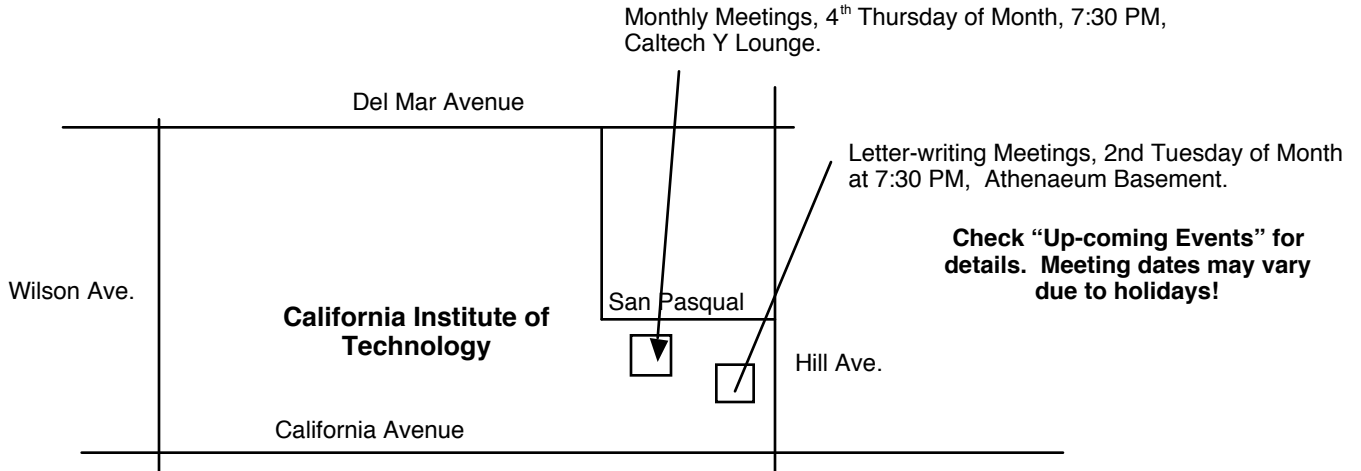
Sincerely,

(your name and address)

Editor's Last Word:

Read us on line: <http://www.its.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.*