ARTISTS FOR AMNESTY

ARTISTS FOR AMNESTY IS A GROUP OF ARTISTS COMMITTED TO PREVENTING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, SAVING LIVES AND PROMOTING A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS.

MONTHLY BULLETIN

VOLUME III

AUGUST 2002

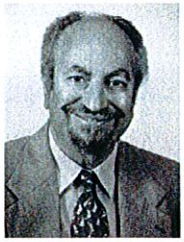
Welcome to the *Artists for Amnesty Monthly Bulletin*, which will keep you informed about critical human rights issues, cases of individuals at risk, and the life-saving work of Amnesty International. Our Monthly Bulletin also will highlight the efforts of artists on behalf of human rights.

STRUGGLING FOR JUSTICE

CHECHEN REFUGEES, NOWHERE TO CALL HOME Ingushetia, Chechnya's neighbor to the West, houses over 150,000 of the refugees fleeing the war in Chechnya. The Russian government recently announced that the refugee camps will be shut down . With hostilities igniting once again on the Georgian-Chechen border, the planned relocation of the refugees to Chechnya as early as this fall sets the stage for a deepening of this human rights crisis.

U.S. AID COULD FUEL HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS IN COLOMBIA The U.S. Senate's decision to lift the restrictions that have so far prevented US military aid from being used in the war against armed opposition groups in Colombia could further exacerbate the already spiraling human rights crisis in the country. Amnesty International stressed that the Colombian armed forces' counter-insurgency strategy continues to be characterized — through their continued collusion with paramilitary forces — by the systematic and widespread violation of human rights, and warned against any dilution of the human rights conditions attached to military aid. Expanding and deepening U.S. involvement in Colombia's conflict without evidence of improvements in the government's human rights policies may result in worsening an already grave human rights situation.

DR. SAAD EDDIN IBRAHIM NO LONGER FREE Earlier this year, Amnesty International celebrated the release of Dr. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, who had been imprisoned solely for his non-violent political activities in Egypt. Following a trial that fell short of international standards, the Supreme State Security Court has now sentenced Dr. Ibrahim to serve a seven-year prison term. Amnesty International believes the trial against this human rights defender was aimed at silencing the human rights movement in Egypt. Dr. Ibrahim had been adopted as a prisoner of conscience following his conviction and imprisonment in May 2001. Dr. Ibrahim may seek a final review of his case before the Court of Cassation. Amnesty International is seeking his immediate and unconditional release.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

CEDAW VICTORY On July 30, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by a 12-7 vote cleared the way for the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for ratification by the U.S. Senate. Although the treaty has been signed by the U.S., it has languished for over two decades awaiting ratification to bring it into force. Ratification will require a 2/3 majority vote in the Senate. This victory comes from years of intense effort by Amnesty International and other human rights activists.

ON THE FRONTLINES

BETH ORTON and **AIMEE MANN** aren't just a pair of immensely talented artists, they are human rights activists. They will be performing a benefit concert for Amnesty International in Los Angeles at the John Anson Ford Amphitheatre, August 21. Beth Orton has recently released her new album, *Daybreaker,* her third studio release. *Billboard* Magazine describes her latest work as a "blending of organic and electronic sounds, mixing them to an often entrancing cohesion." Aimee Mann was nominated for an Academy Award for her song "Save Me" on the *Magnolia* soundtrack. She will be releasing her new album, *Lost in Space,* on August 27.

Amnesty International is very grateful for the generous support given by both of these artists, and we look forward to a wonderful performance under the stars. Look out for tickets to be available August 8 through Ticketmaster outlets and www.ticketmaster.com.

SYSTEM OF A DOWN, with their cutting edge sound, have emerged as one of the country's most popular hard rock groups. The band's latest album, *Toxicity,* questions the state of the U.S. prison system and denounces the excessive use of force by police. They have become strong supporters of Amnesty International, and can be seen wearing Amnesty t-shirts and playing Amnesty PSAs before their appearances during this year's Ozzfest.® Amnesty International will have information tables at every stop of the summer tour, courtesy of Sytem of a Down.

"Amnesty International has been very instrumental in bringing attention to the plight of political prisoners around the globe, and in some cases creating the conditions of their release. In the age of the Globalist agenda, Amnesty is an invaluable cause of action."

- Serj Tankian, System of a Down

Amnesty International would like to thank the members of System of a Down for their tremendous support.

SPECIAL FOCUS CASE

SENTENCED TO RAPE

On June 22, 2002, a tribal council "sentenced" an 18-year-old girl in the village of Meerwala, Punjab province to be raped in punishment. Her crime? Her 12-year-old brother was found walking in the company of a girl from a tribe regarded as having a higher status than the tribe to which the brother and sister belong. There are unconfirmed reports that the boy was sodomized for his alleged "illicit affair." Members of the Mastoi tribe and the tribal council reportedly threatened that all the women in the family of the accused boy would be abducted and raped if the boy's sister refused to accept the punishment ordered after the tribal council's verdict. The gang-rape was carried out by four men, including one member of the tribal council, while members of the Mastoi tribe reportedly stood outside and cheered. After the rape, the girl was driven naked through the streets of her village while hundreds looked on. The girl's relatives were initially too frightened of retribution by the Mastoi tribe to approach police. A week later, a delegation of lawyers met with local police authorities and insisted that the police register a complaint by the girl's father. Following media coverage, the governor of Punjab, Khalid Maqbool Ahmed, ordered an official inquiry into the tribal council's action, the rape, and the possibility that the police had attempted to cover up the crime. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court reportedly condemned the rape as a "violation of human rights and human dignity," and summoned Punjab police authorities to explain the incident. Four alleged rapists have been arrested.

Write the governor of Punjab province:

Summarize the recent rape case; urge that the authorities clearly and publicly condemn all acts of violence against women and girls; welcome the governor's request for a full investigation; ask that the results of the investigation be made public; urge that those found to be responsible are held accountable; ask for full reparation, including medical care, compensation, and rehabilitation, to be given to the girl and other victims of violence; and urge that adequate protection is provided for other women and girls who may be at risk of similar abuses.

TAKE ACTION

LT. GENERAL KHALID MAQBOOL AHMED
GOVERNOR OF PUNJAB PROVINCE
GOVERNOR'S HOUSE
LAHORE
PAKISTAN FAX: 00 92 42 9200077

SEND A COPY OF YOUR LETTER TO:

AMBASSADOR ASHRAF JEHANGIR QAZI
2315 MASSACHUSETTS AVE. NW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008 FAX: 202.387.0484

A TASTE OF JUSTICE

FLORIDA JURY FINDS SALVADORAN GENERALS LIABLE FOR TORTURE On July 23, 2002, a Florida jury in a federal civil trial awarded $54.6 million to three Salvadorans who proved that they were brutally tortured by Salvadoran security forces between 1979-83. Juan Romagoza, Neriz Gonzalez and Carlos Mauricio sued two Salvadoran generals who retired to south Florida in 1989. The suit was brought under federal laws that allow survivors of torture to seek redress in U.S. courts, even if the offenses occurred outside the U.S. The two retired generals were both profiled in Amnesty International's recent report, *United States of America: A Safe Haven For Torturers.*

Mr. Romagoza suffered electric shocks, was shot in the arm and was suspended from his fingers damaging his hands--ensuring he would never perform surgery again. Mr. Mauricio was subjected to horrific beatings and was suspended with his hands over his head for long periods of time. Ms. Gonzalez was eight months' pregnant at the time of her torture. She reported that soldiers raped and beat her in 1979, placing a metal bed frame over her stomach and see-sawing on top of her. Her baby died from the injuries two months after being born prematurely.

Source: Center for Justice and Accountability

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST 21– BETH ORTON AND AIMEE MANN, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL BENEFIT CONCERT, JOHN ANSON FORD AMPHITHEATRE, 7:30pm. Tickets are available at: www.ticketmaster.com.

AUGUST 26 - AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND L.A. FRIENDS OF TIBET PRESENT: EVEN OUR TEARS WERE SECRETS: THE REMARKABLE LIFE OF PALDEN GYATSO, Magnin Auditorium, Skirball Cultural Center 7:30-9:00pm. Palden Gyatso survived 33 years of torture in Chinese prisons and has testified before the U.S. Congress and the United Nations. For details: 310.815.0450

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES: Without Distinction—Attacks on Civilians by Palestinian Armed Groups

CUBA: The Situation of Human Rights in Cuba

For copies of these reports contact Bonnie Abaunza (see below).

JOIN ARTISTS FOR AMNESTY

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