

Amnesty International

Southern California

Mini-Conference

Program



March 26, 2005

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Putting on this conference requires the combined efforts and hard work of a large number of groups and individuals. The organizing committee would like to especially thank:

- The invited speakers and workshop presenters for their time and participation.
- The Western Regional staff (Erin Callahan, Samer Rabadi, and Kathy Brown) for all their support, including fielding phone calls, putting packets together, staffing group sales, etc., etc., etc.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Program	Kristina Elali and Harmon Tipton
Emcee	Kristina Elali
Support	Western Regional Office
Groups Sales	Kathy Brown
Logistics	Ernie Solheid
Food	Jacques Kilchoër

PROGRAM

9:00 – 2:00	REGISTRATION	Lobby
9:00 – 9:20	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST	Lobby
9:20 – 10:20	OPENING PLENARY	Room 252
	<i>Emcee:</i> Kristina Elali, <i>Coordinator, AIUSA Group 178 Irvine</i>	
	Invited Address: Amnesty’s Torture Campaign	
	Erin Callahan, <i>AIUSA Western Regional Director</i>	
	Invited Address: Northern Uganda	
	Ochan Otim, <i>President, Friends for Peace in Africa</i>	
	Invited Address: Southern Sudan	
	Benson Deng, <i>Lost Boy of Sudan</i>	
10:30 – 5:00	GROUP SALES	Room 240
10:30 – 11:50	WORKSHOPS, SET 1	
	Armed Conflict Interdependency: Southern Sudan and Northern Uganda	Room 252
	Benson Deng, <i>Lost Boy of Sudan</i>	
	Darcie Olson, <i>AI East Africa Regional Action Network</i>	
	Ochan Otim, <i>President, Friends for Peace in Africa</i>	
	Kathy Smith, <i>Coordinator, Scripps Ranch Amnesty Group</i>	
	Human Trafficking	Room 250
	Aaron Cohen, <i>Executive Director, United States International Mission</i>	
	Beth McFarland, <i>AIUSA Group 596 Huntington Beach</i>	
	Raquel S-Saboor, <i>AIUSA Groups 178 Irvine and 596 Huntington Beach</i>	
	Marissa Ugarte, <i>Executive Director, Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition</i>	
	Introduction to Amnesty International	Room 248
	Jacques Kilchoër, <i>AIUSA Group 178 Irvine</i>	
	Healy Vigderson, <i>Coordinator, AIUSA Group 137 San Diego</i>	
	Torture Campaign: Taking Apart Torture	Room 246
	Samer Rabadi, <i>AIUSA Western Region Deputy Director</i>	
12:00 – 12:40	CAUCUSES	
	Local and Student Groups	Room 250
	<i>Facilitators:</i> Kristina Elali, <i>Coordinator, AIUSA Group 178 Irvine</i> and Harmon Tipton, <i>AIUSA Trainer/Group 137 Hillcrest</i>	
	Death Penalty	Room 248
	<i>Facilitator:</i> Tim Spann, <i>AI Death Penalty Coordinator for Southern California</i>	

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12:00 – 12:40	VIDEO SCREENING	Room 252
	Human Needs, Human Rights: Amnesty International and the Movement for Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights	
12:40 – 2:00	LUNCH: See flyer in packet for places to eat	Off Campus
2:00 – 3:20	WORKSHOPS, SET 2	
	Death Penalty	Room 246
	Tim Spann, <i>AI Death Penalty Coordinator for Southern California</i>	
	Group Health: Save Your Group's Life	Room 250
	Harmon Tipton, <i>AIUSA Trainer/Group 137 San Diego</i>	
	Healy Vigderson, <i>Coordinator, AIUSA Group 137 San Diego</i>	
	Oil Rights or Human Rights?	Room 252
	Tony Cruz, <i>AI Corporate Action Network</i>	
	Violence Against Women and the International Criminal Court	Room 248
	Jamie Skaluba, <i>Stop Violence Against Women Campaign</i>	
3:30 – 4:50	WORKSHOPS, SET 3	
	Refugees and Human Rights	Room 250
	Idean Saleyhan, <i>AIUSA Country Specialist for Ethiopia and Eritrea</i>	
	AIDS and Human Rights	Room 248
	Mahsa Abassi, Amanda Ellis, Sarah Keller, Aarti Mehta, Brian Murray, Darcie Olsen, Raquel S-Saboor, <i>AIUSA Group 596 Huntington Beach</i>	
	War on Terror and Human Rights Law	Room 246
	Victor Condé, <i>President, Human Rights Aware</i>	
5:00 – 5:30	CLOSING PLENARY	Room 252
	<i>Emcee:</i> Kristina Elali, <i>Coordinator, AIUSA Group 178 Irvine</i>	
	Invited Speaker	
	Victor Condé, <i>President, Human Rights Aware</i>	
	Acknowledgements	
6:00 –	DINNER: Angelo's and Vinci's Ristorante	
	550 N. Harbor Blvd in downtown Fullerton	
	Sign up at the registration desk.	
	Directions from campus: Exit the parking lot and go south on E. Campus Drive to the campus entrance at Commonwealth and Nutwood Avenues. Go south on Commonwealth one block to Chapman Avenue. Turn right on Chapman and go 2.3 miles. Turn right on Harbor Blvd.	
	The restaurant is on the right just past the Fox Theater. Turn right at the next street and then right into the parking lot behind the restaurant.	

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INVITED SPEAKERS

Benson Deng

Currently I run the computer and digital photography system at Waste Management in El Cajon. I speak to schools and Rotaries on behalf of my fellow countrymen and other Lost Boys. I'm a member of the Lost Boys Rotaract Club in Mid-City and am in my fourth semester at San Diego City College. With my brother Alepho, and cousin Benjamin, we wrote a book about our life in Africa. Titled *They Poured Fire on Us from the Sky*, it will be published and released on June 13, 2005.

Our village in Southern Sudan was attacked by Islamic extremists when I was seven years old. We fled a thousand miles across Sudan to Ethiopia on foot. The traveling was always by night and I hated this very much because we were not allowed to sleep and when I stepped on unidentified things in the dark like thorns, twigs and sharp stones, my feet were sore all the time. But I was not the only one; about twenty-five boys my age shared the same hardships. This stopped me from any complaints or crying. I was not wearing any shirt or jacket, just only my underwear all the way to Ethiopia.

Erin Callahan

Erin Callahan is Amnesty International's Regional Director for the Western United States, and previously managed media relations for Amnesty International USA. She has twelve years of experience with U.S. presidential campaigns, serving as communications director in Iowa, New Hampshire, Ohio and California. She also served as Communications Director for U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski and as Emergency Services Manager for Alameda County Sheriff's Department.

In addition, she was a lecturer at Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, conducted political seminars for the National Democratic Institute's Eastern European delegations, was a policy advisor for Mexico City based Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Center for Human Rights, and produced a radio series on youth culture in Israel and Palestine for National Public Radio.

She is a graduate of UC Berkeley and has a master's degree in broadcast journalism.

Victor Condé

Victor Condé is a lawyer with fourteen years experience teaching human rights in law school and at the graduate school level. He is an expert on international and comparative human rights and humanitarian law and international criminal law. Professor Condé is part of the AIUSA Legal Support Network and the AIUSA Human Rights Education Network for the Western Region and is President of Human Rights Aware, an NGO whose mission is to teach teachers how to teach human rights. He is the author of *A Handbook of International Human Rights Terminology* and *Human Rights in the United States: A Dictionary and Documents*, published in 2000. The latter book features a forward by Bill Schulz, AIUSA Executive Director. In addition, he teaches once a year at the International Institute in Strasbourg, France.

Ochan Otim

Dr. Otim has been an active advocate for peace, human rights, and internationalism for many years. His charitable affiliations include Amnesty International, African Educational Program, Kacokke Madit, Samalitan Christian Children's Fund, Inc., Ugandan Community Organization in California, and Nile Heritage Foundation. The mission of Friends for Peace in Africa (FPA) is to facilitate and mediate through dialogue, advocacy, and empowerment, the implementation of conditions that enable every individual in all regions of Africa, to live and develop to his/her fullest potential in an atmosphere of peace.

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WORKSHOPS

Armed Conflict Interdependency: Southern Sudan and Northern Uganda

Benson Deng, *Lost Boy of Sudan*

Darcie Olson, *AI Regional Action Network for East Africa*

Ochan Otim, *President, Friends for Peace in Africa*

Kathy Smith, *Coordinator, Scripps Ranch Amnesty Group*

In this workshop we will discuss each country's background and history that has led to the present day armed conflicts (the civil war in Darfur in Sudan and LRA/child soldiers in Uganda). We will discuss the unifying themes of child soldiers, displacement camps and the challenges that lie ahead for both countries as the people of East Africa try to build a peaceful future.

Human Trafficking

Aaron Cohen, *Executive Director, United States International Mission*

Beth McFarland, *AIUSA Group 596 Huntington Beach*

Raquel S-Saboor, *AIUSA Groups 178 Irvine and 596 Huntington Beach*

Marissa Ugarte, *Executive Director, Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition*

Human trafficking is a form of modern day slavery. This social crisis is not confined to third world countries. It is in fact occurring at an alarming rate in our backyards of the United States and specifically here, in Southern California. The purpose of this workshop is to inform people of the magnitude of human trafficking. We will provide a basic outline of what it is, how people become victims, and steps you take to help in combatting this issue.

Introduction to Amnesty International

Jacques Kilchoër, *AIUSA Group 178 Irvine*

Healy Vigderson, *Coordinator, AIUSA Group 137 in San Diego*

This session will include an overview of Amnesty International's work and structure in the USA and internationally. Questions about Amnesty's work and campaigns will be welcome.

Torture Campaign: Taking Apart Torture

Samer Rabadi, *AIUSA Western Region Deputy Director*

In an environment where torture is becoming seen as a viable practice, this workshop is designed to ground activists in the basics of torture and help them develop ways to argue against it. The workshop will include role-playing scenarios involving discussions of torture.

Death Penalty

Tim Spann, *AI Death Penalty Coordinator for Southern California*

This workshop will feature a screening of *Interview with an Executioner* and a question-and-answer session on the death penalty.

Group Health: Save Your Group's Life

Harmon Tipton, *AIUSA Trainer/Group 137 in San Diego*

Healy Vigderson, *Coordinator, AIUSA Group 137 in San Diego*

Join a discussion of the dilemmas that every group faces with recruitment and retention of members and the solutions that could save your group's life. Brainstorm, share your experiences, and get advice from Amnesty activists with 20 years' experience.

Oil Rights or Human Rights?

Tony Cruz, *AI Corporate Action Network Coordinator for California and Hawaii*

This workshop will focus on our campaign to defend communities in the Amazon whose health and livelihoods have been threatened by ChevronTexaco.

Violence Against Women and the International Criminal Court

Jamie Skaluba, *Stop Violence Against Women Campaign Coordinator for Southern California*

This workshop will focus on the Stop Violence Against Women (SVAW) campaign and International Criminal Court (ICC). Learn how they are connected, why it is important to our SVAW work to have the ICC ratified and how we can use our experience with Amnesty to lobby for the ICC to be ratified.

Refugees and Human Rights

Idean Saleyhan, *AIUSA Country Specialist for Ethiopia and Eritrea*

This workshop will provide an introduction to human rights issues relating to refugees. Topics to be discussed include international law and refugee rights, current trends in global refugee flows, and asylum policies in industrialized countries. Special focus will be placed on US refugee/asylum policies and post-9/11 developments in refugee protection.

AIDS and Human Rights

Mahsa Abassi, Amanda Ellis, Sarah Keller, Aarti Mehta, Brian Murray, Darcie Olsen, Raquel S-Saboor, *AIUSA Group 596 Huntington Beach*

The most current report published in 2004 by UNAIDS has estimated that 40 million people are currently infected with HIV worldwide. These statistics are predicted to only increase in the upcoming years unless people take an active role in trying to curb this epidemic that plagues the global community. One of the most important and proven effective ways of stopping the spread of HIV is through education. Through education you can provide people with the tools of understanding the reasons behind why HIV has and still is spreading at a phenomenal rate throughout the world. The AIDS and Human Rights workshop will try to highlight why AIDS has spread throughout different regions of the world through the neglect and violations of human rights. Regions to be covered will include North America, Latin/South America, Europe/Russia, Middle East, India, Asia, and Africa.

War on Terror and Human Rights Law

Victor Condé, *President, Human Rights Aware*

The workshop will cover the War on Terror and the various pieces of legislation surrounding that, including the Patriot Act. In addition it will cover cases on Guantanamo prisoners and Abu Ghriab, current updates on those critical cases, and what's being done about them.

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CAUCUSES

Local and Student Groups

Kristina Elali, *Coordinator, AIUSA Group 178 Irvine*

Harmon Tipton, *AIUSA Trainer/Group 137 Hillcrest*

An open discussion between local and student groups to provide a chance to meet one another and discuss resources they can share.

Death Penalty

Tim Spann, *AI Death Penalty Coordinator for Southern California*

An open discussion about the death penalty and events in California with one of Amnesty's State Death Penalty Coordinators.

VIDEO SCREENING

Human Needs, Human Rights: Amnesty International and the Movement for Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

This new video presents three stories that explore the evolution of Amnesty International's mission, the interdependence of human rights, and some of the ways in which Amnesty International and the broader human rights movement are working to advance economic, social and cultural rights. Narrated by Adrien Brody, the video features interviews with Irene Khan, Bill Schulz, and a host of activists.

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PRESENTERS

Mahsa Abassi

Mahsa Abassi has been part of the Huntington Beach Amnesty International group for three years. She is currently co-leading the group with Darcie Olsen.

Aaron Cohen

Aaron Cohen works as a special agent specifically in the area of human rights. As an activist and author with more than a decade of exposure to human rights intelligence, military paramilitary slave retrievals, and to turning states' evidence against hostile governments such as Sudan and Vietnam, his career follows his message of freedom and peace, and his reports and assessments have contributed to the body of knowledge published by the US State Department in their annual Trafficking in Persons report. "It's this experience working undercover for human rights and seeing the victims up close that has motivated me to write *The Jubilee Prophecy*," he says of his book about Peace through Music and modern slavery. Aaron Cohen is the executive director of The United States International Mission (USIM), has served as a consultant with the Protection Project at Johns Hopkins University, with People for Children of the Ricky Martin Foundation, and as the executive director for the Jubilee Freedom Foundation, working with an array of world class entertainers, royals, religious leaders, and celebrities including the Dalai Lama, the Princess of Thailand, Bono of U2, and Perry Farrell of Lollapalooza.

Tony Cruz

Tony Cruz is the Amnesty International Corporate Action Network Coordinator for California and Hawaii. In the last few years, Tony has been active on LGBT issues and was formerly the chairman for Soulforce San Francisco, an interfaith gay advocacy organization working to end discrimination and violence spurred on by religious intolerance. He is employed as a social worker, helping those who have suffered traumatic brain injuries.

Kristina Elali

Kristina Elali has been involved with Amnesty International since 1991. She is a member of Group 178 Irvine, a trainer for Amnesty, and Western Regional Representative for the Special/Existing Initiative Fund Committee.

Amanda Ellis

Amanda Ellis is a member of the Huntington Beach High School Amnesty International group. She also participates in the Huntington Beach Amnesty group.

Sarah Keller

Sarah Keller has been a part of the Huntington Beach Amnesty International group for two years and is currently the treasurer of the group.

Jacques Kilchoër

Jacques Kilchoër has been a member of an Amnesty International local group in Irvine, California, for 17 years. His past experience with Amnesty International includes being a group member, a group coordinator, and a member of the West Africa Regional Action Network.

Beth Anne McFarland

Beth Anne McFarland has been an active member of Amnesty International since December 2003. She is the founder and President of Orange Coast College's chapter of Amnesty International and a member of the Huntington Beach group since January 2004. She is the AI Volunteer Coordinator for the 2005 West Hollywood Film Festival. She is also been a member of Orange County's Human Trafficking Task Force as well as a member of the Outreach sub-committee since July 2004. Beth is a Student Trustee at Orange Coast College and will be graduating with her A.A. in spring 2005. She plans on transferring to a UC where she will pursue a double major in Communications and Political Science.

Aarti Mehta

Aarti Mehta has been a member of the Orange Coast College's Chapter of Amnesty International since spring of 2004. She has helped organize events related to slavery, the women of Juarez and child soldiers and has served as the organization secretary and vice president.

Brian Murray

Brian Murray is a member of the Huntington Beach High School Amnesty International group. He also participates in the Huntington Beach Amnesty group.

Darcie Olson

Darcie Olson has been a member of Amnesty International for over 10 years. She is currently the RAN Coordinator for East Africa and is active in the Huntington Beach group 596 in Orange County.

Samer Rabadi

Samer Rabadi joined Amnesty International in 1994 as an intern in the Los Angeles Regional Office. In the intervening years, he has been a Group Coordinator, Chair of the Los Angeles Cluster, Area Coordinator, Regional Planning Group member, and Standing Committee on Membership Development member. He joined staff in 2003 and is currently the Deputy Director for the Western Region.

Idean Salehyan

Idean Salehyan is a Ph.D. candidate in Political Science at the University of California, San Diego. His dissertation research examines the role of diaspora communities and other transnational actors in organizing political opposition groups. His recent publications include: "Norms and Interests in US Asylum Enforcement" *Journal of Peace Research*, 41(6), 2004, and *The International Migration of the Highly Skilled*, 2001, CCIS Press. Idean has served on the board of directors for the Alliance for African Assistance, a refugee-resettlement organization based in San Diego. He has also been an active member of Amnesty International for over 12 years and is currently an AIUSA Country Specialist for Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Ken Saragosa

Ken Saragosa is Assistant Professor of English Literature at Soka University of America and has been attending as well as helping coordinate events for the Huntington Beach Amnesty International group.

Jamie Skaluba

Jamie Skaluba has been involved with Amnesty since 2002. She was a member of Long Beach Group 175 before becoming an Student Area Coordinator. She gave up her SAC duties to become the Stop Violence Against Women Campaign Coordinator for Southern California as well as being a full-time intern in the Los Angeles office. Jamie has recently been hired as the Associate for the Artists for Amnesty program.

Kathy Smith

Kathy Smith has been a member of AI for about 15 years. Coordinator of Scripps Ranch group, 8 years. Current focus cases in Gujarat, India (state action file), and for environmental human rights defenders, Narmada Bachao Andolan, India. Active in Africa work: especially Northern Uganda, under East Africa team and through local university forum discussion with Miramar College AI and Friends for Peace in Africa. Continue with letter writing actions from Central Africa RAN. Recently participated in Western Route of Ciudad Juárez Delegation Tour. Worked to build a coalition of support for co-sponsorship of tour to San Diego, 2004. Worked collaboratively with national tour sponsor, Mexico Solidarity Network and Stop Violence Against Women Campaign, Amnesty International.

Tim Spann

Tim Spann has been active working towards abolishing the death penalty for seventeen years. He is the Death Penalty Coordinator for Southern California for Amnesty International. He is also the chapter coordinator for the San Diego chapter of Death Penalty Focus of California, a statewide death penalty abolition organization. He has traveled to many states across the U.S. in support of Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation, a group comprised of surviving family members of homicide victims who speak out against capital punishment. Mr. Spann is also active in the San Diego Hillcrest chapter of Amnesty International USA.

Raquel S-Saboor

Raquel has been a member of Amnesty since September 2004. She is part of the Huntington Beach and Irvine local groups. She is currently pursuing her B.A. in Public Relations and Graphic Design from Cal State Fullerton. From the moment Raquel learned about human trafficking she has been dedicated to learn more about the issue and raise awareness in her community. She is also a member and secretary for the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force.

Harmon Tipton

Harmon has been active in AI for more than eighteen years as a student coordinator and local activist. He is currently a trainer for the Western Region and a member of San Diego Group 137.

Marissa Ugarte

In her role as the Executive Director of the Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition, Marisa Ugarte brings more than 20 years of experience in assisting children and high-risk youth. With a Masters of Arts background in social work and psychology, Ugarte spent the past three years creating organizational programs for Tijuana, Mexico. She created the Bi-national Crisis Line in Tijuana, as well as the Domestic Violence Crisis Center for DIF. Ugarte is an advisor to DIF and to the Civil Protection in Disaster Crisis Prevention Program. In the U.S., Ugarte has convened three anti-trafficking conferences, and is an active speaker at similar conferences in the U.S. and Central America.

Healy Vigderson

Healy Vigderson is the current group coordinator for Amnesty International Group 137 in San Diego. She has been an active Amnesty member since 1989. Healy has worked as an educator for San Diego City Schools, a scientific researcher for several universities, and currently serves as the administrator for the Epilepsy Foundation of San Diego County. Her Amnesty leadership experience includes service as a Student Area Coordinator for San Diego, College Group Coordinator for SDSU, Events Coordinator for Amnesty Group 137 and planning group member for the 1999 Western Regional Conference held in San Diego. Healy serves on the board of directors for the International Museum of Human Rights in San Diego (IMoHR) and is a member of the Baha'i Faith. She enjoys lugging Amnesty brochures in heavy boxes and tabling in the rain.