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ACTIVISM GUIDE
Fall 2015

Exciting new photo exhibition now available:
In/visible Scars: torture survivors in Canada

“TORTURE is not designed to get information; it is designed to break the human soul.”

Photo © Eugen Florin Zamfirescu
Promoting World Refugee Day in Regina.

What's going on in your community? Check out our events calendar at www.amnesty.ca/events for more information on these and other events across Canada.

ANTIGONISH
- Gold Fever film screening, October 20, Antigonish Town & County Library. Contact maritimes@amnesty.ca

HALIFAX
- Youth Activism Conference, October 17, location TBD. Contact maritimes@amnesty.ca

SASKATOON
- Get active with Amnesty Saskatchewan provincial conference, October 24

TORONTO
- Word on the Street at Harbourfront Centre, September 27
- Cities for Life, November 27 (location TBD). Contact AI Canada Death Penalty Coordinator Aubrey Harris dpacoordinator@amnesty.ca

VANCOUVER (vancouver@amnesty.ca)
- Alex Neve lecture on Bill C51, September 17, SFU downtown
- My Body My Rights public forum, October 5, location TBD
- Amnesty International Film Festival, October 14-17, VPL Central Br.
- BC/Yukon/S.Alberta regional meeting, October 17, VPL Central Br.

Canada Votes 2015

The federal election is on! Don't miss this opportunity to ask local candidates about their party's policies on human rights issues. Please steer clear of “get out the vote” type campaigns. Amnesty does not take a position on electoral systems or issues like the process for voter registration or residency requirements. Amnesty is also very careful to ensure our work is non-partisan.

For tips on how to engage politicians and the questions to ask, go to: www.amnesty.ca/canadavotes2015.

Petitions available for download

All our active petitions can be downloaded from our online petition library at www.amnesty.ca/get-involved/take-action-now/petition-library.

Not sure if a petition is still active? Feel free to contact the campaigner named on the petition.

Share this guide with others!

Let everyone know they can read (and download) this Activism Guide. On-line version: www.amnesty.ca/activism-guide.

Need more information? Please let us know!

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SEPTEMBER: Stop Torture Photo Exhibition

In/visible Scars: torture survivors in Canada

Torture is far from top of mind in Canada, because it isn’t practiced here. But people tortured abroad live in Canada. And Canada has a role to play in preventing torture abroad.

The In/visible Scars photo exhibition spotlights the courage, strength, and resilience of torture survivors living in Canada, half of them were Canadian citizens at the time they were tortured. It highlights the role Canada should be playing to prevent more people from enduring unspeakable torture, and we hope it will compel Canadians to join torture survivors and take action in support of Canada joining the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture.

The exhibition tells the story of eight people who now call Canada home. They hail from around the world, have all experienced the horror and devastation that torture wreaks on individuals and families, and have undergone the transformation from victim to survivor to activist.

We invite you to host the exhibition in your community—in a library, gallery, shopping centre, market, or somewhere else where it will attract large numbers of people. We hope that people will be outraged about Canada’s lack of commitment to Stop Torture and will join our campaign.

SIGN THE PETITION Sign our e-action (www.amnesty.ca/opcat) calling on Canada to prevent torture around the world—and share it on social media. Collect signatures on our paper petition (www.amnesty.ca/get-involved/take-action-now/petition-library) at events.

SHARE THE IMAGES The full photo exhibition will be online in mid-August at www.amnesty.ca/stoptorture/torture-survivors. Share the images online and link to our petition.

ORGANIZE AN EXHIBITION Four copies of the photo exhibition (printed on vinyl banners for easy shipping) are traveling the country. Contact materials@amnesty.ca to book the exhibition. It is available free of charge and comes with a guide, actions, and swag—everything you need to set up the exhibition in your community.

HOST A SPEAKER The In/visible Scars exhibition features eight dynamic torture survivor advocates. Some may be available to attend or video conference into major public events. To discuss how to book a speaker contact jhansen@amnesty.ca.

HOST A FILM SCREENING Rosewater is a film that tells the true story of an Iranian-born journalist who is arrested, jailed, and tortured in Iran. Organize a screening of the film in your community. Contact Elena at edumitru@amnesty.ca for details.
Are you ready for new challenges?

Amnesty International is pleased to offer our supporters a wide range of opportunities for leadership. In addition to leading youth and community groups, we are actively recruiting volunteers to serve as Youth Organizers, Local Organizers, and Fieldworkers.

Youth Organizers

The Youth Organizers’ main role is to be the direct link between Amnesty Canada’s Youth and Student Program and youth activists at the local level. This leadership opportunity for youth is a new initiative for the Youth and Student Program. Youth Organizers help organize and facilitate youth and student group activities and campaign opportunities, act as a liaison between youth and student groups, community groups, staff and other volunteer leader. They also get to work with some fantastic activists and learn some great new skills while doing so.

We have established teams in various cities, and are looking to grow these teams and will consider setting up teams in new cities. For more information please contact Shauna MacLean at smaclean@amnesty.ca.

Local Organizers

The Local Organizers’ main responsibility is to reach out to others and encourage them to engage in human rights activism through Amnesty International. This includes looking for opportunities to showcase Amnesty International in various community settings and follow- ing up with individuals who have contacted them or an Amnesty office expressing an interest in getting involved. We have established small teams of Local Organizers in Vancouver, Calgary and Halifax and welcome new applications from these cities. We welcome applications from elsewhere across Canada to help us determine where to establish other teams of Local Organizers. Contact Don Wright at dwright@amnesty.ca.

Fieldworkers

A Fieldworker’s main role is to act as a catalyst for local human rights activism. This involves helping Amnesty groups plan and evaluate their activities, updating members on Amnesty's current campaigns, training and empowering local leaders, networking with social justice groups at the local level, and being the public face of Amnesty in the community by public speaking and responding to media requests. Fieldworkers are expected to contribute approximately 10-15 hours a month to Amnesty.

In order to qualify as a fieldworker, you need to be a member or supporter of Amnesty International and have at least one year’s experience working on human rights activities with other Amnesty Canada activists. Fieldworkers are expected to participate in 2 levels of training. For more information contact Lily Mah-Sen at lmah-sen@amnesty.ca.

Free Activism Swag

Order your free pre-packaged Activism kits today. The generic Action kit contains an assortment of Amnesty pamphlets, buttons, tattoos, bookmarks, copies of our current petitions and other freebies. The Stop Torture Action kit contains an assortment of materials specifically for the campaign. The Write for Rights kit contains the Write for Rights 2015 guide and an assortment of materials to hand out to your writers. You will be asked to pay for shipping costs.

To order, please go to our online shop at www.amnesty.ca/store and click on “Activism Materials”.

Opportunities for Leadership
Help make this is an election issue!

Indigenous women and girls experience staggering high rates of violence, and go missing and are murdered at far higher rates than other women and girls in Canada. The federal government has ignored calls for comprehensive action, but our activism has helped to create public awareness, media coverage, and has put pressure on decision-makers to take concrete action.

We need to ramp up our activism now! This year’s annual October 4 vigils honouring missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls will happen weeks before the federal election. Make violence against Indigenous women and girls an election issue! For more info contact stolen sisters@amnesty.ca.

5 things you can do

LEARN MORE Check out www.amnesty.ca/stolensisters for news, analysis of government announcements, and actions.

ATTEND A VIGIL Contact your local band office, friendship centre, or Indigenous community organization to see if a local vigil is planned.

COLLECT POSTCARD SIGNATURES Order postcards: http://www.amnesty.ca/store/.

INVOKE YOUR COMMUNITY Encourage your municipal council to proclaim October 4 “No More Stolen Sisters Day” or pass a resolution echoing our call for action.

SPREAD THE WORD Sign our e-action (www.amnesty.ca/nomorestolensisters) and share it using hashtag #NoMoreStolenSisters

Protecting civilians during conflict: taking the side of human rights

Armed conflicts can be triggered by any number of unresolved grievances and issues including identity, ethnicity, religion or competition for resources. What they all have in common is that civilians often pay the highest price in the struggle for power.

Where wars erupt, suffering and hardship invariably follow. Conflict isn’t just about death, it is a breeding ground for mass human rights violations, including torture, disappearances and imprisonment without charge.

Women and children are disproportionately affected by armed conflict - they make up 80% of all refugees and displaced people. Rape and other forms of sexual violence are routinely committed during conflict.

Amnesty does not take sides in conflicts. We document and campaign against human rights abuses and violations of international law, no matter who commits them, or where. We support the survivors to demand justice.

Amnesty's latest research mission to Yemen documented the toll of a relentless Saudi-led campaign of missile strikes – including the use of banned cluster munitions – and internal fighting. According to recent UN data, there have been more than 1,400 civilian deaths and 3,400 civilian injuries in three months of the armed conflict.

Find our latest information and actions here: www.amnesty.ca/our-work/priority-countries
It’s time for Shell to deal with its dirty past

Hundreds of oil spills occur in the Niger Delta every year, causing significant harm to the environment. Pollution has destroyed people’s livelihoods, undermined their rights to clean water and food, and put their health at serious risk. The oil companies, which have polluted the region for decades, are not doing enough to prevent the spills from happening, clean up pollution, or compensate those affected. The Nigerian government is also failing to regulate the oil industry and protect the rights of the people of the Niger Delta.

November 10, 2015 will be the 20th anniversary of the execution of Ken Saro Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists by the Nigerian military government. Ken Saro Wiwa demanded that the oil companies and the government clean up the environment. But twenty years on, the issues Ken Saro Wiwa campaigned on have still never been addressed.

In 2011, the United Nations Environment Programme confirmed the massive scale of pollution in a landmark report. They made detailed recommendations to the Nigerian Government and to the oil industry, but four years on these have largely been ignored.

It is time for a comprehensive clean-up of oil pollution in the Niger Delta, and for companies like Shell to prevent further oil spills.

It is time to take action.

In October and November 2015, Amnesty International members across Canada and around the world will target Shell oil through social media actions and live demonstrations at Shell stations. For more information, visit our Niger Delta campaign and action page at www.amnesty.ca/nigerdelta and follow Amnesty Canada’s Business and Human Rights programme on social media.

Follow us on Twitter: @AICanadaBHR and on Facebook: www.facebook.com/AICanadaBHR

Campaign update: a rare victory in Guatemala

On July 15, communities in resistance to the El Tambor gold mine received some good news: a Guatemalan appeals court ruled in their favour that the mine is operating illegally without a construction permit. The court ordered the municipal council of San Pedro Ayampuc to make sure all construction activity at the mine site stops and to formally consult residents about the mine. The ruling is a victory for La Puya activists like Yolanda Oqueli.

Follow us on Twitter: @AIBHRGuatemala or visit www.amnesty.ca/guatemala.
Join the World’s Largest Human Rights Event!

Get ready to shed some light into dark corners. Let prisoners know they are not alone, never forgotten. Let governments know we are watching, and that we insist on respect for human rights. Let’s write for rights!

What is Write for Rights?
This is Amnesty International’s flagship event. Together, with Amnesty supporters in 140 countries, we press for justice on selected cases in one massive moment. We write, we fax, we email, we tweet, we share, we mobilize. Last year we took 3.2 million actions together. That is powerful, and you are powerful. This December, spend an hour, or an afternoon. Take action on your own, or in your school, family, workplace, community, coffee shop, faith community, or with a friend.

When is Write for Rights?
We centre our activities on or around International Human Rights Day which is December 10. This year it falls on a Thursday. If the timing does not work for you, you may wish to participate before or after that day.

How do we participate?
Sign up at www.writeathon.ca/. We’ll be in touch with information about the event, and with resources and tools for you to use. Check out the site to see the range of resources on offer. All actions will be posted by mid-November. To contact a staff member, email writeathon@amnesty.ca or phone Marilyn at 1-800-AMNESTY ext 325.

Who are we featuring this year?
Burkina Faso: Maria is 13. Her father forced her to marry a 70-year-old man, telling her “If you don’t go to join your husband, I will kill you.” Maria is just one of many girls in Burkina Faso who face early and forced marriage.

Greece: A dozen men brutally beat a gay couple last August. Authorities have identified no suspects. No perpetrators have been punished.

Mexico: Authorities arrested Yecenia Armento Graciano and tortured her for 15 hours. “I wanted them to just give me a bullet to the head so that it would all stop”, she says. She refused to sign a confession until the police threatened to kill her children.

Malaysia: The charges against a political cartoonist and satirist known as Zunar illustrate a clamp down on freedom of expression under the 1948 Sedition Act. Zunar holds the most number of Sedition Act charges -- nine in all.

Saudi Arabia: Human rights defender Waleed Abu al-Khair was convicted of violating the cyber crime law after peacefully expressing his opinions. He is also the lawyer for Raif Badawi among others, and has endured physical abuse in prison.

“\[quote\]I started receiving some letters from AI members. It was the first flicker of light in my dark days.\[quote\]” – Dr Tun Aung, prisoner of conscience in Myanmar, featured in Write for Rights 2013 and released years early.

Dr Tun Aung embraces his wife on his release in January 2015. © Private

DECEMBER: Write for Rights

“I started receiving some letters from AI members. It was the first flicker of light in my dark days.” – Dr Tun Aung, prisoner of conscience in Myanmar, featured in Write for Rights 2013 and released years early.
Social Media for Amnesty Activists

Social media is a powerful tool for social change. It’s never been easier for good ideas to catch on and spark a movement. Whether you’re a seasoned Twitter addict or a digital newbie, here are some quick tips.

WHAT KIND OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT IS BEST FOR YOU?

A Facebook group
- Designed for clubs or communities, and works a bit like a group email list.
- To connect, people have to request to ‘join’ the group as members, and you have to accept them.
- Any member can post content to the group, and all members can view.

A Facebook page
- Works like a mini website.
- Pages are completely public, so anyone can ‘like’ your page to connect
- Only admins can post content to the page (although it’s possible to have multiple admins) and all page-likers can view – although your posts won’t show up in the newsfeeds of all your page-likers
- Pages are great for promoting your group’s activities and events to the wider world, and for networking with like-minded groups and people.

A Twitter account
- Twitter is completely public, so anyone can see your content and/or ‘follow’ you.
- Only the account admin can post content. Some Twitter clients (like Hootsuite) allow you to have multiple admins.
- Twitter is great for networking with like-minded groups and people, engaging with politicians and decision-makers, and keeping up-to-date on the latest human rights news.

WHAT TO POST ON SOCIAL?

1. Share Amnesty Content messages
   Perhaps the post relates to an upcoming event? Or a campaign that will soon be a focus for your group? If so, make the connection.

2. Promote your group’s meetings and events
   Facebook in particular is a great place to post and promote your action group’s events. Social media is a perfect way to show people how great your events are! So think about ‘live-tweeting’ an event, or taking photos to create a Facebook album.

3. Post fun stuff
   Post fun stuff, inspirational quotes, funny comics, awe-inspiring images. If you read an interesting news article or a great blog, watch a good movie trailer, or have a giggle at an online comic, ask yourself ‘would my Amnesty followers be interested in this?’ — if the answer is yes, post it!

4. Ask your followers to take action
   A great way to engage your supporters is to give them something to do, whether it’s to sign one of Amnesty’s online petitions, make a donation to Amnesty, like or share your post, or sign up to attend one of your events.

DON’T FORGET TO FOLLOW/LIKE OUR CHANNELS FOR DAILY NEW CONTENT:
Facebook: Amnesty International Canada
Twitter: @Amnesty Now
Instagram: AmnestyCanada
LinkedIn: Amnesty International Canada
YouTube: Amnesty International, Canada