



TRADE UNION REPORT 2010

Amnesty International
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Amnesty International UK

TRADE UNION REPORT 2010

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Amnesty International UK

TRADE UNION REPORT 2010

Foreword

The past year has seen some tremendous strides forward for the Network. In particular, our email communications have taken off and we have now become the largest specialist network in the Section with 11,400 subscribers by the mid-Year. This is a tremendous testament to the support for workers rights of our core supporters – an enthusiasm that was also strongly on display at our AGM in Warwick.

On the international front, too we have laid some strong foundations for collaboration with the new incoming leadership of the International Trade Union Confederation.

Due to capacity constraints beyond our control, we had to reprioritise our planned work for 2010. That said, impressively we still managed to complete most of our planned work though some activities have been postponed to 2011.

The most significant delay this year was the postponement of the review of our Memorandum with the TUC and of the TU Strategy. Both of these are now slated to dovetail with a new Activism Strategy due to be adopted later this year.

I would like to join Shane in expressing the Committee's thanks for the hard work of many activists, volunteers and staff in taking forward the achievements reported here.

Finally, we wrap up this report with a major speech on workers' rights given by Kate Allen on 4 April 2011 at a solidarity rally in support of public sector workers in the United States.

Solidarity forever!

Tom Hedley
Chair Trade Union Network Committee

Report on trade union activities 2010

Introduction

2010 has been a productive and exciting year for trade union work. We not only made tremendous strides forward for the trade union network, particularly in relation to our international ambitions, we also consolidated our work on the ground, increasing our outreach through union conferences and our events programme. In particular, during 2010, our trade union network has grown to become the largest specialist network within Amnesty.

During this year, we anticipated reviewing our *Trade Union Strategy 2008 and Beyond* and renewing our Memorandum of Understanding with the TUC. However, towards the year's end we commenced an overarching review of AIUK's Activism Strategy, initiated a review into our country work, and began to formulate a Human Rights Education Strategy. In light of these developments the trade union network Committee agreed to defer our own reviews until 2011 in order to dovetail and integrate with the wider strategic directions that will be emerging.

Although the year, in retrospect, appears full of activities, during the second half of the year capacity constraints led to the cancellation of a few programmed activities and a short-term reduction in the pace of work. Nevertheless we remained firmly focused on the direction of travel, and in January 2011 a number of initiatives which had been carefully prepared for during the year began to bear fruit.

This Report covers the calendar year 2010, however for the sake of continuity, it also touches on some of the highlights in the first quarter of 2011.

The year ended with very sad news of the unexpected death in December of Ian Stuart, a long-time trade union stalwart within Amnesty and for many years our Returning Officer. He shall be sorely missed. Kate Allen, Maggie Paterson, John Pestle and I all attended his funeral alongside his family and union colleagues.

We were equally shocked and saddened by the sudden death also in December of Keith Faulkner, the TUC's veteran events manager, who not only stewarded major demonstrations, including our joint 2008 Burma demo, but also supported us in countless small ways at TUC Congresses and other events. Amnesty paid its respects at his funeral and at a subsequent memorial event.

Some highlights

- The February 2010 online action for Mansour Ossanlu reached 10,000 appeals within four weeks; and he was subsequently transferred from his criminal cell;
- May Day was marked by the Turkey Workers Rights action by AI local groups; we have distributed 10,000 action cards to date;
- May saw the re-launch of our Trade Union E-zine, which now appears as a monthly appeal and a quarterly newsletter;
- Joint Amnesty UK/IUF Zimbabwe union rights event at the International Labour Conference in Geneva in June was attended by 70 delegates;
- In June we learnt that our trade union network had, within 18 months, become the largest specialist network in Amnesty UK, with 11,400 subscribers;
- In June Amnesty participated at the 2nd World Congress of the ITUC in Vancouver, and all our objectives were achieved thanks to consistent sponsorship by the TUC and ITF;
- In June our TUC MoU was singled out for praise in feedback by the consultants conducting the *Amnesty Partnerships Review*;
- On the 22 July Gambia Action Day a delegation of AI/TUC/IFJ to FCO was led by Sarata Jabi one of the six trade unionists released early following activism last year;
- In September the published history of trade unions in Amnesty UK was launched by Kate Allen at a fringe meeting during the TUC Congress in Manchester.
- The autumn was marked by joint human rights events organised with the Northern TUC and Yorkshire and Humberside TUC
- In November and December the sugar workers in Iran and agricultural workers in Zimbabwe became union and workers rights portfolio cases.

Individuals at risk and country concerns

Zimbabwe

In the December/January 2010 issue of the Amnesty Magazine we took Gertrude Hambira's story to and the plight of the farm workers 250,000 supporters. We were therefore deeply concerned when we learnt that in February she had had to flee for her safety following threats by the security services in Zimbabwe arising from The General Agricultural and Plantation Workers' Union of Zimbabwe's (GAPWUZ's) denunciations of violent land-grabs of commercial farms. We issued an urgent action on her behalf, and followed up with a May Day action which highlighted the repressive role of Harare Central Police station which has affected trade unionists, women's rights activists and other human rights defenders. This action was strongly promoted in Amnesty UK and widely reported on opposition websites.

At the invitation of the International Union of Foodworkers, Amnesty UK was able to cosponsor a fringe meeting during the International Labour Conference in Geneva in June, at which Gertrude spoke movingly. We took the opportunity to hold some strategic discussions with the IUF regarding the plight of GAPWUZ members and Gertrude and the scope for collaborative campaigning.

Arising from these discussions with our union partners, the decision was taken by the Secretariat to include her case and that of GAPWUZ in our long-term portfolio. Her case came 'live' in November. In September Gertrude featured in our 'voices from the frontline' column in out TU Alert magazine.

In January 2011 I travelled to Geneva to meet with the IUF to discuss shared casework around GAPWUZ and the case of the sugar refinery workers in Iran. In regard to Gertrude and GAPWUZ, the IUF proposed an action card campaign focused on those countries of greatest influence on Zimbabwe. With financial sponsorship by Amnesty, 29,000 action cards in five language iterations (English, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Russian) we distributed by IUF, primarily to coincide with International Women's Day, through African women's trade union networks, to agricultural workers in Brazil and Mozambique, in Uruguay and Russia. The initiative was very widely supported including by the TUC and Unite in the UK.

At the time of writing, work is underway to take her story to 65, 000 Amnesty supporters through a cash appeal. We continue to maintain close direct contact with Gertrude and her union as we take this work forward.

Swaziland

On 10 May Amnesty issued a Statement demanding a public inquiry into the death in custody on or about 4th May of Sipho Jele, a Swazi political activist and union member. The TUC blogged on his case on the Amnesty 30th blog. In June during the ILC meetings in Geneva, I met with the General Secretaries of the two national union centres in Swaziland. The TUC and our Southern Africa team met on 15 July to discuss further collaboration. As the year progressed, the situation for human rights defenders and trade unionists has continued to decline, and we have maintained a close dialogue with the global unions to monitor developments. In mid-April 2011 widespread demonstrations called by pro-democracy activists and trade unions were met with intense repression, including extensive detention and arrests of union leaders. Amnesty and the global unions are collaborating to exert as much pressure as possible on the Swazi authorities. COSATU in South Africa has been particularly vocal.

Gambia

Following our cooperation with the TUC and ITUC and NUJ and IFJ last year, which saw the early release of six Gambian trade unionists and journalists who were facing two year jail sentences for sedition, we again joined forces for a Gambia Action Day on 22 July. In West Africa we encouraged unions and national centres to work with Amnesty Sections, and to that end, we highlighted this initiative to African delegations at the ITUC World Congress in Vancouver in June.

In London on 22 July a joint Amnesty UK/TUC/IFJ/NUJ delegation, alongside Sarata Jabi, one of the six incarcerated Gambia Press Union leaders, met with officials at the FCO. At that briefing, Sarata gave a vivid account of her detention and the impact on her new-born child. It was a moving reminder of the human impact of the Gambian governments disregard for fundamental rights.

Egypt

To coincide with May Day, the Secretariat issued a strong and detailed statement on Workers' Rights in Egypt. This was made available in English, French and Arabic at the ITUC Congress in Vancouver in June and was of particular interest to Education International. This opens up a new country concern for potential collaboration. Incidentally, a small demonstration protesting police brutality was organised by the Amnesty UK Egypt Country Coordinator, outside the Egyptian Embassy in

London on 9 July.

It is beyond the scope of this report to cover in any detail the emerging crisis in the Middle East and North Africa. However, as events have unfolded, Amnesty has worked especially closely with the global unions in defence of workers' rights and in support of the independent trade unions in Egypt.

Iran

Iran remains a country of grave concern to both Amnesty and the trade union movement. We were stunned and dismayed by the execution by hanging on Sunday 9 May of Farzad Kamangar, a teacher trade unionist whom we had been campaigning alongside Education International. He was executed together with four other political prisoners, including one woman. We supported a subsequent demonstration outside the London Embassy. These executions had been carried out in contravention of Iran's own laws and we speculated that they were part of the widespread crackdown ahead of the anniversary of the disputed presidential election.

The state of health of Mansour Ossanlu continues to concern us. In February supporters issued over 10,000 appeals online regarding his transfer to a criminal ward in the prison west of Tehran where he is held. He has now been transferred back to a political prisoners' ward. At the International Labour Conference in June the Iranian Ambassador to Switzerland issued an unusually strong assertion that Ossanlu would be pardoned. Iran had not been selected as one of the countries for scrutiny this year at the Committee on Application of Standards. In the last days of June, however, we have had news that Ossanlu has twice appeared in court and that further charges are to be laid against him. He was subsequently sentenced to a further year in jail. At about the same time, security forces brutally attacked his daughter-in-law and issued threats that he must leave the country and not speak out if he is released. We remain deeply concerned about the fate of his deputy Ebrahim Maddadi, whom we also consider to be a prisoner of conscience.

The crackdown on Ossanlu's bus workers' union is intensifying; on 9 June Saed Torabian and on 12th June Reza Shahabi, both members of the unions' board, were detained and are currently being held incommunicado by the security services. We issued an online appeal on their behalf and their safety was the subject of a joint Amnesty UK and Amnesty Canada photo action on the margins of the ITUC Congress in June, which endorsed the event. Torabian was subsequently released, but Reza Shahabi remains in jail awaiting court proceedings.

Meanwhile, Amnesty have added the case of the Haft Tapeh Sugar Refinery Workers' Union to our portfolio, permitting ongoing campaigning.

In November, Amnesty joined with the global unions in a strategy discussion concerning the bus workers, sugar refinery workers and teachers. The outcome as a commitment by Amnesty to produce a *campaign Digest* on workers' rights in Iran and an accompanying Action Card. It is hoped that our union partners will provide significant distribution and activism channels for this resource.

Also in November, I attended and spoke at a joint Newcastle Amnesty and Northern TUC event in Newcastle focused on Iran and Burma. There was a very good turnout and participants took part in the 'hands action' for Su Su Nway.

Turkey

In January 2010, we led on a two-hour session with a 50-strong delegation on Hak-Is and DISK trade unionists at a TUC/ETUC seminar.

In May we launched our action card appeal calling for Turkey to respect workers and union rights by implementing the core ILO conventions. 10,000 were distributed as the May local groups monthly action, a further 3,000 have been sponsored for AI Turkey use, while two trade unions in Turkey, Tekguida-Is and Hava-Is have between them ordered a further 5,000. We took this card to Brussels for the April launch of a Protection International DVD on workers' rights abuses in Turkey at which Amnesty Francophone Belgium explained that they were also promoting the campaign. We also distributed and promoted the action at the ICTUR Administrative Board, which met in Geneva on the fringes of the ILC and was focused on workers' rights in Turkey and the impact of the Demirel case at the ECHR. This action was also selected for distribution at the Amnesty booth at the ITUC Congress in June. Copies in Turkish were made available to Turkish delegates, including Hak-Is.

Towards the end of the year we took forward our proposed partnership with AI Turkey to support them in their outreach to trade unions to help build their capacity and impact. Two specific projects were proposed for 2011. The first was a planned re-issue of the Turkey Workers' Rights action card, while the second is a proposed solidarity action on workers rights in Iran, based on the upcoming *campaign digest* and focused on food and transport unions in Turkey. Following visits to Istanbul and Ankara in February and March 2011, our success in terms of take up of the workers rights action card has

well exceeded our expectations, with 100,000 copies ordered by trade unions for launch on May Day. The Iran solidarity action will take place later in the year.

Burma

Amnesty's efforts to coordinate with the ITUC on Burma in the run-up to the 'elections' planned for the autumn were hindered by a lack of strategic directions from the confederation. Nevertheless we have attended coordination meetings hosted by the TUC and have confidentially shared key elements of our strategy during this year of sham elections. In the autumn we singled out the case of Su Su Nway – a jailed young activist who had first come to prominence for denouncing forced labour in her community to the ILO Office in Rangoon. Her case was included in the 'hands action' photo petition where supporters were photographed with her name written on the palms of their hands. This action was the principal focus of our stall at the TUC Congress in Manchester in September, where over 200 attendees took part. Her case was also selected for Amnesty's global Letter Writing Marathon, and over 45,000 actions and appeal were recorded in the evaluation. The release of Aung San Suu Kyi in November is a necessary but entirely insufficient step, with over 2,000 political prisoners, including Su Su Nway, still in jail. A joint Northern TUC-Amnesty Newcastle event on Burma and Iran took place on 23 November and was very well attended.

Philippines

We continued our fruitful partnership with UNISON and CHRP by co-hosting a fringe meeting on Philippines Human and Workers' Rights during their Conference in Bournemouth in June. The event was standing-room only; speakers were Jamima Fagta, CHRP, Kevin O'Grady, UNISON, Hazel Galang, Amnesty Secretariat and Dan Borjal a Netherlands Filipino activist. The resolution on the Philippines was one of only 2 (out of 15) to be prioritised for Conference debate. It called for cooperation with Amnesty and CHRP. There are many Filipino workers within UNISON's membership.

In the autumn we sponsored two events at HRAC highlighting human rights abuses in the Philippines. These were undertaken in collaboration with CHRP, UNISON, LMN and others.

Colombia

Colombia remains a grave concern. Presidential elections in May were won by the former defence minister, an ally of Uribe. There is scant evidence of any significant shift in

policy regarding fundamental human rights and impunity. Amnesty continues to issue urgent actions in defence of trade unionists under threat.

On 11th November, we co-sponsored an event on labour rights and impunity in Colombia together with UNISON and ICTUR. The event provided a platform for the lawyers' collective CAJAR to outline their work.

Palestine/Israel/Occupied Territories

Our work on P/I/OT has varied according to the views of our affiliates, whose policies differ. Nevertheless, the TUC/PSC joint leaflet on goods produced in the occupied territories was made available at the TU stall at the AGM, and PCS has shown an interest in our water campaign. We joined in denouncing the Gaza flotilla actions by Israel and attended a demonstration outside the BBC in Manchester alongside delegates of the Unite and UCU conferences who were meeting at that time.

Gibraltar

Moroccan Migrant Workers in Gibraltar have been denied civil, political, economic and social rights for forty years. Unite has been campaigning on their behalf for several decades. Following an approach by the union, their plight was highlighted in the Autumn issue of TU Alert and I spoke at a packed fringe meeting during the TUC Congress in September at which it was possible to speak direct to some of those who were experiencing discrimination. It is proposed that Amnesty will issue a strong Public Statement avowing their rights, and that this will be delivered in Gibraltar in Spanish.

Campaigns

People on the Move: Migrant workers

The abuse of the rights of migrant workers is likely to concern Amnesty more in the future as we move forward with the ‘people on the move’ cross-cutting strand of Amnesty’s Integrated Strategic Plan 2010-2016. At the ITUC Congress I encouraged delegates to work with us around major recent reports on migrant domestic workers in Jordan, on Malaysia, on South Korea, and on transient migrants in Mexico. This area of work is new and evolving within Amnesty, and it is likely that in 2011 some strategic directions will be mapped out, ahead of which we are undertaking consultations and soundings with the TUC, ITUC and the global unions on potential collaboration.

International Work

Now that our infrastructure issues are out of the way (see the good news below), we are able to devote more capacity to take forward our international relationship-building work. At the International Labour Conference in Geneva in June, as well as the joint events with IUF on GAPWUZ and Gertrude Hambira and participation at the ICTUR Administrative Board with its focus on Turkey, I was also able to renew relationships as well as establish new contacts, especially with the chemical workers ICEM and metalworkers IMF.

Amnesty made tremendous progress in terms of outreach at the ITUC Congress in Vancouver on the 21st-25th June. Though the workload was high, and the trip expensive, the gains of participation at this 4-yearly forum of all the world’s major national union centres really merited the investment made. We were the only NGO with an official Side Meeting and an exhibition booth. During the week our activities were consistently sponsored by the TUC and the ITF, and we organised – with the considerable support of AI Canada – a photo protest action in support of jailed Iranian trade unionists.

The Vancouver congress provided an opportunity to renew our contacts with incoming General Secretary Sharan Burrow, and to meet with the incoming Director of External Relations, Alison Tate. A fruitful preliminary discussion with Alison was followed up by an extensive scoping meeting in January 2011 at the HRAC, at which some priorities were identified and a process of engagement was mapped out.

In January 2011 the International Metalworkers’ Federation IMF, convened a joint meeting in Geneva for the Swiss-based global unions, IUF, PSI and

BWI, to discuss approaches to casework and country campaigning. The goal of the meeting was to better manage expectations and to share Amnesty’s approach to case selection and campaigning. This event was welcomed by the attendees, and a similar activity is proposed in due course for the Brussels-based global unions.

Demand Dignity

We have continued to take part in the meetings of the TUC’s International Development Group during the year. This has provided a very valuable forum for exchanging ideas and work plans. In particular, we also contributed to the strategic review of the TUC’s International Development work.

Stop Violence Against Women

In early September I participated at a Yorkshire & Humberside TUC and Amnesty Leeds Group joint event on violence against women, and which I was able to take the cases of Konstantina Kuneva in Greece, Gertrude Hambira in Zimbabwe, Su Su Nway in Burma and the brave women demanding sexual and reproductive rights in Nicaragua. The event was very well attended and there was a lively discussion about shared activism.

Outreach and engagement

Partnerships Review

Arising from the media coverage early in the year concerning Gita Sahgal and Cageprisoners, Amnesty UK and Amnesty IS jointly undertook a commissioned review of partnership working. As part of that review, AIUK’s MoU with the TUC was singled out for praise.

Conferences and events

As usual, Tom Hedley, supported by other members of the TUNC, led the way in terms of our attendance and participation at union conferences and events. Notable this year, was Tom’s speaking engagement at NAPO, which subsequently affiliated to Amnesty. We also had fringe meetings at the TUC Congress and at the UNISON Conference.

I also participated in part in a discussion session in Guildford at the UNISON South East International Seminar in November. There was a lively and fruitful debate about how to collaborate even better.

Trade Union Alert

Due to capacity issues beyond our control, we were unable to publish the Spring 2010 issue of TU Alert. The September issue, published for TUC Congress, has been very well received. It has a focus on 'People on the Move' and the plight of migrant workers. The Spring 2011 issue will have a strong focus on the Middle East and North Africa. As usual, the content of TU Alert is intended to have a long shelf-life and the number of external contributors continues to grow.

Plans to develop a subscription model for the magazine had to be put into abeyance pending the full roll out of our Mascot database. It is hoped to address this long-standing goal during 2011.

TU History and TU DVD

We were delighted to launch Ed Heery's 68-page history of trade union in Amnesty UK at a fringe meeting during TUC Congress in Manchester. As well as Ed, contributors at the launch included Kate Allen, Sally Hunt of UCU and TUC General Council International spokesperson, as well as Tom Hedley and two other 'veterans', Jenny Stephenson and Ken Martin.

The publication has been well received both by activists and labour rights academics. We are promoting it as an incentive to new members, and it is also available through commercial distributors. We are absolutely delighted with the quality and attention paid to design and production, and special thanks must go to the print and publishing team for their considerable hard work which is reflected in a fantastic design and accessible layout.

The Welcome to Amnesty DVD for trade union audiences is now almost finalised and will be launched in 2011. We are delighted to have this outreach resource which succinctly tells the story of Amnesty's engagement with labour rights and with trade unions.

Affiliations

As mentioned in the Annual Report 2009, our affiliation records system has not only been fixed, but improved through de-duping, consistent naming conventions etc. My thanks go to SCT and DBM colleagues for all their hard work. The result was a short dip in total membership compensated for by new affiliations. We ended the year 2010 with an increase in membership of just over 10% to a total of 220. In 2011 we will look at further recruitment partnerships and initiatives. Our Mascot database has been rolled out in December 2010 and we hope to take advantage of its functionality during 2011 to – in particular – better track our communications with affiliates and partners.

The online Network

I am delighted to report that since May we have reinstated our monthly E-zine comms programme with individuals who sign up to the network. Every month has been an action-based short E-zine, with once every quarter a longer E-magazine. We will monitor click-throughs and experiment with titles and formats to achieve best impact.

I am also thrilled to advise that in the short 18 months since the TUNC agreed to open the Network to individuals with an affinity for our work, we have grown to become the largest specialist Network within Amnesty UK, with 11,400 subscribers at present. This is a phenomenal sign of our activists' affinity for our labour rights work and has been achieved with little active promotion in view of our past emailing constraints. I am especially grateful to colleagues in the web and database marketing teams, and to our Activism team comms coordinator, for this significant breakthrough in our outreach.

Health Staffs/Professionals – BMA

We are very grateful that – through the efforts of Anastasia Chew and with the support of the N W Thames Junior Doctors Committee – a motion drafted by Amnesty reached the agenda of the British Medical Association Conference in Brighton. This motion was subsequently composited with other human rights motions and the specific references to organisations were removed, though the policy adopted still reflects the scope for collaboration and invites the BMA to do so. We are delighted by this opportunity. The BMA press released the debate, which took place on Thursday 1 July.

In early 2011 the Section initiated a review of all Networks, and the option of re-establishing a Health Professionals' Network has been included in the terms of reference for this Project. The trade union network itself is also included in this review – though its unique status as a constituent assembly was also recognised. The outcome will inform the future Trade Union Strategy.

Staff and volunteers

As usual, thanks must go to many colleagues for the achievements reflected in this report. In particular, special thanks must go to Katy Fattuhi, our trade union volunteer throughout most of 2010. Katy's stalwart support throughout has been of immense benefit. We wish her all success following her appointment as Director of an arts development agency in Islington.

Shane Enright, April 2011

Annex 1

Amnesty's trade union Urgent Action casework 2010

| Date | Country | Case |
|----------------|------------|---|
| January 2010 | Peru | Peruvian trade union leaders Pedro Condori Laurente and Antonio Quispe Tamayo were released on 29 March, pending the outcome of the trial. They had both been detained since 11 January 2011 on unfounded charges. No evidence that they have committed any crime has been presented and Amnesty International believes they are being charged solely because of their peaceful human rights work. |
| May 2010 | Guatemala | A pregnant garment factory worker has been threatened and pressured to leave her job or quit the union. The lawyers who advise her have been followed and, their office was broken into after a press conference where the intimidation against union members was reported. |
| June 2010 | Iran | FOUR TRADE UNIONISTS REMAIN IN DETENTION Gholamreza Gholamhosseini (m), Reza Shahabi (m), Mansour Ossanlu (m), Ebrahim Maddadi (m) Morteza Komsari and Ali Akbar Nazari, leading members of an independent but unrecognized trade union in Iran, were released in late December. Four others remain in custody. |
| June 2010 | Sudan | Doctors Ahmed Alabwabi, Alhadi Bakhit, Abdelaziz Ali Jamee, Ahmed Abdallah Khalafallah, Ashraf Hammad and Mahmoud Khairallah Mohammed were released on 24 June. The six doctors were arrested between 1 June and 8 June by the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) in relation to a strike that was being organised to ask for better conditions for doctors in Sudan. The six doctors are members of the Doctors Strike Committee that was organising the strike. |
| July 2010 | Swaziland | Political activists; human rights defenders and trade unionists in Swaziland are at risk of harassment; ill-treatment and arrest; as the authorities use draconian counter-terror legislation to investigate a spate of government-targeted petrol bombings. |
| August 2010 | Mexico | Armed men have assaulted and threatened independent trade unionists Cándido Corona Barruecos and Virgilio Meléndez Montiel at the factory where they work; in the central Mexican state of Puebla. Members of a non-governmental labour rights organization supporting the trade unionists have received death threats. |
| August 2010 | Bangladesh | Six female garment workers and Montu Ghose, a lawyer advising the Garment Workers Trade Union Centre, have been released on bail. |
| September 2010 | Swaziland | Since 6 September; human rights defenders; trade unionists and political activists in Swaziland have been arbitrarily detained; harassed and intimidated; as the authorities tried to disrupt two days of planned pro-democracy demonstrations. There are fears of continuing human rights violations following these demonstrations. |
| September 2010 | Brazil | Alexandre Anderson de Souza; the president of the Associação dos Homens do Mar (AHOMAR; a fishermen's association); has received a series of threats related to his work as a community leader. He is not being provided adequate protection and is now at risk. |
| September 2010 | Cambodia | Several union leaders and activists organizing a nationwide strike of garment factory workers in Cambodia are at risk of arrest and legal action. They include Ath Thorn, the President of the Cambodian Labour Confederation (CLC), Morn Nhim (f), President of the Cambodian National Confederation (CNC) and Tola Moeun, Head of the Labour Rights Programme at CLEC – Community Legal Education Centre. |
| November 2010 | Brazil | Flaviano Pinto Neto, a leader of the Charco community in Maranhão state, north-east Brazil, was shot dead on 30 October. Manoel Santana Costa, another leader of the community, along with over twenty other members of the community, have received a series of death threats and now fear for their lives. |
| November 2010 | Ukraine | Trade union activist Andrei Bondarenko was not made to undergo a compulsory psychiatric examination on 13 December 2010, as had been scheduled. He believes that public and international pressure, including the appeals sent by the UA network, helped bring this about. |
| November 2010 | Guatemala | Mateo López is Secretary General of the local branch of the Health Trade Union (Sindicato de Salud) and a member of the coalition, National Front for the Struggle (Frente Nacional de Lucha – FNL). Since January 2010, he has been very active in denouncing corruption in the health service. |

Annex 2

Kate Allen

Standing firm on workers' rights in the USA

Kate Allen, director of AIUK, spoke at a TUC solidarity rally on 4 April 2011 in support of public sector workers' rights in the United States

I am proud, on behalf of Amnesty International, to be with you today to show solidarity with workers in the United States who are standing up in defence of their fundamental human rights.

Let there be no doubt: the right to organise, the right to join and form trade unions, the right to collective bargaining, and the right to strike – these are universal human rights.

They are contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the international covenants, in the ILO Core conventions. The United States has promised to uphold these rights and we are here today to remind law makers of these obligations.

The right to organise at work is a crucial enabling right, it is the basis on which workers and communities can defend their living standards, protect their health and livelihoods, and defend the public services that the most vulnerable are usually most reliant upon.

Not only do trade unions give voice to workers' aspirations, they also stand up for our communities and services, and they resist discrimination and disenfranchisement. It is because unions are effective that they are under attack, and it is because they are effective that we are seeing unprecedented levels of community resistance whether in Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Florida and in other States where fundamental worker protections are under challenge.

There is a direct link between the right to organise and the average wages that workers can enjoy. That is as true here in the UK as it is in America. In the US poverty levels, lack of health insurance, infant mortality – are all higher in States which curtail union rights. It is no surprise that so called "right to work" states have a higher rate of accidents – 52 per cent higher according to the US Bureau of Labour.

I have just returned from Amnesty USA's annual general meeting where members and supporters came together as one to express our solidarity with trade unionists and communities in defence of their rights.

Many employees are already struggling because of the economic crisis, and labour rights and the protection of union representation are sorely needed to ensure that employees do not bear the brunt of the crisis. The struggle for union rights is also a struggle for migrant workers' rights, for education and health rights, for wage security, for workplace health and safety.

Amnesty is steadfast in our insistence that workers must enjoy their fundamental rights to organise, to strike, to collectively bargain. There can be no equivocation. State governors and legislators must withdraw support for these measures which violate international law.

And let's make no mistake – labour rights are not only important for workers, but are essential for the promotion of our wider social and human rights goals. Public sector workers are typically the strongest and fiercest advocates of good value effective public services.

If we are to tackle, for example, the wide racial disparities in sexual health and maternal mortality in the USA we need to correct the shortage of health care professionals that is a serious obstacle to timely and adequate care. We need to defend public hospitals and workers' health benefits, we need to improve access to education, we need more and better rewarded teachers and health care professionals – and workplace bargaining and strong unions are the best guarantee of secure and sustainable services.

This year Amnesty International is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. In the article that Peter Benenson wrote in the Observer newspaper back in 1961, which led to Amnesty's foundation, one of the cases he raised was that of Tony Ambelitos, a trade unionist who was imprisoned by the Greek junta solely for the exercise of his union rights. For fifty years we have defended workers rights and we are here today to renew that commitment and continue the struggle.

We are witnessing an unprecedented call for human rights and democracy in the Middle East and North Africa, and in Tunisia it is organised labour that has led the way. In Egypt independent trade unions have broken the pall of fear and silence and mobilised and organised for change. Arab women workers are coming together and demanding that their voices be heard, and it is their labour unions that are providing platforms for solidarity and resistance.

Annex 2 (continued)

Kate Allen

Standing firm on workers' rights in the USA

Wherever labour rights are under attack, Amnesty will stand up and be counted.

Amnesty UK has partnered with our small Section in Turkey to reach out to trade unionists who are facing an increasing onslaught from employers and the state. Just last week we have joined together with two federations and eleven unions to prepare for a campaign to demand that Turkey respects the fundamental rights contained in the ILO core conventions.

On May Day Turkish trade unions will distribute 100,000 Amnesty action cards in over 81 cities and communities calling on the incoming government to guarantee fundamental workers rights following the June 12th election. We will replicate this demand globally and we will be calling on British trade unions to play their part in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in Turkey who are struggling to have their rights respected in their workplaces.

And we know that together we are stronger. Here in the UK we are proud of our partnership with the British TUC and proud of the thirty years and more of collaboration between Amnesty and unions. We have never been stronger than we are today. In the two years since we opened up our trade union network to individuals, we have grown to become the largest specialist network in the UK, with over 14,000 subscribers.

Together we can make a difference. When the government of Gambia prosecuted six trade unionists, we came together with the TUC and the global unions to demand their release. A few weeks into two year sentences for sedition, all six were pardoned.

When we learnt that Mansour Ossanlu, the jailed leader of the Tehran bus workers union was being denied an operation that he needed to save his eyesight, we came together with you and sent fifteen thousand protest messages through our website over five days – that is more than one action a minute night and day – until, without precedent, he was taken from his jail cell to have the operation he needed.

And we are coming together in defence of Gertrude Hambira, leader of the agricultural workers' union in Zimbabwe, who has been forced into exile for speaking out against the land-grabs of Mugabe's cronies, which are leading to forced evictions of the poor land workers that

she represents.

By teaming up with the International Union of Foodworkers we have been able to focus our appeals on Gertrude's behalf on those countries of greatest influence on the Mugabe government. Action cards have been distributed in Brazil, in Mozambique, through African women's trade union networks, and in Russia reminding the authorities that the eyes of the world are upon them.

And we have shown solidarity as well with the brave trade unionists of Colombia, which continues to be a killing ground for workers who are organising. We have shown solidarity with Konstantina Kuneva in Greece, with Su Nway in Burma and with other brave women and men whose only crimes have been to stand up for their fellow workers.

I know that these struggles will be long and that the road ahead will be rocky. There is a great deal at stake, but I take encouragement from the unprecedented and inspiring mobilisation of communities across the US, bringing together students and service users alongside organised labour in mass protests on a scale unseen in decades. I take comfort that public opinion is on our side, that right will surely trump might, that our values – values of decency and dignity, of justice and solidarity will surely prevail.

On April 4, 1968, shortly before his assassination, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stood with sanitation workers in Memphis to demand human rights, basic respect and collective bargaining to gain a better life. Today, hundreds of thousands of people are taking the same stand— together. I am proud to be with you and Amnesty is proud to be amongst your number.

THREE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

- 1 Visit our website to find out more:
www.amnesty.org.uk/tradeunions
- 2 Sign up to create your personal profile
and to join the Trade Union Network:
www.amnesty.org.uk/register
- 3 Contact us:
tradeunions@amnesty.org.uk

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