

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IMPACT REPORT 2012-2013

MAKING HUMAN RIGHTS CHANGE HAPPEN



**AMNESTY**  
INTERNATIONAL





Amnesty International UK rally in London's Trafalgar Square, during Global Day of Action on the Middle East and North Africa

# INTRODUCTION

by Salil Shetty, Secretary General,  
Amnesty International



For more than 50 years Amnesty International has been a social movement that has created extraordinary social change – helping to transform the call for freedom, justice and dignity into a truly global demand. With threats to human rights lying at the heart of major challenges facing humanity, our ongoing ambition is to increase significantly our impact.

We are determined to challenge ourselves to change the way we work globally, to be bold and imaginative, and to promote innovation and new thinking to help build the long-term future of a truly global human rights movement – one that makes change happen wherever and whenever it is needed.

This public impact report, covering January 2012 - December 2013, is part of that ambition. It reports on our achievements and contribution to human rights impact and change. It aims to articulate the global breadth and depth of our work, to enhance our accountability and transparency, and to foster understanding of what can be achieved and how – including by drawing out lessons for future activism.

It is important to stress that human rights impact is often the result of many factors, organizations and the broader human rights movement. We are usually one of many actors working on an issue. In some cases we strategically supported action led by our partners or by activists and human rights defenders. However, the stories of change selected here are examples of some of those from our current priority areas of work where we believe that our contribution to the final outcome was significant.

Organizationally we can identify key threads, including that:

- A strengthened approach to partnerships, active participation and network building improved the relevance and sustainability of our work
- We strategically used our reach and influence to make connections between the local, the national and the global to achieve change in policy and practice, to bring a human rights angle to complex socio-economic problems and to use individual cases work as an entry point to broader changes and vice versa
- We invested in building expertise and capacity, technologically and otherwise, to respond rapidly and flexibly to human rights violations – although as always, more is needed

These stories also show that – even when threats to justice, freedom and dignity appear too intractable or deeply entrenched to be overcome – people united in common action have the power to create real change. With tenacity and patience, hope really can triumph over adversity.

**“Amnesty International ... has helped us to keep our small wick of self-respect alive, you have helped us to keep the light and we hope that you will be with us in the years to come, that you will be able to join us in our dreams, and not take either your eyes or your mind off us, and that you will help us to be the country where hope and history merges.”**

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, opposition leader  
and former prisoner of conscience, Myanmar

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AROUND THE GLOBE WHERE WE WORK AND HOW

Amnesty International is a global movement of seven million people in more than 190 countries who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all. We have:

- more than two million members and supporters who drive forward our fight for rights
- more than five million activists who strengthen our calls for justice

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending violations of these rights.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

## We work to:

- End discrimination and persecution
- Abolish the death penalty
- End abuses in criminal justice systems
- Protect the rights of those living in slums and informal settlements
- Protect freedom of expression, association and assembly
- Protect people on the move – migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees
- End abuses in armed conflict and crisis
- Regulate the trade of arms and of military, policing, surveillance equipment
- Empower women and girls to claim and exercise their sexual and reproductive rights
- Hold corporations accountable
- Make international justice real
- Ensure security with human rights
- Stop torture



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*Top:* Solidarity for the Syrian people, Oslo, Norway, 2013

*Middle:* Arms Trade Treaty campaign event, USA embassy in Seoul, South Korea

*Bottom:* Sochi Olympics action – a ballerina protests in Moscow against repression of free speech in Russia



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# OUR IMPACT WORLDWIDE



## Urgent Actions – marking 40 years of saving lives

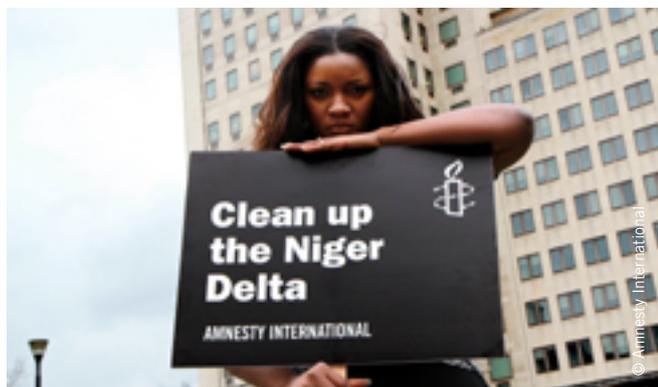
Solidarity with individuals is a key pillar of our work, and 2013 marked the 40th anniversary of our powerful Urgent Action network. Once we hear of an individual in danger and after rapid fact checks, an Urgent Action appeal is published, translated into many languages, shared with our offices worldwide and then with thousands of network members. Authorities can be inundated with letters, faxes, emails and tweets from all over the world. In 2013, we issued 609 Urgent Actions and updates relating to 82 countries or territories.

Urgent Actions in the Middle East and North Africa increased after the ‘Arab Spring’. Of 102 issued to protect people across the region in 2013, we recorded impact and positive developments in 14 cases. Imprisoned human rights defenders were released in Bahrain, Syria and Egypt. Urgent Actions have dramatically spiked in Syria, where thousands of pro-reform activists have been detained since 2011 by the security forces and pro-government shabiha gangs, torture and ill-treatment has been widespread, and hundreds of people have reportedly died in custody. For example, when pro-reform activist and 62-year-old jeweller Georges Moubayed was abducted after leaving home in Damascus in January 2012 by a group believed to be linked to the authorities we issued an Urgent Action on risk of torture and ill-treatment, and he was released later that month.

While we do not usually claim full responsibility for successful outcomes, a third of all Urgent Actions make a concrete difference – preventing torture or ill-treatment, securing someone’s release or saving lives. “Urgent Actions put individual people in the spotlight fast, so they can’t be tortured or illegally detained in the shadows”, said Bryna Subherwal from our Individuals at Risk team.

## Upholding freedom of expression – Russia

Our work for prisoners of conscience in Russia contributed to the release of high-profile cases under amnesty or presidential pardon – including Maria Alyokhina and Nadia Tolokonnikova from the band Pussy Riot, businessman Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Vladimir Akimenkov, one of those arrested in Moscow’s Bolotnaya Square during demonstrations in 2012. Akimenkov’s case was part of our Write for Rights 2013 letter writing marathon, which saw 2.3 million actions taken by hundreds of thousands of people in 143 countries. The Pussy Riot members and Vladimir Akimenkov were released on 19 December 2013, alongside the Greenpeace ‘Arctic 30’ activists and two other Bolotnaya Square detainees, as part of a general amnesty shortly before the opening of the Sochi Olympics. Mikhail Khodorkovsky was pardoned separately on the same day. Despite these high-profile successes – largely facilitated by a high visibility moment in the Winter Olympics – large-scale persecution of peaceful demonstrators and voices of dissent in Russia continues. We have seen very little response from the authorities and there remain serious challenges in achieving sustainable changes in policy and practice in Russia.



## Holding corporations to account – Nigeria

In major progress in securing justice for oil-affected people in the Niger Delta, a landmark ruling by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in December 2012 directed the Nigerian government to hold oil companies to account for rights abuses – making it clear that by failing to do so, the government was breaching its legal obligations. Oil companies in the region – particularly Shell, which is the biggest on-land operator – have long evaded responsibility for oil pollution, with the Nigerian government allowing this. The ECOWAS ruling means that the government must compel Shell to comply with national regulations, comprehensively clean up the oil spills, compensate people for devastation to their lives and do everything possible to prevent oil spills recurring. We provided legal expertise to support the ECOWAS case and our research was used as evidence.

By combining innovative research – including satellite imaging confirming changes caused through pollution – with strategic partnerships and technical expertise, we successfully challenged Shell on oil spill issues. This demonstrates how innovation, flexibility and developing appropriate tools can challenge corporations, and highlights our capacity to work on technically challenging issues while ensuring the participation and ownership of affected communities.

In 2013, in a case brought by Amnesty International and Friends of the Earth, an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) complaints mechanism concluded that Shell had used misleading data on oil pollution. Our detailed research was key to this outcome.

Meanwhile, in response to our calls for greater transparency in the way oil pollution is investigated, Italian oil company Agip began to publish all of its oil spill investigation reports in 2013. This followed a similar move by Shell in 2011.

## Protecting Indigenous People's lives and livelihoods – Ecuador

In July 2012, in a landmark ruling, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights found the Ecuadorian state responsible for putting at risk the lives and livelihoods of the Sarayaku – Indigenous people tragically affected by oil companies. The court ruled that Ecuador must apologize, consult with and recompense the Sarayaku. The ruling was a major step forward in protecting Indigenous people's rights in Ecuador and across the region. We worked closely with the Sarayaku community, including presenting an amicus brief before the Inter-American Court. This cooperation was key to success. We learned a lot about the importance of active participation by affected communities and of continuous and clear communication with them. Since the ruling we have campaigned for the Court's recommendations to be implemented – and seven have been so far. Targeted advocacy, partnerships and strong media worked in this instance. In addition, our campaign is opening up spaces and possibilities for similar progress elsewhere – although the power of stakeholders involved and the government's lack of political will remain major hurdles.

*Images from left to right:*

Pussy Riot's Nadya Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina sign a petition for human rights in Russia

Nigerian singer and actor Omotola Jalade Ekeinde speaks out against Shell's actions that have devastated Niger Delta communities

Hernán Malaver Santi, member of Sarayaku's legal team, at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Costa Rica



## Ensuring accountability for complicity in CIA renditions – European Union

In September 2012 the European Parliament adopted a report and resolution condemning implicated European governments for failing to effectively investigate their complicity in the US-led rendition and secret detention programmes, which included torture and enforced disappearance. We helped to raise support for the report by regularly submitting new research and evidence to the parliament – and through direct engagement with key parliamentarians – to ensure a strong call for redress for victims of these operations and accountability for complicit governments and individual perpetrators. Through a public campaign our members and supporters in Europe demanded the report's adoption, and our European sections directly lobbied parliamentarians. The report had been an objective for us since the 2006 adoption of the first European Parliament report on CIA operations. After the 2012 report, we carried out further lobbying to ensure delivery of the parliament's commitment to a one-year follow-up resolution, and actively contributed to the strong follow-up resolution adopted in October 2013. We have been one of the key non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on these issues, and feedback from decision-makers and partners underlined our role in achieving these milestones.

Our campaigning and third party intervention also contributed to the 2012 European Court of Human Rights ruling on Macedonia's role in the CIA rendition to Egypt of German national Khaled El-Masri – a landmark judgment that for the first time held a European state, Macedonia, accountable for its complicity in the US operations. Our large body of work opposing the post-9/11 CIA-led rendition and secret detention programmes – focusing on the USA and European countries, including Finland, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Sweden, and the UK – demonstrates our commitment to end impunity and to bring to justice all perpetrators of violations regardless of their power and influence.

## Establishing global tools to secure justice – global

With our partners in a global NGO coalition we celebrated the establishment of a United Nations (UN) protocol that provides a new route to justice for potentially millions of people. The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, having been ratified by 10 countries, entered into force on 5 May 2013. The Protocol establishes a new complaints mechanism that could be a vital tool for people – especially those living in poverty – to hold their government accountable for both individual injustices and systematic socio-economic failings in fields such as health, education and housing. The legal instrument strengthens access to justice for violations of economic, social and cultural rights, which have been largely exempted from effective remedy at the international level and in many national and regional jurisdictions. The success follows more than a decade of advocacy – including through domestic efforts for legal and constitutional protections of economic, social and cultural rights, in which we actively participated and in some cases led.



## Protecting sexual and reproductive rights – El Salvador

When 22-year-old mother Beatriz from El Salvador was refused a life-saving abortion we collected more than 170,000 appeals on her behalf from across the globe and generated extensive media coverage. Although Beatriz was at risk of dying if she continued her pregnancy, for weeks she was denied the abortion services she needed and wanted. Sustained campaigning saved Beatriz's life when she was granted an early caesarean section. In a letter to everyone who campaigned on her behalf, she said: "Thank you for having supported me all the way. Without you I think I wouldn't have been able to stand being in the hospital ... This situation has been very difficult and without your support I wouldn't have been able to get through it."

The case shows how a powerful human story can mobilize thousands of people worldwide to stand up in support of sexual and reproductive rights. We worked closely with partners and human rights defenders in designing our approach, adding particular value by framing the issue as one of human rights – a crucial but often still unrecognized point in such cases. Civil society actors working in this area have welcomed our expertise on rights and in global standard setting. Beatriz's case also helped us improve our own capacity to work in this area and to learn from others.

## Opposing the death penalty – Gambia

Amnesty International and our partners in the country played a crucial role in stopping the government of Gambia from carrying out executions. In a televised address in August 2012, Gambian President Yahya Jammeh announced that by mid-September all existing death sentences would be "carried out to the letter". Three days later, eight men and one woman were executed by firing squad – Gambia's first executions in nearly three decades. Another 38 death row inmates were at imminent risk of execution. We orchestrated a powerful response, combining strong media and public attention with quiet advocacy and support to human rights defenders working in Gambia. On 14 September 2012, President Jammeh retreated and announced a "conditional" moratorium on executions. There have been no executions in the Gambia since.

*Images from left to right:*

Press conference launches Amnesty International report about secret CIA prisons in Poland

Millions of people – especially those living in poverty – have a new route to justice

Beatriz who almost died waiting for permission to terminate a pregnancy that could have killed her

Amnesty International Togo Secretariat during a Gambia action



## Preventing migrants' exploitation – Qatar

Authoritative research, advocacy and use of external opportunities helped shift attitudes and secure the announcement of reforms regarding Qatar's treatment of migrant workers in its World Cup preparations. Our recommendations – made in two major reports on construction and domestic workers – were echoed and cited by an international law firm commissioned by the Qatari authorities to examine our findings, and were used by dozens of states in the intensely critical May 2014 UN Universal Periodic Review hearing into Qatar's rights record. The government subsequently announced reform proposals to the sponsorship system and exit permit, which were amongst our key advocacy targets. The proposals are insufficient but demonstrate the rapid impact of our research, campaigning and media focus, together with action by our partners.

Our engagement with corporations in Qatar led some to announce investigations into abuses, and others to seek consultation with us and to accept our advice on mechanisms to prevent abuses. FIFA sought our advice on what steps it should take to support workers in Qatar. Our advocacy initiatives with Qatar's National Human Rights Committee and Ministry of Labour, our relationships with local lawyers and activists and our direct communication with employers contributed towards the resolution of individual cases. Dozens of workers secured salaries previously withheld, hundreds received exit permits to be able to return home, and despite initial refusals employers paid compensation for some worksite injuries.

Early strategic engagement with key stakeholders inside and outside Qatar, including other international organizations working on this issue and high-profile international media outlets, allowed us to create messages and recommendations to effectively engage states and corporations. Our holistic, solution-oriented approach also included advocacy and research in the migration origin countries of Nepal and India – including an innovative network of volunteer Migration Ambassadors in Nepal who raise awareness among young people on Qatar's human rights situation.

## Campaigning for abolition of the death penalty worldwide

Despite some setbacks, global progress towards abolition of capital punishment – an irreversible punishment that violates the right to life – continued to gather momentum. In 2012-2013, 14 countries took steps towards abolition and the US states of Connecticut and Maryland achieved full abolition. By the end of 2013, 98 countries had abolished the death penalty in law for all crimes, compared to 85 countries in 2004.

Internationally, our work against the use of the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment shows how a strong mix of tactics and long-term commitment can deliver tangible change. This has included coordination of UN-level and global work with national lobbying, effective user-friendly advocacy tools, and forging alliances with 'champion states'. Our annual death penalty statistics – a unique element of our approach – enable global progress to be tracked. This year-on-year tracking has enabled us to highlight the long-term trend towards abolition and is a tool widely used by NGOs and states. Our global research and monitoring capacity underpin these statistics. We have also produced targeted analytical research to challenge mistaken perceptions, including the myth that capital punishment is particularly effective in combating crime.



## Defending people against forced evictions – Romania

A December 2013 judgment by Romania’s Cluj-Napoca County Court – ruling illegal the Mayor’s decision three years earlier to forcibly evict around 300 Roma from the Coastei community to a site at the margins of the city, by a landfill and a chemical waste dump – was a victory for justice, the affected community and our partners. The court ordered the city authorities to pay damages to the Romani applicants and provide them with adequate alternative housing. The litigation – started by the community with the support of the European Roma Rights Centre – sent a strong signal to Romania’s local authorities that forced evictions and relocations of people into inadequate housing is unacceptable, and to the government that regulation is needed to outlaw forced evictions. “This decision is very important. We finally got a favorable result and we see that justice can be fair in Romania,” said Roma activist Claudia Greta. With our support, Claudia gave a moving testimony at the European Parliament in April 2013, with a standing ovation by participants including parliamentarians and governmental officials.

Together with the affected community, we developed a strategy focused on people’s concerns and needs – including through evidence-based research, human rights arguments, lobbying and engaging decision makers, and working closely with the community and our partners. We used our global leverage to raise awareness through a letter-writing marathon – with the community receiving several thousands of solidarity messages from people in over 40 countries, and the local authorities swamped by more than 100,000 letters. Our local and national partners noted the added value we bring to their work by providing a reliable rights perspective and by focusing on the right to housing, as we are one of the few NGOs to do so explicitly.

## Promoting LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex) rights – Europe

Governments worldwide are failing to live up to their obligations to protect the rights of LGBTI people. Across the globe, LGBTI people are frequently targeted with violence in their everyday lives, while Pride marches have been blighted by bans and violent attacks. We defend the rights of LGBTI people in a variety of ways, including by urging governments to fulfil their responsibility to allow people to express themselves and to protect people from homophobic or transphobic violence, as well as through active participation, partnership and capacity building. In June 2012, around 40 Amnesty International activists from 16 European countries joined LGBTI activists from Baltic countries in a Pride march in Riga, Latvia. Cooperation between the authorities and civil society enabled the event to go ahead successfully despite homophobic protests and intimidation.

*Images from left to right:*

Migrant accommodation in Qatar

Campaigning in Madrid for Hakamada Iwao who – after 46 years on Japan’s death row – was finally granted a re-trial and conditionally released in 2014

Launching report on forced evictions in Romania, Bucharest

Euro Pride in Oslo, 2014



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## Exposing the injustice of US drone attacks – Pakistan

Our October 2013 report into unlawful killings by the USA in Pakistan through attacks by drones – armed remotely piloted aircraft – led to huge media coverage globally. Our report documented recent killings in Pakistan’s northwestern tribal areas and the almost complete absence of transparency and justice surrounding the US drone programme. Although there are genuine threats to the USA and its allies in the region, and drone strikes may be lawful in some circumstances, we documented attacks for which there was no apparent justification and which raised serious questions about violations of international law that could even amount to war crimes. This included the killing of a 68-year-old grandmother as she picked vegetables in fields while surrounded by her grandchildren, and 18 laborers including a 14-year-old boy in an impoverished village as they prepared for their evening meal.

Based on rare access to remote and dangerous tribal areas, the report was one of the most comprehensive studies to date of the US drone programme from a human rights perspective. Its global impact highlights the importance of detailed and painstaking research, combined with an effective media relations strategy. This was a topical and controversial issue, issued at the right time in the news agenda. The report was published just after a key UN report on drones and just before Pakistan’s Prime Minister Sharif was due to meet with US President Obama – providing added context for the world’s media. The report was also extremely successful across socially influential sites and blogs. The global attention led the US President’s spokesperson at the White House’s daily press briefing to read a statement about the report, in turn generating further media coverage and public awareness.

## Preventing abuses – Middle East and North Africa

In 2013, we called on all governments to suspend the transfer of weapons of the type used by Egypt’s internal security forces in violent dispersals of protests. We lobbied the USA and EU in particular, as they were the key suppliers. After we raised the issue at a EU meeting of arms control officials and our press release ‘naming and shaming’ the key suppliers, EU foreign ministers suspended “export licenses to Egypt of any equipment which might be used for internal repression.” The USA also announced a suspension and postponement of certain arms supplies to Egypt.

Later that year we exposed the transfer of tear gas and other riot control equipment to Bahrain and its subsequent abuse, and the planned import to Bahrain of hundreds of thousands of tear gas canisters and tear gas grenades. South Korea – one of the world’s biggest tear gas suppliers – agreed to suspend shipments of the canisters and grenades to Bahrain following a combination of international advocacy in several supply countries, public exposure of the issue, and lobbying of the South Korea government and tear gas companies by Amnesty International South Korea working in partnership with Bahrain Watch. In a Financial Times interview, South Korean government officials highlighted the pressure they received from human rights groups on this issue.

*Images from left to right:*

University of Minnesota students and Amnesty International USA stage ‘Game of Drones’ action

Amnesty International France action for human rights in Bahrain

# FOCUS

## ACHIEVING AN ARMS TRADE TREATY



Press conference at Arms Trade Treaty signing ceremony, New York, USA, June 2013

On 2 April 2013, 20 years of determined lobbying and campaigning by Amnesty International and others paid off when the UN General Assembly voted decisively to adopt an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

With at least half a million people on average dying every year because of armed violence and conflict – and millions more displaced and abused – this treaty was desperately needed. For the first time, a binding treaty stipulates that the human rights implications of each arms sale must be examined before any transaction can take place.

“This historic treaty represents a strong desire of many states to tackle the irresponsible international arms trade. Strict implementation will save millions of lives and reduce the risk of serious human rights violations,” said Brian Wood, our Head of Arms Control and Human Rights.

From originating the idea in 1993 with three small NGOs, Amnesty International campaigned since the late 1990s in partnerships to promote the treaty proposals worldwide and worked increasingly since 2009 with “champion” states, to help develop the ATT text and secure its official adoption by the UN.

By September 2014 – following further advocacy with our partners – the treaty had 118 state signatories and 50 ratifications, and so is due to enter into force in December 2014.

### Why it matters

The uncontrolled arms trade takes a massive toll in lost lives and livelihoods. It fuels conflict, poverty and human rights violations. Every day millions of people worldwide suffer the direct and indirect consequences of an irresponsible arms trade. Thousands are killed, injured, raped, forced to flee from their homes or live in fear.

### The birth of a treaty

We have campaigned for more than two decades to achieve robust, legally binding, global rules on international arms transfers to stem the flow of conventional arms and munitions that fuel atrocities and abuse.



Control Arms Coalition campaigners demonstrate in front of UN building, New York, USA

The original idea that led to the ATT was conceived in our UK offices in the early 1990s. In 1993-94, we worked with three small UK NGOs to draft a legally binding code to control international arms transfers in a way that respects human rights and international law, with help from lawyers at the Universities of Cambridge and Essex. Our initial advocacy effort was in the European Union (EU) but the idea began to spread wider.

From 1995 – with other Nobel Peace Prize Laureates led by Oscar Arias and working with a committee of NGOs – we called for a legally binding International Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers, and circulated proposals to all states for such a code and a framework convention. The EU agreed a Code of Conduct on Arms Exports with a human rights criterion in 1998, but it was not legally binding. In the US, John Kerry worked with others in the Congress to agree a law mandating the President to negotiate an International Code with its major allies to govern arms transfers while respecting human rights principles.

## Global campaign

Yet with these initiatives falling far short of the binding treaty we advocated, we decided to step up our campaigning efforts to convince governments that the world urgently needed the ATT to fill a massive gap allowing irresponsible arms trading.

With Oxfam and the International Network on Small Arms (IANSA), we launched the Control Arms Campaign for a Global Arms Trade Treaty in October 2003, generating publicity through events, new publications and popular mobilization. Supporters erected hundreds of wooden gravestones for a global launch in front of the world's media in London's Trafalgar Square, staged processions with camels and elephants and entered the annual boat race in Cambodia with the Control Arms banners.

Most of all we organized the first-ever global photo petition – the Million Faces – to which anyone could add their picture.

**ONE PERSON IS KILLED  
BY ARMS EVERY MINUTE**



© Control Arms Coalition/Andrew Kelly

Control Arms Campaign event in New York, USA, during UN Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty

## 12 BILLION BULLETS ARE PRODUCED EACH YEAR. THAT'S TWO FOR EVERY PERSON IN THE WORLD

Over subsequent years, millions of people worldwide called on governments to agree a strong ATT with robust rules to protect lives and livelihoods. Activists demonstrated with homemade 'bulletproof' vests, headstones and toy guns, and even waved inflatable bananas to expose the absurdity of having an international treaty to regulate trade in bananas but not a global treaty for trading in arms. Support for an ATT grew from a handful of governments to more than 50.

In 2006, the Control Arms campaign invited Kenyan survivor of armed violence Julius Arile Lomerinyang – the millionth person to add their photo to our Million Faces demand for an ATT – to New York to hand this photo petition to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. We had teams of lobbyists pressing ministers, diplomats and officials, and generating media coverage. In December, 153 states voted for the General Assembly to begin work on the treaty. Only the USA voted against – but expert advocacy work had an impact and in 2009, the Obama administration declared US support for a treaty. In 2012, 153 UN member states voted for formal negotiations to begin.

## Golden rule – no arms for atrocities

Amnesty International made the 'golden rule' to protect human rights the centerpiece of the Control Arms campaign and, working in parallel with the International Committee of the Red Cross, this rule increasingly became the heart of the treaty negotiations.

The 'golden rule' in essence is simple – governments should not allow arms transfers if there is a real risk they will be used to seriously violate human rights or commit war crimes. By 2011 this rule was included in the draft treaty texts but still not supported by the US and many other states – but we kept up the pressure in as many capitals as we could. Leading up to the UN ATT conference in July 2012, we presented 620,000 signatures from over 65 countries – calling for a golden rule – to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and brought the symbolic graveyard to the UN headquarters.



Arms Trade Treaty signing ceremony, New York, USA, June 2013

© Amnesty International

## Last steps – a treaty in sight

After six years of official UN deliberations – and spurred on by intensive international advocacy work alongside our partners in the Control Arms Coalition – a treaty was in sight, with a month-long negotiating conference for the final treaty text in July 2012. We argued that the treaty had to be bulletproof – clear, robust, comprehensive and incorporating full respect for international human rights and humanitarian law.

Many governments agreed to support such a strong treaty but some powerful arms exporters – including the USA, China and Russia – argued for looser rules including that the treaty only cover a narrow range of weapons and have weak criteria for arms trade authorizations. At the 11th hour, the USA and a few other states prevented the treaty text from being adopted.

With our partners in the Control Arms Coalition and the support of some ‘champion’ states, Amnesty International seized this apparent setback as an opportunity to improve the treaty. We pushed for the UN General Assembly to reconvene the ATT Conference in March 2013, and for the draft wording to be tightened and made clearer and stronger with rules to protect human rights and to close loopholes. It was agreed the ATT could be decided by majority vote – no longer could one country or small group of countries veto it.

## Convincing powerful states

During the UN deliberations Amnesty International played a crucial role in helping to shift the positions of powerful and skeptical states towards greater respect for human rights, meeting with officials from over 150 countries and sharing proposals and arguments. Our regular high-level meetings with US negotiators and their allies helped convince US policy makers to move to a more positive position on human rights protection and to include ammunition. Pressure on China and Russia helped move them from outright opposition to the treaty to attempts to weaken the text, and eventually to accept not to try and block its adoption.

## Making history

Intense lobbying and public pressure paid off. History was made on 2 April 2013 when the UN General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to adopt an ATT with a golden rule. 155 states including the USA voted yes, 22 states including Russia and China abstained, and only Iran, North Korea and Syria voted against.

The achievement represents a fundamental shift in official thinking internationally about arms control and its relationship to human rights protection. Despite some shortcomings, the treaty text agreed provides a firm foundation to better regulate the international flow of the key weapons, munitions and their parts and components that are being used to violate human rights. However, state practices are still in many cases far below the aspirations and standards set out in the treaty.



Campaigning at the UN in 2013

## The future

We are keeping up the pressure by exposing cases of blatantly irresponsible arms transfers and by pressing governments to bring the ATT rules into their own national laws by ratifying the treaty. Once the treaty enters into force the challenge then will be to ensure proper implementation so that no state authorizes arms transfers to those committing crimes against humanity or war crimes, or turns a blind eye to dealers supplying arms likely to be used to commit serious human rights violations. With vigilance and good faith, and if human rights are at the forefront of how it is put into action, the ATT will over time save millions of lives and livelihoods, and help make the world a safer place.

## Lessons

The achievement of the ATT – starting from ideas in a small room in Amnesty International's offices 20 years ago to its entry into international law in 2014 – demonstrates the importance of creative and strategic thinking about human rights, of organizing and sustaining worldwide popular mobilization and high-level advocacy to tackle global challenges, and of being prepared to carry out long-term strategies and to see change through.

In the 1990s, to many people such a treaty felt like an impossible dream. But the determination, patience and tenacity of our strategists, researchers, advocates and campaigners – working with partners around the world to collect signatures, lobby politicians, raise awareness, build support and provide evidence and arguments – has prevailed.

Amnesty International acted as a reliable and independent source of expertise and knowledge for influential and even highly skeptical states, while smart advocacy – including linking high-level work at the UN with national action by our sections worldwide, both with their own governments and embassies of other states – achieved tangible changes in states' attitudes and actions.

Evidence of unfolding human rights violations linked to the proliferation and abuse of arms was used to communicate convincing arguments for change. Our documentation of atrocities in Syria and other countries in the Middle East and North Africa, and in other parts of Africa, was crucial in shifting the mood in the UN during negotiations for the ATT, while our long-standing work on sexual violence during the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was used to push for a provision on gender-based violence in the eventual treaty – the first treaty to explicitly incorporate this concept.

# INNOVATION, PARTNERSHIPS & HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION



## Digital innovation – hackathons

With diverse partners we piloted open innovation processes exploring new models of working with traditional networks – such as activists, human rights defenders and students – and networks such as small technology start-ups and the wider open-source community. Such collaborations can help connect our local partners – often closest to human rights violations – and designers and developers who can help build solutions. A hackathon – an event in which computer programmers and others intensively collaborate on software projects over a brief period of time – organized with Build a Change challenged university students in Burkina Faso and Canada to create solutions which used technology to spread information about sexual and reproductive rights among young people. #FreedomHack in 2013, organized with CommunityRED and Cont3nt, was a hackathon first, connecting journalists and human rights defenders in Mexico City with technologists in Washington DC.

## Digital innovation – Panic Button

Panic Button – an app that could prevent people from being abducted and becoming a victim of torture or cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment – was born out of our 2012 challenge to designers and activists to fight human rights violations in innovative ways. This modern SOS signal for individuals at risk is an Android app that sends distress SMS messages to contacts pre-programmed into a user’s mobile phone. If the phone’s Global Positioning System (GPS) is activated, text messages will include the phone’s location on a map, updated regularly.

The app – the product of an open design process initiated with open innovation platform OpenIDEO – was prototyped and field-tested with activists across Africa. Following funding as a 2013 Google Global Impact Challenge finalist, extensive piloting and capacity building with 130 human rights defenders – with Amnesty International providing 280 mobile handsets – took place in East Africa, Central America and Asia-Pacific. Panic Button is now available on Google Playstore and F-Droid, so anyone anywhere with a cheap Android smartphone can install it.

As we have rolled-out and tested the app we have overwhelmingly had the same response: that it is empowering individuals who face daily risk of human rights violations, allowing them to identify and respond to these threats by focusing on how they can – with their networks – be proactive and prepared, rather than ill-equipped and reactive. The tool is having a double impact: practical use in a human rights emergency and long-term development of network capacity and resilience when it comes to people’s security.

“Panic Button can be useful in countries like Sudan where mass arrests and detention of human rights defenders are common, and where often families of the victims struggle to know the whereabouts of their loved one,” said a human rights activist from Sudan.

*Images from left to right:*

Panic Button, drawn by Tim Gaedke

Amnesty International workshop in Morocco for young activists from across the Middle East and North Africa

Children of Ismoil Bachajonov, Tajikistan, 2013: their father died as a result of torture in detention



## Human Rights Friendly Schools

Five years on from the launch of our global Human Rights Friendly Schools project in 2009, we are working with 92 schools, 5,000 teachers and 84,000 young people across 20 countries around the world. The approach empowers young people and promotes the active participation of all members of the school community to integrate human rights values and principles into all areas of school life – including school governance and policy decisions, relationships between school community members, the curriculum and extracurricular activities, and even the wider school environment in which students are taught. Through a whole-school approach, young people and school staff experience human rights in their day-to-day lives, providing them with the tools and competencies essential to prevent human rights violations, and to establish human rights as social norms in communities. In their individual – and adaptable – journey to becoming ‘human rights friendly’, schools become platforms for social change in their communities.

Tim, a former student of Mongolia-India Joint School and now a University student, said: “At the beginning of the Human Rights Friendly School Project, I had no knowledge of human rights. Students of my class became extremely involved and concerned about human rights issues in the world. The project has changed my way of viewing things and showed me how to be loud against human rights violations.”

## Growing the human rights movement

Globally, we played a crucial role of catalyst and change agent in the human rights movement – utilizing our ‘power of connections’ to add value and ensure sustainability and relevance of action locally and nationally. We linked activists; provided capacity building, funds and expertise for campaigning, media work and litigation; and opened up avenues to international bodies and global media outlets.

In Tajikistan, the police and security forces frequently use torture and ill-treatment to force confessions, with many victims in pre-trial detention left with physical and psychological injuries and some dying in custody. Survivors often end up in prison after an unfair trial. Building on our research analyzing flaws in the criminal justice system and addressing impunity, we worked with and strengthened the capacity of a national NGO coalition against torture – helping members to identify common objectives and strengthen relations, directing relief support to fund legal assistance and rehabilitation support for torture victims, organizing skill-sharing platforms between Tajik NGOs and others working on torture and ill-treatment in Central Asia, and coordinating our international advocacy work with the coalition.

A joint submission to the UN Committee against Torture generated significant media coverage and influenced the committee’s findings and recommendations, and we arranged for Tajik NGOs to attend an oral hearing with the committee in Geneva. In coordination with local NGOs we took up individual cases that would have been difficult and dangerous for them to speak about publicly, and we helped develop their media and campaigning capacity. We raised the profile of torture and ill-treatment amongst Dushanbe’s diplomatic community; increased domestic media coverage including public responses to our findings; achieved success in individual cases – including the first successful prosecution for torture, the staying of an extradition order to Tajikistan, and some forms of redress for some torture victims; and ensured inclusion of the offence of torture in the criminal code and the establishment of a mechanism to monitor places of detention.



# DEFENDING FREEDOM AND JUSTICE IN A CHANGING WORLD

The events and stories detailed in this report came against the backdrop of a changing human rights landscape. A steadily shifting geopolitical power balance is seeing influence shift away from traditional powers and towards emerging new global powers, including the so-called BRICS countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa – and others in the South and East.

Increasing numbers of countries are becoming more politically open. This has been accompanied by significant growth in mainstream media and developments in social media and technology affecting how – and the speed at which – human rights violations are reported. At the same time, human rights change is increasingly driven from inside, by the people whose rights are being violated – particularly young people – and often at risk to their lives.

To remain effective, we have to respond to such changes. Constant evolution and change have been hallmarks of Amnesty International's story – learning and adapting to external changes, and to frequently changing and fluid opportunities and threats affecting human rights.

## **Strengthening our public constituency in the global South and East**

One of the consistent lessons we have learned is that we need to increase our presence in the global South and East to enable us to work more closely with people in the frontline of abuse and with local partners in our response to human rights violations, and to have a strong presence in strategic locations. This has informed a large organizational change process that commenced in 2012 with pilots of regional offices in Johannesburg and Hong Kong and which is being rolled out between 2013-2015.

We want to transform Amnesty International into a movement with equal and effective representation around the world, shifting our centre of gravity to the global South and East. This responds to a long-held desire of our international membership to see a new and global way of working. Our recently opened national offices in Brazil and India, for example, are already making a major impact on the way we work in those countries.

We are continuing to lead our global work from a central office in London, but increasingly this is supported by new offices in major cities around the world from where we coordinate our work in each region. These 'regional hubs' will work with our existing national offices in order to drive our work regionally and globally.

Ensuring a stronger presence in the global South and East will enable us to respond to changes in the world and to increase significantly the impact of our work for the rights of all people.

## Maintaining our core principles

At the same time, some things must not change. There can be no compromise on our commitment to high-quality research, evidence and legal analysis. Amnesty International's deeply-held principles of political impartiality, independence, accuracy and international solidarity – and the crucial importance of bearing witness – must continue to underpin everything we do. This is built on an understanding that all rights must be respected together if we are to achieve a world free from fear and want.

## Involvement

From conception to delivery, we aim to involve those we work for and with wherever possible. The extent to which this can occur varies, taking into consideration issues including people's safety and confidentiality. How we have framed and defined our global campaigns speak to this. Our work on slums and forced evictions in particular has seen active involvement of the affected individuals and communities, while our human rights education work is also important in this space. However, more could be done on clarifying and setting minimum standards in community engagement practices, and we are working to standardize some practices within our project management approach.

## Help stand up for human rights

The impact described in this report could not have happened without the commitment and support of our many members, supporters and partners worldwide. As we move forwards to meet the challenges of a changing world, it is more important than ever to remember that human rights violations anywhere are the concern of people everywhere.

Please help us to forge a truly global human rights movement. Help us tip the scales against tyranny, repression and injustice.

More than five decades of experience has shown us that every individual can make a difference – but millions standing together for freedom, justice and dignity can change the world.

**“Only when the last prisoner of conscience has been freed, when the last torture chamber has been closed, when the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a reality for the world’s people, will our work be done.”**

Amnesty International founder Peter Benenson,  
on our 40th anniversary

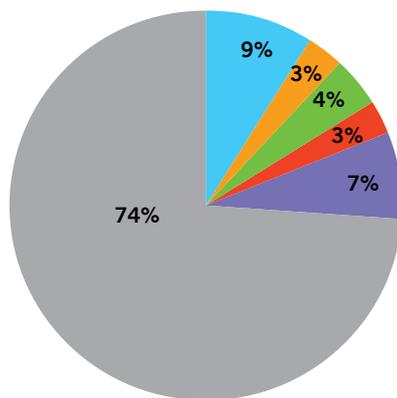
# OUR FINANCE 2012

**Total 2012 revenue**  
= 239 million euros

**Total 2012 expenditure**  
= 243 million euros

Amnesty International is composed of a number of offices with separate audited financial statements. We have included a consolidation of key information for 2012 as part of our efforts to maintain our transparency and accountability to stakeholders. Given the breadth and depth of our work globally, there are some variations in how information is recorded across different offices – figures therefore are indicative and have been rounded as appropriate.

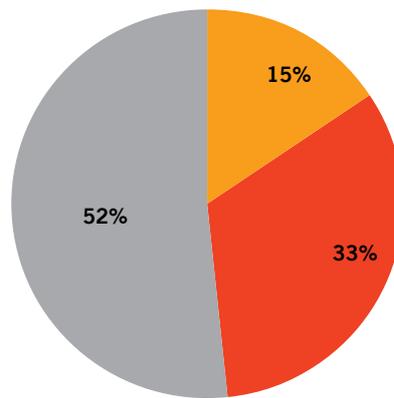
## Revenue Mix



The majority of movement income comes from small donations from individuals, ensuring independence is maintained from political institutions.

- Donations from individuals
- Legacies and bequests
- Trusts and foundations
- Major donors
- Restricted income
- Other revenue

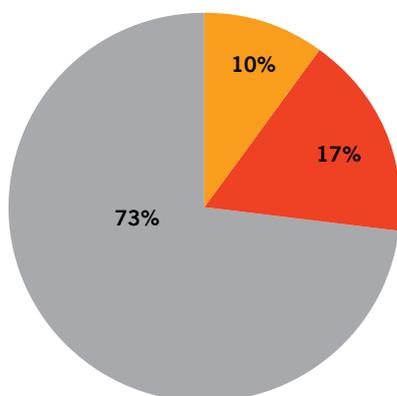
## Resource Usage



Fundraising investment is key to ensure we continue delivering human rights impact.

- Fundraising activities
- Human rights work
- Support / Governance

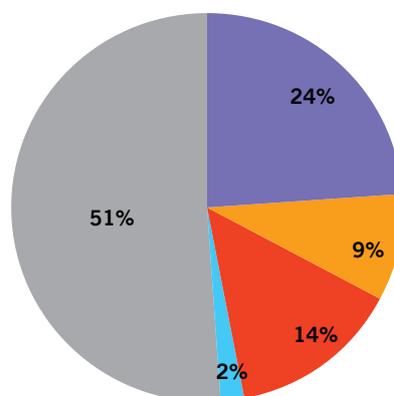
## Income by location



Currently movement income largely comes from the global North but growth in the global South is a strategic goal.

- Europe
- Middle East and Africa (0)
- Americas
- Asia and Pacific
- International Secretariat (0)

## Expenditure by location



This measures expenditure based on the location of the office concerned, and does not indicate expenditure on specific regions by our global movement.

- Europe
- Middle East and Africa
- Americas
- Asia and Pacific
- International Secretariat

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Cover photo: Mam Sonando, a former Amnesty  
International prisoner of conscience, celebrates  
his arrival at the Cambodian National Assembly  
following an extended 10 day march on  
December 10, 2013, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.  
© Omar Havana/Getty Images

[amnesty.org](http://amnesty.org)

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IMPACT REPORT 2012-2013

MAKING HUMAN RIGHTS CHANGE HAPPEN

Amnesty International is a global movement of seven million people in more than 190 countries who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all. We have:

- more than two million members and supporters who drive forward our fight for rights
- more than five million activists who strengthen our calls for justice

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending violations of these rights.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

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**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**

