



Amnesty International

Orange County

GROUP 141 ORANGE • GROUP 175 LONG BEACH
GROUP 178 IRVINE • GROUP 596 HUNTINGTON BEACH

January 2006

<http://www.aiusaoc.org>

Guantánamo Detainees: 4 Years without Justice

This article is taken from an January 10, 2006 AI press release.

Marking the fourth anniversary of the first transfers of detainees to Guantánamo Bay in Cuba, January 11, 2006, Amnesty International released new testimonies alleging the use of torture and ill treatment against prisoners in the U.S. detention center and additional details on several detainee cases.

The testimonies include that of one of the first detainees to be transferred to Guantánamo, Jumah al-Dossari, a 32-year-old Bahraini national who was taken to the U.S. Naval Base in January 2002 after being held by U.S. forces in the Kandahar airbase in Afghanistan.

Al-Dossari's testimony, corroborated by people who have now been released from Guantánamo, includes several allegations of physical and psychological torture and ill treatment inflicted by U.S. personnel both on him and on other inmates in Afghanistan and Guantánamo.

"Anniversaries usually represent milestones. Today's milestone is a frightening and disheartening one. The situation at Guantánamo is not getting better—in fact, it may be worse. First, the Bush Administration wants all 186 pending habeas corpus petitions filed on behalf of the detainees to be dismissed based on a new law that was not meant to apply to cases filed before the law went into effect. And now, after Congress overwhelming passed the historic Anti-Torture Amendment, President Bush is asserting that he can waive the restrictions on the use of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment against detainees. When does the hypocrisy of defending democracy around the world while continuing to curtail fundamental due process end?" said Dr. William F. Schulz, Executive Director of Amnesty International USA.

"There are approximately 500 men who have been treated with complete and utter disdain—the antipathy of the American value of recognizing the basic human dignity of all people. It isn't surprising that after years of uncertainty about their fate, some of these men have expressed their intention to die rather than remain in Guantánamo indefinitely," added Schulz.

Detainees effectively remain in a legal black hole, many with no access to any court, legal counsel, or family visits. Many are subjected to confinement in small cells for up to 24 hours a day with minimal opportunity for exercise. Detainees are often kept in isolation, sometimes for months, as punishment for the infraction of strict camp rules. Several of the detainees have attempted suicide. Most recently Bahraini Jumah al Dossari attempted suicide, reportedly for the tenth time. Other detainees have in desperation embarked on hunger

strikes, being kept alive, sometimes against their will, through painful force feeding procedures.

Appalling conditions, allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, detention of individuals in Guantánamo for up to four years without justice: these are alarming violations of human rights. US plans to try detainees by military commission will bring even more injustice. These commissions are not independent and allow statements extracted under torture or coercion, and hearsay evidence.

Guantánamo detainees must be released, unless charged with recognizable criminal offences and brought to fair trial.

Amnesty International is urging Congress to create an independent commission to investigate all aspects of U.S. detention and interrogation policies including the dozens of reports of torture and ill treatment that have taken place since 2002 and to take measures to prevent torture from recurring in the future.

Eric James Kilchoër

Eric James Kichoër was born on January 2, 2006 to Elizabeth and Jacques Kilchoër, members of the Irvine group. Eric weighed 3.01 kg (6 lbs, 10 oz) and was 47 cm (18.5 inches) long at birth. Jacques has been one of the longest-serving and most active Amnesty members in Orange County.



Calendar

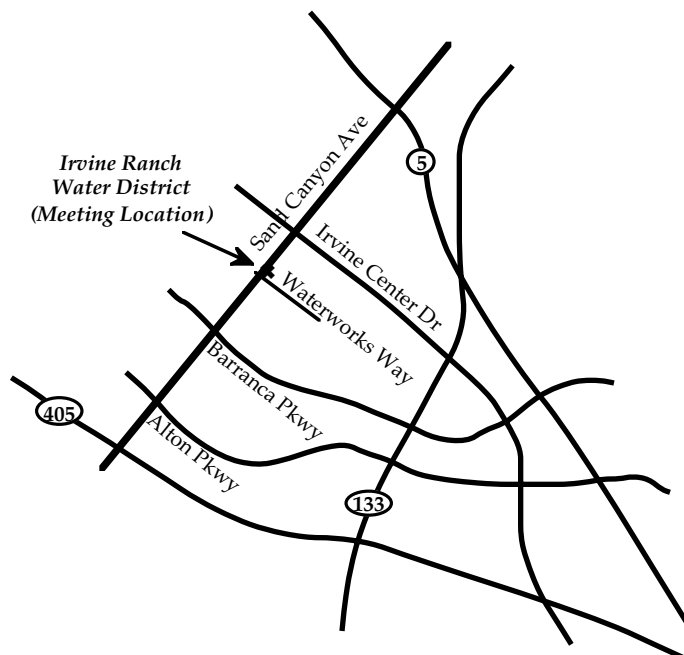
January

16 Monday 5:00–10:00 PM

Execution Vigil at Circle of Orange, Chapman and Glassell Streets to protest the scheduled execution of Clarence Ray Allen by the state of California. For more information, see the Death Penalty Focus website at <http://www.deathpenalty.org>.

17 Tuesday 7:00 PM

Group #141 Orange Monthly Meeting in Classroom 3 at the Sisters of St. Joseph, 480 S. Batavia Street, in Orange. Look for the classroom/auditorium building behind the main building. Drive around and to the back. Group #141 meets the third Tuesday of each month. For further information about the group, contact Deidre Jackson at (562) 430-7381.



Group #178 Irvine Meeting Location

18 Wednesday 7:00 PM

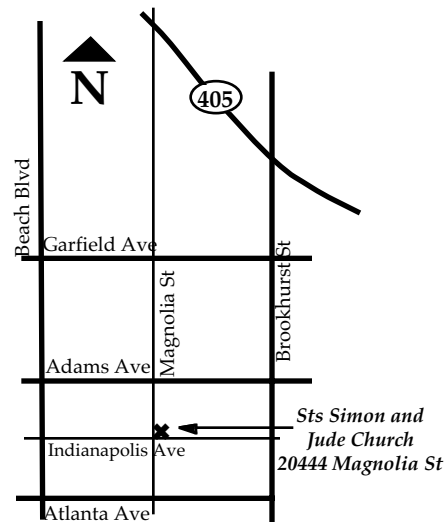
Group #175 Long Beach Monthly Meeting at the Unitarian Universalist Church, Rooms 1 and 2, 5450 Atherton Street, Long Beach. Letter-writing from 7:00–7:30. For further information about the group, contact Norma Edwards at (562) 425-4353.

30 Monday 7:00 PM

Group #596 Huntington Beach Meeting at Saints Simon and Jude Church, Adult Center, 20444 Magnolia Street in Huntington Beach. See details on the website <http://www.hbamnesty.com/main.htm>.

31 Tuesday 7:00 PM

Group #178 Irvine Monthly Meeting at the Irvine Ranch Water District, 15600 Sand Canyon Avenue, Irvine, between the 5 and 405 freeways. See details on the web page <http://www.aiusaoc.org>. For more information about the group, contact Kris Elali at (714) 724-5811.



Group #596 Huntington Beach Meeting Location

Amnesty International
Group 178
P.O. Box 14485
Irvine, CA 92623-4484