

Keeping you Connected October 2, 2016

Dear All:

Keeping you connected 2 Oct. 2016

Quick updates and developments --

Angie Hougas

Member, AIUSA BD of Directors

Director & Co-Founder, Rhythm N' Rights

1 GOOD NEWS

2 AI CANADA

3 AIUSA UPDATES

Surveillance

Middle East

Refugee Rights

Death Penalty Abolition

Regional Conferences, link of dates and info

4 MEDIA MENTIONS

5 REPORTS

1 GOOD NEWS (Keep writing your Urgent Action Letters!)

Egypt: Ahmed Abdullah (Urgent Action): Prisoner of conscience Ahmed Abdullah was released on bail after spending over four months in detention without trial in Egypt.

2 AI -CANADA

Guantanamo/Torture

· AIUSA met Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada and shared updates with Amnesty staff and coalition partners on AI Canada's work on torture accountability. Here is [an op-ed that Alex wrote](#) (Alex is SG of AICAN) pertaining to Canada's complicity in torture (specifically relating to Abdullah Almalki, Ahmad Abou-Elmaati and Muayyed Nureddin, as well as Maher Arar) and [here is episode one of a three-part miniseries](#) about torture accountability in which Alex's commentary is featured.

3 AIUSA UPDATES

Surveillance

· Senator McCain reintroduced legislation to expand the FBI's surveillance authorities under the Patriot Act. In particular, it would expand the FBI's ability to secretly demand that Internet companies provide them with users' records without a court order, and gagging the companies from notifying the users, policymakers or the press. The records the FBI could get without a court order include web browsing history and logs of who you communicate with online via email, video and text; what services you subscribe to; and the times you sign in and out of your accounts. This FBI power is referred to as its National Security Letter (NSL) authority.

Middle East North Africa Advocacy

• Saudi Arabia / Yemen:

- o First US Senate vote in recent history over arms sale to Saudi Arabia: Bill failed on 71-27 vote.
- o Majority of Democrat senators voted for ban, only 10% of Republican senators did.
- o Vote tally here: <http://bit.ly/SaudiVote02>
- o Media coverage here: <http://bit.ly/SaudiVote03>

Refugee Rights

• Vermont

: VT Legislative Coordinator Kit Miller, joined the All-Staff meeting to give a report about the work that she has done with Carolyn Smiles (AC for VT) and VT members to pass a city council resolution in Burlington. That work has included organizing since February, culminating most recently with a 40-person community dialogue last week, as well as countering Islamophobia and xenophobia in neighboring Rutland. Next steps include following up with others in neighboring communities who are interested in similar resolution campaigns. The Burlington resolution is expected to pass by a wide margin at the October City Council meeting. **Illinois:** The Desplains student group submitted a resolution to welcome refugees to the City Council this week. After previously being told the resolution would not be adopted, student activists came to the Citizen Participation portion of the last City Council meeting and presented their resolution directly. This time, it was accepted!

Ongoing: As student groups continue to register for their activism in the 2016-17 school year, Field Organizers are sharing the Refugee Toolkit and the America I Believe In Toolkit, and groups are beginning more local work now that the #IWelcome campaign has launched. **Death**

Penalty Abolition

- Last week marked the anniversary of the execution of Troy Davis. Events were held by members and staff in Atlanta, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC. AIUSA staff spoke on a panel in Los Angeles on the continued legacy of the Davis family and ongoing work to end the death penalty in CA and elsewhere, as well as intersections between racial justice and criminal justice reform.
- Staff person, Jiva Manske accepted an award from American University on behalf of Amnesty, recognized for AIUSA's work with the Davis family;
- AIUSA staff and members participated in a Twitter Power Hour on the #NoOn66 campaign in CA

Regional Conferences

Dates for each of the 5 AIUSA regions & more information here:

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/events/regional-conferences>

5 MEDIA MENTIONS

CLIPS

AUMF

9/16/16 [Fifteen years on, Authorization for the Use of Military Force must go](#), *The Hill*. Op-ed by **Margaret Huang**

Balochistan

9/19/16 [Conference Report: Faces of Oppression – Human Rights Violations in Balochistan](#), *UNPO*. Mentions **T Kumar**

Chelsea Bomber

9/21/16 [Trump & GOP Senator Want To Deny Alleged Chelsea Bomber Due Process](#), *The Gothamist*. By Steve Heins, mentions Tom Parker

China

9/22/16 [China's 12-Year Sentence for Ai Weiwei's Lawyer](#), *The Atlantic*. By Yasmeen Serhan

Drones

9/16/16 [Family of Italian Killed in Drone Strike Gets More than \\$1 Million Payment from U.S.](#), *The Intercept*. By Cora Currier. Quotes **Naureen Shah**.

Refugees

9/19/16 [The United Nations Explained: Its Purpose, Power and Problems](#), *The New York Times*. By Somini Sengupta, mentions **Margaret Huang**.

9/19/16 [We're Failing to Provide Protection to Female Refugees](#), *Time*. Op-ed by **Margaret Huang**

9/15/16 [Obama hoping to rally world support at the U.N. for worsening refugee crisis](#), *Washington Post*. By David Nakamura, mentions **Margaret Huang**.

9/14/16 [UN Refugee Summit: "No Cause for Comfort"](#), *UPI*. By Tharanga Yakupitiyage, mentions **Margaret Huang**

9/19/16 [Global leaders pledge more help for refugees: critics say pledges are not enough](#), *LA Times*. By Ann Simmons, mentions **Margaret Huang**.

9/20/16 [Refugees are the focal point of this week's United Nations summit](#), *Think Progress*. By Esther Lee

9/20/16 [El ataque en Nueva York da pie a Trump para agitar el miedo contra los refugiados](#), *Univision*. Mentions **Margaret Huang**.

9/20/16 [Obama leads summit to aid refugees](#), *CNN*. By Laura Koran, mentions **Margaret Huang**

9/20/16 [5 countries that could do more for refugees](#), *Think Progress*. By Esther Lee

9/20/16 [What the world owes its refugees](#), *New York Daily News*. Op-ed by Salil Shetty

9/19/16 [Obama to Push Refugee Aid at U.N., but Critics Say Effort Is Overdue](#), *New York Times*. By Somini Sengupta. Mentions Elvis Garcia, whom we connected with the Times.

9/20/16 [Obama Gathers World Leaders To Pledge Billions In Refugee Aid](#), *Huffington Post*. By Willa Frej, mentions **Salil Shetty**

9/21/16 [Did Obama Host a Summit on Migrants While Ignoring a Refugee Crisis in the U.S.'s Own Backyard?](#), *Democracy Now*.

9/19/16 [Astonishing time-lapse satellite imagery shows rapid growth of refugee camps](#), *The Washington Post*. By Max Bearak, mentions **Christoph Koettl**

Rwanda

9/21/16 [Teach-In' Protest On Rwanda's Human Rights Record](#), *WSHU*. By Davis Dunavin.

9/21/16 [Rwandan president addresses critics in Yale lecture](#), *Yale News*. By Mike Cummings.

Saudi

9/21/16 [Human rights groups cheer Saudi arms sale vote despite failure](#), *The Hill*. By Rebecca Kheel, mentions **Sunjeev Bery**.

9/22/16 [Senate rejects bill blocking U.S.-Saudi arms deal: rights groups applaud "growing dissent" on Yemen war crimes](#), *Salon*. By Ben Norton, mentions **Sunjeev Bery**.

9/22/16 [Senate Votes to Advance \\$1.15 Billion Saudi Arms Deal](#), *ABC News*. By Catherine Thorbeck, mentions **Sunjeev Bery**

9/20/16 [Congressman seeks to block arms sale to Saudi Arabia, citing U.S.-backed war crimes in Yemen](#), *Salon*. By Ben Norton, mentions **Sunjeev Bery**

9/9/16 [Bipartisan senators block military equipment sale to Saudi Arabia](#), *Gray TV*. By Kellie Meyer, mentions **Sunjeev Bery**

9/19/16 [Supplying White Phosphorus to Saudis? New Claims Reinforce US War Crimes Complicity in Yemen](#), *Common Dreams*. By Andrea Germanos, mentions **Sunjeev Bery and Philip Luther**

Snowden

9/14/16 [Pardon Snowden Campaign Launches, Led by ACLU, Amnesty & Human Rights Watch](#), *Democracy Now*.

9/19/16 [Why Obama should pardon all leakers and whistleblowers - not just Edward Snowden](#), *The Intercept*. By Peter Maass

9/14/16 [House committee counters Edward Snowden pardon push, biopic with brutal report](#), *The Week*

9/14/16 [Rights Groups, Riding Film Publicity, Urge Pardon for Edward Snowden](#), *The New York Times*. By Charlie Savage.

9/14/ [16 House Intelligence Committee: Snowden 'No Whistle-blower'](#), *New York Magazine*. By Jonah Shepp

9/16/16 [Activists press Obama to pardon Snowden](#), *The Washington Post*. By Ellen Nakashima.

9/16/16 [Edward Snowden, Spy or Whistleblower?](#), *TruthDig*. Mentions **Naureen Shah**.

9/19/16 [Why Edward Snowden deserves Clemency ?](#), *USA Today*. By Rem Reider

9/20/16 [Clemency for Snowden? What the Debate Can't Tell Us](#), *Lawfare*. By Quinta Jureric

Sudan

9/21/16 [Trial to resume in Sudan for Christian pastors who could face death penalty](#), *Daily News*. By Sarah Growchowski

9/22/16 [Rights Groups: No Justice for Sudan Crackdown Victims](#), **Voice of America**. Mentions Sarah Jackson

Troy Davis

9/17/16 [The Execution that Birthed a Movement](#), **In These Times**. By Jen Marlowe and Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor

Yemen

9/19/16 [Amnesty International: U.S. Bomb Used in Attack on Yemen Hospital](#), **Democracy Now**.

9/19/16 [Amnesty International: US-made bomb used in Yemen hospital strike](#), **The Hill**. By Rebecca Kheel, mentions Phillip Luther.

9/19/16 [US-made bomb used in Saudi strike on Yemen hospital: Amnesty International](#), **Talk Media News**. By Loree Lewis, mentions Phillip Luther.

9/19/16 [Contesting the U.S.-Saudi Bromance With 1,000 Cuts](#), **Lobelog**. By Robert Naiman.

9/19/16 [Will Civilian Deaths in Yemen Force a Re-Set on U.S.-Saudi Relations?](#), **Pacific Standard Magazine**. By Jared Keller, mentions Phillip Luther.

PRESS RELEASES

9/17/16 [Egypt: Asset freeze is a shameless ploy to silence human rights activism](#)

9/19/16 [Amnesty International USA Calls for Concrete Action on Refugee Crisis](#)

9/20/16 [Greece: Statement from Amnesty research staff at site of refugee camp fire](#)

9/20/16 [Nigeria: Special police squad get rich torturing detainees and demanding bribes in exchange for freedom](#)

9/21/16 [India: Kashmiri human rights activist re-arrested](#)

9/21/16 [DRC: Authorities must not fan the flames of unrest with violence](#)

9/21/16 [Saudi Arms Deal Must Be Halted After Failed Senate Vote](#)

9/22/16 [Bahrain: Dissolution of main opposition party is flagrant attack on freedom of expression and association](#)

9/22/16 [Sudan: No Justice for Protester Killings](#)

FACEBOOK

- Top Post: [Obama's Refugee Summit Video](#)
- o Likes, Comments and Shares: 3,697
- o Reach: 213,036

TWITTER

- Top Post: [Pardon Snowden](#)
- o Retweets and Likes: 9,293
- o Impressions: 722,979

INSTAGRAM

- Top Post: [Regional Conference Promotion](#)

- o Likes and Comments: 102 likes, 435 views

TUMBLR

- Top Post: [Safety During Protest](#)
- o Notes: 249

6 REPORTS

Title: Nigeria: ‘You have signed your death warrant’ : Torture and other ill treatment in the Special Anti-Robbery Squad

Website link: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr44/4868/2016/en/>

Publish date: 21/09/2016 00:00 BST [GMT+1]

Abstract: The Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a special branch of the Nigeria police created to fight violent crime, is responsible for widespread torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (other ill-treatment) of detainees in their custody. Amnesty International’s research shows that detainees, both men and women, are subjected to various methods of torture and ill- treatment in order to extract information and “confessions”. Such methods include severe beating, hanging, starvation, shooting in the legs, mock executions and threats of execution.

Title: Bangladesh: Submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

Website link: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/4863/2016/en/>

Publish date: 20/09/2016 16:30 BST

Abstract: This submission focuses only on the issue of violence against women, and specifically on violence against Indigenous women and girls from the Chittagong Hill Tracts. However, it is important to note that the concerns listed here are not exhaustive and that many of the issues raised in this submission are also experienced by Indigenous women and girls living outside the Chittagong Hill Tracts as well as Bengali and other women and girls across the country.

Title: United Arab Emirates (UAE): Appeal Case: Mohammed al-Roken

Website link: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde25/4889/2016/en/>

Publish date: 23/9/2016 00:00 BST [GMT+1]

Abstract: Dr Mohammed al-Roken is a prominent academic, a former professor of constitutional law, and human rights lawyer. State Security officials arrested him on 17 July 2012. On 2 July 2013, the highest court of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) sentenced him to a 10-year prison sentence following an unfair, mass trial of 94 activists. It became widely known as the “UAE 94” trial.

Title: Morocco: Submission to the United Nations Human Rights Committee 118th Session, 17 October-14 November 2016

Website link: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde29/4858/2016/en/>

Publish date: 19/09/2016 00:00 BST

Abstract: Amnesty International submits this information to the United Nations Human Rights Committee in advance of the examination of the sixth periodic report of the Kingdom of Morocco, at the 118th session of the Committee scheduled to be held in October 2016.

Title: Thailand: "Make him speak by tomorrow": Torture and other ill-treatment in Thailand:
Executive Summary

Website link: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa39/4746/2016/en/>

Publish date: 28/09/2016 00:00 BST [GMT+1]

Abstract: In Thailand, senior government officials have declared their commitment to ending the use of torture. Nevertheless, Amnesty International has found, through a two year investigation, that torture remains shockingly common. The report "Make him Speak by Tomorrow" describes the findings of a two year investigation by Amnesty International into the use of torture and other ill treatment by Thai authorities. This executive summary summarizes the legal and institutional failures that facilitate torture and other ill-treatment in Thailand and offers key recommendations to such abuses once and for all.