

22 March 2006

Steadfast in Protest

Publication of the 2005 Annual Report of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (FIDH/OMCT)

This publication will be an opportunity to alert the international public opinion on the situation of these men and women who, in spite of the tremendous risks they face, persist in denouncing the human rights violations they have witnessed. The report presents the situation of 1,172 human rights defenders oppressed, as well as obstacles to freedom of association in nearly 90 countries.

“The strength of human rights defenders stems from their faith in their fight, their perseverance, and their solidarity beyond borders [...]. The Observatory [for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders] is an indispensable link in ensuring that the international community never forgets the men and women who are fighting to defend our rights”.

**Louise Arbour, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,
and author of the foreword of the Report**

+++

A message from Shirin Ebadi Nobel Peace Prize Winner 2003

On the occasion of the presentation of the 2005 Annual Report of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (FIDH/OMCT).

I wished to issue a message on the occasion of the publication of the Annual Report of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders.

This report is a result of the programme led by the FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights) and the OMCT (World Organisation against Torture). It once more paints a bleak picture of the defence of universal rights as a high-risk activity in nearly one hundred States.

The overall picture presented in this 2005 report reflects a worldwide human rights situation that is sadly becoming harder. It is clear that arbitrary policies are gaining ground. It is urgent and of international importance to mobilise for the respect of the freedom of expression and of association, on which human rights defenders base their actions daily. I congratulate the FIDH and the OMCT for being at the forefront of this combat.

Mobilization pays off : in Iran my friend and colleague Soltani, a lawyer and human rights activist, was freed last Sunday after seven months in prison. But the real situation in my country is of great concern. For example, Gandji, a human rights defender and journalist, is held in arbitrary detention for the sixth consecutive year. And the NGO that we created, the Defenders of Human Rights Centre in Iran, has still not been officially recognised.

All the attention that will be given to the current Observatory Annual Report will directly help the cause of defenders throughout the world who are punished for the sole reason that they call for the respect for universal human rights.

It was important for me to stress this today.

Shirin Ebadi.

+++

Interviews of Human Rights Defenders

These interviews of human rights defenders have been carried out during the year 2005. In spite of the diversity of the situations met in their countries, these testimonies show how complex the task of these defenders is, and how dangerous it can often prove to be for themselves, their families, or their relatives.

[Adan mohamed Abdou Union Djiboutienne du Travail Djibouti](#) RealAudio - 4 Mo - FR

[Amourlaye Touré MIDH Côte d'Ivoire](#) RealAudio - 4.8 Mo - FR

[Bernadette Sayon Zale OCO CEFAD République centrafricaine](#) RealAudio - 4.9 Mo - FR

[Dismas Kitenge - Groupe Lotus - RDC](#) RealAudio - 5.3 Mo - FR

[Gungai Wonfyio LCDH Centrafrique](#) RealAudio - 3.8 Mo - FR

[Lida Yusupova Mémorial Tchéchénie](#) RealAudio - 6.4 Mo - FR

[Paul Nsapu - Ligue des électeurs - RDC](#) RealAudio - 4.8 Mo - FR

[Paz Floras Codepu Chili](#) RealAudio - 5 Mo - FR

[Pie Ntakarutimana ITEKA Burundi](#) RealAudio - 3.6 Mo - FR

[Roger Bouka OCDH Congo Brazzaville](#) RealAudio - 4.8 Mo - FR

[Thomson Adebayor Liberia Watch Libéria](#) RealAudio - 4.2 Mo – EN

[Thun Saray ADHOC Cambodge](#) RealAudio - 4.6 Mo - FR

Please find below the links towards:

- *The executive summary:*

http://www.omct.org/pdf/observatory/2006/obs_report2005_executive_summary_eng.pdf

- *The full report:*

http://www.omct.org/pdf/observatory/2006/obs_annual_report_2005_eng.pdf