

**THE IMPACT OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ON THE
PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS FROM 1961-2004**

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ART2004651

**BEING A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AND DIPLOMACY,
FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF BACHELOR OF HISTORY (B.A.) DEGREE IN HISTORY**

MAY, 2024

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God Almighty for his Divine Favour, Mercy, Grace, Blessings and Protection upon my life, as well as provisions throughout my stay in the University of Benin.

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify this research project was carried out by **IFEOLUWA SHADRACH OLASUPO** in the Department of History and International Studies, University of Benin, under my supervision.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My profound gratitude goes to Almighty God for his grace, protection, and infinite mercy that have been seeing me through my course of study till now.

My sincere gratitude goes to my project supervisor, MRS. BRIDGET O. OMORUYI who has contributed immensely to the success of this work by giving prompt attention incessant encouragement, very constructive criticism, advice and suggestions each time the work was brought for corrections.

To all my wonderful Lecturers, especially Prof. Eddy Erhagbe, Dr. Iweze, Prof, Nwokocha , Dr. (Mrs.) I. O. Osemwengie, Mr. Daniel Orobator and My esteemed Course Adviser, Dr. Charles Osarumwense, Dr. Emmanuel Toby, Dr. F. Osariemen. Dr. Albert Onobhayedo, Dr. Daniel Olisa Iweze, Dr. (Mrs.) J. C. Nwaka (Rev. Sis), Mr. Victor Aiguobarueghian, who all actively and passively contributed to the actualization of my tertiary education. God Almighty will reward you.

Special thanks goes to my parents, Mr and Mrs Olasupo for their financial support, patient and encouragement throughout my stay in the University and to my siblings, Oluwatosin Daniel Olasupo, Temidayo Hulda Olasupo, Mary Olamide Olasupo and Abisola Odunayo Abioye for their concern and support. Your sacrifices have been my foundation.

My immense gratitude goes to MIKADO X INTERNATIONAL SALON and AJ'S UNISEX SALON for giving me the opportunity to work with them.

My special appreciation goes to my Boss Mr. Michael Idoroh, Boss Nass and to my colleagues Great Osamudiamen, Ayokunle Onileowo, Wilson Ibrahim and also to all my special clients.

To my course mates Taiye Oluwasanumi Blessing and Ochiaga Chukwudumedi Favour for their supports.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The protection of human rights has been a critical global concern throughout history, with numerous organizations emerging to address violations

and advocate for justice. Among these, Amnesty International stands as a prominent force, dedicated to promoting and defending human rights worldwide. Founded in 1961, Amnesty International has played a significant role in shaping the discourse, policies, and actions surrounding human rights over the decades.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries witnessed a growing awareness of human rights abuses on a global scale. Atrocities such as the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, and colonial oppression underscored the urgent need for international action to safeguard fundamental freedoms and dignity¹. In response to these challenges, Amnesty International emerged as a beacon of hope, driven by the vision of a world where human rights are respected and protected for all.

Throughout its history, Amnesty International has employed various strategies to advance its mission, including research, advocacy, mobilization, and campaigning. The organization's commitment to impartiality, independence, and non-partisanship has enabled it to address a wide range of human rights violations across different contexts and regions. From political prisoners and prisoners of conscience to victims of torture, discrimination, and injustice, Amnesty International has stood alongside individuals and communities in their struggle for rights and justice. Amnesty International has been a pivotal force in

safeguarding human rights globally from 1961 to 2004. Founded in 1961, Amnesty's independence and unwavering commitment to challenging human rights abuses have been instrumental in its effectiveness. The organization's impact is rooted in its rigorous research methodologies, utilizing first-hand accounts, survivor testimonies, and forensic data to ensure the credibility of its findings. Over the years, Amnesty's long-term campaigns have yielded significant results, contributing to the establishment of crucial international agreements like the Arms Trade Treaty, the International Criminal Court, and the global convention against torture².

The period from 1961 to 2004 witnessed significant milestones in the evolution of human rights activism and governance. Amidst geopolitical shifts, social movements, and technological advancements, Amnesty International adapted and expanded its efforts to confront emerging challenges and uphold universal principles. From the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 to the establishment of international human rights mechanisms and tribunals, the landscape of human rights advocacy underwent profound transformations during this time. Amnesty's work extends across all human rights issues worldwide, including impactful interventions in individual cases through their Individuals at Risk program, which has saved countless lives from abuse and persecution. The organization's willingness to confront challenging and

complex issues head-on, even in less visible regions, underscores its dedication to upholding human rights universally. Through strategic partnerships, collaboration, and the mobilization of millions of supporters globally, Amnesty has wielded significant political influence, driving change and advocating for human rights at various levels

This study aims to critically examine the impact of Amnesty International on the protection of human rights from 1961 to 2004. By analyzing historical records, archival materials, and scholarly literature, the study seeks to assess the organization's contributions, successes, limitations, and enduring legacy. Through a comprehensive review of Amnesty International's campaigns, interventions, and collaborations, this research endeavors to shed light on the complex dynamics of human rights activism and the evolving role of non-governmental organizations in promoting global justice and accountability.

In conclusion, the study of Amnesty International's impact on the protection of human rights offers valuable insights into the challenges and possibilities of advancing a more just and humane world. By understanding the historical context, strategies, and outcomes of Amnesty International's advocacy, policymakers, scholars, and activists can glean important lessons for

shaping future efforts to defend and uphold human rights for generations to come.

Aims and Objectives

This study aim to examine the impact of Amnesty international on human rights from 1964 to 2004, while its objectives are to;

1. explore the historical context of human rights.
2. analyze the ideology of Amnesty International and its impact on human rights movements.
3. investigate the strategies employed by Amnesty international in advocating for human rights.
4. evaluate the impact of Amnesty International's campaign for human rights.
5. assess the legacy of Amnesty International in its fight for human rights.

Scope of Study

The scope of this research spans from 1961 to 2004 which is a period of over four decades that would see Amnesty International rise from the aftermath of the second world war and the cold wars and general uncertainty that

pervaded the world at those times with many countries clamoring for independence and others seeking domination over others. It will examine the political, social, and economic factors that shaped the 1960s and the need to respect human rights at all times. The study will also analyze the achievements and challenges of Amnesty International and the struggle to protect the human right of persons amidst wars, political unrests, military coups and religious conflicts. The study begins in 1961 following the establishment of Amnesty international as an organization tasked with the responsibility of the protection of human rights across all countries of the world . In the same vein, the study ends in 2004, Invariably the study cuts across a period of 43 years.

Methodology

To successfully attempt a comprehensive study of this research, this research work would be carried out using the historical research methodology. The historical research method entails using the past to evaluate the present. It would enable the researcher to chronicle the history of human rights movements all over the world and how Amnesty international as an organization has championed this course. This study would employ qualitative method of research. Secondary sources such as books, journals and news paper clips would be utilized in this work.

Secondary sources: Secondary sources such as journals, articles, books, newspaper clips will be consulted in this study. In addition, library research will also be conducted at the John Harris Library, University of Benin which houses a plethora of books that will be visited to obtain hardcopies. Some of these will also be obtained from the internet.

Literature Review

There exist numerous works of literature in the form of books, articles, and journals that are related to this study, which this research study will review to aid a comprehensive knowledge of the study; The evolution of human rights has taken different forms over the years as the scope as to what constitutes human rights continues to expand to accommodate a wider variation of rights that are considered inalienable and shouldn't be deprived of any human being.

Amnesty International traces its roots back to 1961 when British lawyer Peter Benenson launched a campaign to mobilize public opinion and support for "prisoners of conscience" worldwide. Since then, the organization has grown into a global movement with millions of members and supporters across various countries. Scholars such as Clapham and Forsythe³ in their book *"Human Rights NGOs in International Relations"* documented the evolution of

Amnesty International, highlighting its organizational structure, advocacy tactics, and impact on human rights discourse

The first work relevant to this study is *International relations: perspectives and controversies*.⁴ This book attempts an analysis of the controversies that pervades the interaction between nations as they relate on matters such as military, economy, sea and airspace and other matters of international correspondence. It also points out the involvement of non state actors with specific reference to Amnesty International and how they influence the policies and laws of nations. The book dedicates over five pages on the activities of Amnesty internationals inter border campaign for the promotion of human rights and how the organization calls out government for human right violations especially in third world countries where it has become a habit for despotic government officials to imprison political rivals. One of Amnesty International's primary methods of advancing human rights is through its campaigns and interventions. Simpson stresses that Amnesty International has been instrumental in launching campaigns that have led to significant changes in human rights protection. For example, the organization's campaign against torture resulted in the establishment of the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in 1984. Amnesty's work on abolishing the death penalty has also been successful,

with the number of countries that have abolished the practice increasing significantly during this period. The book establishes the relationship between the organization and the promotion of human right protection across the world. One of Amnesty International's primary methods of advancing human rights is through its campaigns and interventions. Studies by Neier and Power have examined the effectiveness of these campaigns in raising awareness, pressuring governments, and securing the release of political prisoners. These scholars argue that while Amnesty International's efforts have yielded significant successes in certain cases, they have also faced criticism for selective advocacy and limited impact in entrenched conflicts.

The *Diplomacy of Conscience* by Clark further clarifies the position of Amnesty International as a major non state actor in the promotion and protection of human rights. The book is first published in 2010 and it explains how Amnesty international is contributing to the campaign on changing the norms of human rights. The book explains the disparity in human rights perceptions and how the original norms of what constitutes as mans inalienable right should no longer be subjective in relation to local legislations, rather a broader and semi objective perception should be advocated. The book explains that Amnesty International's work encompassed a wide range of human rights issues, including the promotion of religious tolerance, LGBT rights, and the

protection of human dignity⁵. These issues were not under the general purview of human rights as countries preferred to limit their human right laws to matters such as political freedom and right to peaceful assembly. Clark explains that the expansion of the scope of human rights to accommodate matters such as LGBT can be traced to the influence of non state actors of which Amnesty International is a major player in terms of human rights.

According to Neier, in his book *"The Role of Amnesty International in the Protection of Human Rights."* ⁶human rights violation would have remained in its most narrow interpretation if not for non state actors like Amnesty International. The book explains the different tactics that the organization utilizes to influence government into carrying out human right reforms and cutting down on human rights violations. According to this writer Amnesty International has addressed a wide range of human rights issues throughout its history. It traces the history of the organization back to its inception in 1961 and analyzed some of the issues that influenced its formation such as the cold war and the race for nuclear weapons without adequate safe guard for protection of the health of civilians, the atrocities of the second world war that were revealed during the Nuremberg trials, genocides in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. Some of the key issues the organization has focused on include women's rights, children's rights, minority rights, and the abolition of torture. Amnesty's efforts

in these areas have led to the adoption of international treaties and conventions, as well as changes in national laws and policies.

In the book *Keepers of the flame: understanding Amnesty International. Stanford University Press* by Sebastine Hopgood⁷ This book exposes the attention given by the organization to certain regions. According to the writer the body has in recent years dedicated considerable efforts in carrying out its activities in Africa and some parts of Asia. It does not fail to mention that the later fact has caused certain observers to suspect the organization of having imperialist intentions. Amnesty International has had a significant impact on human rights protection in various regions around the world. In Africa, for instance, the organization's campaigns and advocacy efforts have led to the release of political prisoners and the improvement of prison conditions. In Latin America, Amnesty's work has contributed to the establishment of human rights institutions and the promotion of human rights norms.

Furthermore, Amnesty International has also played a pivotal role in shaping international law and policy related to human rights. Legal scholars such as Meron and Shelton⁸ have analyzed the organization's contributions to the development of human rights norms, conventions, and mechanisms. Through its research, documentation, and lobbying efforts, Amnesty International has influenced state behavior, accountability mechanisms, and

transitional justice processes, as demonstrated in studies on the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Convention against Torture. The fear of being brought before the International criminal court has proven more persuasive than lobbying which is a tactic usually employed by the organization to discourage political and military rulers from abusing power and violating the human rights of civilians and citizens. The activist campaigns of the organization have not gone without being noticed by scholars. In the article titled *International Criminalization of Internal Atrocities* by Theodore⁹, The organization fought for the release of prisoners of conscience, focusing on freedom of conscience and freedom of expression. Particular reference was made to developing countries where the government is clamping down on freedom of speech in order to quell revolts and political emancipation. The article intimated on the activities of the organization in securing the release of those persons who are labelled as enemies of the government and kept in jail on baseless charges. According to Dinah in her article titled *Amnesty International and the International Criminal Court*¹⁰ featured in the international journal of International law, Amnesty International advocated for the protection of human rights for refugees, including access to education and protection against discrimination.

In conclusion, the literature on the impact of Amnesty International on the protection of human rights offers a nuanced understanding of the organization's multifaceted role, contributions, and limitations. By engaging with diverse perspectives and empirical evidence, scholars have enriched our understanding of the complex dynamics of human rights activism and the evolving landscape of global governance. As Amnesty International and other NGOs navigate the challenges of a rapidly changing world, ongoing research and dialogue are essential for advancing the cause of human rights and social justice.

Chapterization

This research is categorized into five chapters.

Chapter One: Introduction

This is the first chapter of this research which gives a highlight of what would be discussed in the entire research work. It provides an introduction to the background of the study, stating the aim and objectives, the methodology used in carrying out this research, the scope of the research, and various literature reviewed about this study.

Chapter Two: Historical Analysis of Amnesty International

This chapter introduces and highlights the origin of Amnesty International. The chapter provides some background information on the history of Amnesty International and human rights. It discusses how the organization came to be and what prompted its formation. The chapter would consider the mode of operation of the organization and its involvement in the development of human rights.

Chapter Three: Strategies Employed by Amnesty International in Human Rights Protection Campaigns.

This chapter would concentrate on analyzing the strategies utilized by Amnesty International in advocating for the protection of human rights across the world.

Chapter Four: Amnesty International Human Right Activities in Nigeria

This chapter would analyze the activities of Amnesty International in Nigeria and its contribution to human right development in the country.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

This is the concluding part of the work.

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CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

The Origin and Evolution of Amnesty International

Amnesty International, a global movement known for its advocacy of human rights, traces its origins to a singular act of empathy and activism. The organization emerged from the determination of one individual to make a difference in the world. In this essay, we will delve into the fascinating history of Amnesty International, exploring its inception, evolution, and enduring impact on the international human rights landscape. The story begins in 1960 when British lawyer Peter Benenson read a newspaper article about two Portuguese students who were imprisoned for raising their glasses in a toast to freedom. Moved by their plight, Benenson penned an article titled "The Forgotten Prisoners," which was published in The Observer newspaper on May 28, 1961. In this article, Benenson called for a worldwide campaign to mobilize public opinion and secure the release of individuals imprisoned for their beliefs or identity. Benenson's impassioned plea resonated deeply with people around the world, sparking a groundswell of support for his cause. In response to the overwhelming public interest, Benenson, along with other like-minded activists, founded Amnesty International on July 28, 1961¹. The organization's mission

was clear: to work tirelessly for the release of prisoners of conscience and to promote respect for human rights globally.

From its humble beginnings, Amnesty International quickly gained momentum, attracting volunteers and supporters from diverse backgrounds and countries. The organization's grassroots approach, centered on letter-writing campaigns, petitions, and public demonstrations, proved to be highly effective in raising awareness and pressuring governments to release prisoners of conscience. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Amnesty International expanded its focus beyond prisoners of conscience to encompass a broader range of human rights issues, including torture, extrajudicial executions, and the death penalty. The organization's advocacy efforts brought international attention to human rights abuses in countries around the world, leading to tangible improvements in the treatment of prisoners and the enactment of laws to protect human rights.

One of Amnesty International's most notable achievements came in 1977 with the adoption of the "Declaration of Tokyo," which set forth principles for the humane treatment of prisoners and became a landmark document in the field of human rights law. This declaration, along with other advocacy initiatives, helped to establish Amnesty International as a leading voice in the global struggle for human rights. Over the decades, Amnesty

International has continued to evolve and adapt to changing political and social landscapes. The organization has expanded its advocacy efforts to include issues such as women's rights, refugee rights, and the rights of indigenous peoples. It has also embraced new technologies and communication channels to reach broader audiences and engage with supporters worldwide.

Despite the progress made in advancing human rights, Amnesty International faces ongoing challenges in the fight against injustice and oppression. The persistence of authoritarian regimes, armed conflicts, and systemic discrimination underscores the urgent need for continued advocacy and activism. In response to these challenges, Amnesty International remains steadfast in its commitment to defending human rights and holding governments and other actors accountable for their actions.

In conclusion, the origin and evolution of Amnesty International are a testament to the power of individuals to effect meaningful change in the world. From its humble beginnings as a grassroots movement, the organization has grown into a global force for human rights, championing the rights of the oppressed and marginalized. As we look to the future, Amnesty International serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for all those who believe in the inherent dignity and worth of every human being.

The Formation of Amnesty International

Amnesty International (AI) is a prominent international non-governmental organization, headquartered in the United Kingdom, that focuses on protecting human rights and advocating for their global enforcement. Founded in 1961 by British lawyer Peter Benenson, AI started as a campaign to obtain an amnesty for prisoners of conscience worldwide, following his outrage over the jailing of two Portuguese students who toasted to freedom¹². The organization's mission statement is to prevent and end grave abuses of human rights, and it has expanded its scope to include various human rights issues, such as ending torture, protecting human dignity, advocating for refugees, and promoting women's, children's, and minorities' rights. AI's organizational structure is complex, with the International Secretariat (IS) controlling its operations. The IS is led by a team of senior directors and the secretary-general, who are responsible for researching and reporting human rights violations, ensuring international unity in voice, monitoring financial health, and providing materials for campaigning and legal analysis. The organization also has an international board, composed of nine individuals elected by the Global Assembly, which ensures compliance with global standards and policies. AI's funding primarily comes from donations and fees from international membership, allowing it to maintain independence from economic interests,

governments, and religions. The organization has been successful in influencing human rights campaigns, such as the establishment of the International Criminal Court. AI's work is guided by principles of international solidarity, effective action for individual victims, global coverage, universality and indivisibility of human rights, impartiality and independence, democracy, and mutual respect.

Amnesty International: A Journey of Human Rights Advocacy

Amnesty International stands as a beacon of hope and resilience in the global struggle for human rights. For over six decades, this renowned organization has championed the cause of justice, shedding light on human rights abuses and advocating for the rights of the oppressed and marginalized. In this essay, we will embark on a journey through the rich history of Amnesty International, tracing its origins, key milestones, and enduring impact on the world stage. The story of Amnesty International begins in 1961, with a single act of compassion and outrage. British lawyer Peter Benenson was moved by the plight of two Portuguese students who were imprisoned for raising their glasses in a toast to freedom. Determined to make a difference, Benenson penned an article titled "The Forgotten Prisoners," which was published in The Observer newspaper on May 28, 1961. In this article, Benenson called for a

worldwide campaign to mobilize public opinion and secure the release of prisoners of conscience¹³.

The response to Benenson's impassioned plea was overwhelming, laying the groundwork for the establishment of Amnesty International on July 28, 1961. The organization's founding mission was clear: to work tirelessly for the release of prisoners of conscience and to promote respect for human rights globally. From its inception, Amnesty International adopted a grassroots approach to advocacy, relying on letter-writing campaigns, petitions, and public demonstrations to raise awareness and pressure governments to release prisoners of conscience. In the early years, Amnesty International focused primarily on individual cases of injustice, mobilizing its growing network of supporters to advocate for the release of prisoners around the world. The organization's efforts were bolstered by the publication of its annual report, "Prisoners of Conscience," which documented cases of human rights abuses and provided a platform for activists to raise awareness about specific issues.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Amnesty International expanded its focus to include a broader range of human rights issues, including torture, extrajudicial executions, and the death penalty. The organization's advocacy efforts brought international attention to human rights abuses in countries around the world, leading to tangible improvements in the treatment of

prisoners and the enactment of laws to protect human rights. One of Amnesty International's most significant achievements came in 1977 with the adoption of the "Declaration of Tokyo," which set forth principles for the humane treatment of prisoners and became a landmark document in the field of human rights law. This declaration, along with other advocacy initiatives, helped to establish Amnesty International as a leading voice in the global struggle for human rights¹⁴.

Over the decades, Amnesty International has continued to evolve and adapt to changing political and social landscapes. The organization has expanded its advocacy efforts to include issues such as women's rights, refugee rights, and the rights of indigenous peoples. It has also embraced new technologies and communication channels to reach broader audiences and engage with supporters worldwide. Despite the progress made in advancing human rights, Amnesty International faces ongoing challenges in the fight against injustice and oppression. The persistence of authoritarian regimes, armed conflicts, and systemic discrimination underscores the urgent need for continued advocacy and activism. In response to these challenges, Amnesty International remains steadfast in its commitment to defending human rights and holding governments and other actors accountable for their actions.

In conclusion, the history of Amnesty International is a testament to the power of individuals to effect meaningful change in the world. From its humble beginnings as a grassroots movement, the organization has grown into a global force for human rights, championing the rights of the oppressed and marginalized. As we reflect on the past six decades, Amnesty International serves as a reminder that the struggle for human rights is ongoing, and that each of us has a role to play in advancing justice and dignity for all.

Amnesty International's Contribution to Human Rights Development: A Legacy of Advocacy and Impact

Amnesty International has played a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of human rights development since its inception over six decades ago. Through its unwavering commitment to justice and advocacy, the organization has catalyzed significant advancements in the protection and promotion of human rights worldwide. In this essay, we will explore the multifaceted contributions of Amnesty International to the evolution of human rights, highlighting key achievements and enduring impacts. One of the most significant ways in which Amnesty International has contributed to human rights development is through its relentless advocacy for the release of prisoners of conscience. Since its founding in 1961, the organization has mobilized millions of people around the world to take action on behalf of individuals who have been imprisoned for

their beliefs or identity. Through letter-writing campaigns, petitions, and public demonstrations, Amnesty International has pressured governments to release prisoners of conscience and to respect the fundamental rights of all individuals. Amnesty International operates through a multi-faceted approach that includes human rights advocacy, research and reports, campaigns and lobbying, and legal action¹⁵. These operations are carried out by a global movement of millions of people who demand human rights for all, regardless of their nationality or location. Amnesty International's litigation work often involves acting as a third-party intervener or "friend of the court" (*amicus curiae*), providing insights into human rights laws and standards to judges who may not be familiar with these areas. They have been involved in strategic litigation since at least 1987, focusing on supporting victims of human rights violations and human rights defenders, and aiming to achieve systemic change. Amnesty International has a strong focus on strategic litigation, which combines their legal expertise with that of their researchers, campaigners, and advocates throughout the litigation process. They work in collaboration with other prominent human rights organizations worldwide¹⁶. Their strategic litigation work covers a wide range of thematic issues, including torture and other ill-treatment, international justice, detention, the rights of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants, children's rights, censorship, freedom of expression, maternal

health, reproductive rights, the death penalty, discrimination, and economic, social, and cultural rights. Amnesty International's litigation work has taken place in various national and international courts, including the UK Supreme Court, and they have been involved in cases concerning international refugee law, international human rights law, and complex doctrines of international law. They have supported successful petitions to high courts and have participated in ongoing cases around the world. Beyond its focus on prisoners of conscience, Amnesty International has played a crucial role in bringing attention to a wide range of human rights issues, including torture, extrajudicial executions, and the death penalty. By documenting human rights abuses, conducting research, and publishing reports, the organization has provided valuable evidence to hold perpetrators accountable and to advocate for systemic change. In many cases, Amnesty International's advocacy efforts have led to tangible improvements in the treatment of prisoners, the enactment of laws to protect human rights, and the establishment of international standards for the protection of individuals from abuse and discrimination. One of Amnesty International's most notable contributions to human rights development came in 1977 with the adoption of the "Declaration of Tokyo," which set forth principles for the humane treatment of prisoners and became a landmark document in the field of human rights law. This declaration, along with other advocacy initiatives, helped to establish

Amnesty International as a leading voice in the global struggle for human rights and paved the way for the adoption of international treaties and conventions to protect human rights¹⁷.

In addition to its advocacy work, Amnesty International has played a key role in raising awareness about human rights issues and educating the public about the importance of defending human rights. Through campaigns, events, and educational materials, the organization has empowered individuals to take action and to stand up for the rights of others. In the United States, Amnesty International has called on foreign governments to immediately and unconditionally release prisoners of conscience, including those in Saudi Arabia who were arbitrarily detained and subjected to torture and other forms of ill-treatment. By fostering a culture of human rights activism, Amnesty International has inspired countless people to become agents of change in their communities and to work towards a more just and equitable world.

Furthermore, Amnesty International has been at the forefront of efforts to hold governments and other actors accountable for human rights violations. Amnesty International has been advocating for justice for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the Central African Republic (CAR) for several years. Their efforts led to the acquittal and release of 18 students and an

academic who were prosecuted for taking part in a peaceful campus-based Pride parade.

Through its rigorous research and documentation, the organization has provided crucial evidence to support legal proceedings and international investigations into human rights abuses. By shining a spotlight on perpetrators of abuse and demanding accountability, Amnesty International has helped to ensure that victims receive justice and that perpetrators are held responsible for their actions. In the United States, Amnesty International has called on foreign governments to immediately and unconditionally release prisoners of conscience, including those in Saudi Arabia who were arbitrarily detained and subjected to torture and other forms of ill-treatment. Following an intervention from Amnesty International, Austrian-based Kelkos Energy withdrew its baseless defamation lawsuits against environmental activists Shpresa Loshaj and Adriatik, who had publicly raised concerns about the environmental impact of hydropower projects¹⁸. Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign in 2020 saw more than 445,000 people from 43 countries demand the acquittal and release of METU students who were prosecuted for taking part in a peaceful campus-based Pride parade¹⁹. In the United States, Amnesty International has highlighted the use of prolonged solitary confinement in federal ²⁰prisons, which is in breach of international law and has severe mental

and physical impacts on prisoners. These examples demonstrate the various modes of operation that Amnesty International utilizes to protect human rights and advocate for justice. Their work involves a combination of advocacy, lobbying, releasing prisoners, and campaigning to bring about systemic change and protect the rights of individuals around the world.

In conclusion, Amnesty International's contribution to human rights development is vast and multifaceted. Through its advocacy, research, education, and accountability efforts, the organization has played a central role in advancing the cause of human rights around the world. As we reflect on the impact of Amnesty International over the past six decades, it is clear that the organization's legacy of activism and advocacy will continue to shape the future of human rights for generations to come.

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CHAPTER THREE

STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IN HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION CAMPAIGNS

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets out the human rights are fundamental to the dignity and development of every human being. These include political rights, such as freedom of opinion, expression and association; economic rights, such as the right to work and to an adequate standard of living; civil rights, such as equality before the law and the right to marriage; and social or cultural rights, such as the right to education and to participate in the cultural life of the community. It is the responsibility of every government of every state in the world to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of all people in their territory. AI aims to put pressure on governments to accept and act on this responsibility (Amnesty International, 2002).

Amnesty International holds that all human rights are interdependent and endorses and promotes all the rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, Amnesty International cannot give the same attention to all abuses of human rights in its work, which is why it concentrates on ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination. The mandate

decided on by its members determines the permissible boundaries of Amnesty International's research and action.

Historically, the main focus of Amnesty International's campaigning has been to:

- To free all prisoners of conscience;
- To ensure a prompt and fair trial for all political prisoners;
- To abolish the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- To end extrajudicial executions and "disappearances";
- To fight impunity by working to ensure that perpetrators of such human rights abuses are brought to justice in accordance with international standards.

Over the years, Amnesty International has expanded this mandate to encompass human rights abuses committed by non-governmental bodies and private individuals (non-state actors). It opposes abuses by armed political groups (in control of territory or operating in opposition to governments), such as hostage-taking, torture and unlawful killings. It also opposes human rights abuses against civilians and non-combatants by both sides during armed

conflict as well as targeted abuses in the home or community where governments have been complicit or have failed to take effective action. Female genital mutilation, abuses in the context of the trafficking in women and violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people where tolerated or condoned by the authorities have all fallen within this category .

Amnesty International core values is to form a global community of human rights defenders with the principles of international solidarity, effective action for the individual victim, global coverage, the universality and indivisibility of human rights, impartiality and independence, and democracy and mutual respect. Amnesty International addresses governments, intergovernmental organizations, armed political groups, companies and other non-state actors. In order to achieve this, the organization seeks to disclose human rights abuses accurately, quickly and persistently. It systematically and impartially researches the facts of individual cases and patterns of human rights abuses. These findings are publicized, and members, supporters and staff mobilize public pressure on governments and others to stop the abuses.

In addition to its work on specific abuses of human rights, Amnesty International urges all governments to observe the rule of law, and to ratify and implement human rights standards; it carries out a wide range of human rights

educational activities; and it encourages intergovernmental organizations, individuals, and all organs of society to support and respect human rights.

Amnesty International primarily targets governments, but also reports on non-governmental bodies and private individuals “non-state actors”. The sphere of action of Amnesty International is clearly defined and refers to the protection of human rights around the world. Specifically, this organization fights that its key areas of operations are as follows:

1. protection of women;
2. protection of children;
3. ending the torture and execution (barring any illegal torture people);
4. protection of prisoners of conscience (freedom of conscience and freedom of expression, and the release of all prisoners of conscience);
5. protection of refugees;
6. protection and overcoming the phenomena of human rights violations that are related to his physical and psychological integrity;
7. abolishing the death penalty, torture and other cruel treatment has held prisoners;

8. fair and fast trials for prisoners
9. overcoming the phenomena of discrimination on any grounds: gender, race, religion, language, political opinion, national or social origin, and others.
10. Regulation of the global arms trade .

Some specific aims are to abolish the death penalty, end extra judicial executions and “disappearances”, ensure prison conditions meet international human rights standards, ensure prompt and fair trial for all political prisoners, ensure free education to all children worldwide, decriminalize abortion, fight impunity from systems of justice, end the recruitment and use of child soldiers, free all prisoners of conscience, promote economic, social and cultural rights for marginalized communities, protect human rights defenders, promote religious tolerance, protect LGBT rights, stop torture and ill-treatment, stop unlawful killings in armed conflict, uphold the rights of refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers, and protect human dignity.

Additionally, Amnesty International has developed ways to publicize information and mobilize public opinion. The organization considers the publication of impartial and accurate reports as one of its strengths. Reports are researched by interviewing victims and officials, observing trials, working with

local human rights activists, and monitoring the media. It aims to issue timely press releases and publishes information in newsletters and on web sites. It also sends official missions to countries to make courteous but insistent inquiries (Wikipedia).

Campaigns to mobilize public opinion can take the form of individual, country, or thematic campaigns. Many techniques are deployed, such as direct appeals (for example, letter writing), media and publicity work, and public demonstrations. Often, fund-raising is integrated with campaigning. In 2018, the organization started to adopt a new communications strategy based on. In situations which require immediate attention, Amnesty International calls on existing urgent action networks or crisis response networks; for all other matters, it calls on its membership. It considers the large size of its human resources to be another of its key strengths.

The role of Amnesty International has a significant impact on getting citizens on board with focusing on human rights issues. These groups influence countries and governments to give their people justice with pressure and in human resources. An example of Amnesty International's work is writing letters to free imprisoned people that were put there for non-violent expressions. The group now has power, attends sessions, and became a source of information for

the UN. The increase in participation of non-governmental organizations changes how we live today .

The Principles implemented by Amnesty International

All Amnesty International's work is guided by the principles of international solidarity, effective action for the individual victim, global coverage, universality and indivisibility of human rights, impartiality and independence, and democracy and mutual respect.

International solidarity: Human rights transcend national borders, and AI was founded in the belief that the protection of human rights is an international and not merely a national responsibility. Its members come from many cultures and backgrounds, but we work in solidarity with each other, with victims of human rights abuses, and with the worldwide human rights movement.

Effective action for the individual victim: Our research, our campaigning, our efforts to change laws and policies, our appeals and letters, are determined not by politics or ideology, but by what will help real women, men and children. Amnesty International started its campaign in 1961 with a newspaper article about two prisoners of conscience in Portugal. More than 40 years later, even when we are dealing with atrocities on a massive scale, we try in our reports to

describe the fate of individual victims, to give the stories of their lives. We try to show the individual human suffering behind the headline statistics.

Global coverage: it works for human rights for all everywhere. AI works for diverse victims, under all kinds of governments. AI does not make comparisons between countries or “rate” them, but addresses human rights abuses according to their level and seriousness.

Universality and indivisibility: Human rights are the same for all people regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, political or other opinion, national or social origin. We are all born free and equal in dignity and rights – human rights are universal. To live in dignity, human beings are entitled to freedom, security and decent standards of living – human rights are indivisible.

Impartiality: the organization does not support or oppose any government or political system, nor the views of the victims whose rights it seeks to protect. All Amnesty International sections and groups work on a wide variety of different regions of the world, with differing political situations.

Independence: Amnesty International is independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion. It does not support or oppose any government or political system, nor does it necessarily support the views or

the causes of the victims whose rights it seeks to protect. To ensure its independence, Amnesty International does not seek or accept money from governments or political parties for its work in documenting and campaigning against human rights abuses. Its funding depends on the contributions of its worldwide membership and fundraising activities.

By establishing and asserting our impartiality, we give weight to the central premise of AI's work, that all people are entitled to the human rights described in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. By remaining both independent and impartial, it deflects the argument governments often try to make that Amnesty International is criticizing them because of a political bias rather than because of their human rights record, and strengthens Amnesty International's standing and the reliability of its research in the eyes of the international community (Amnesty International, 2002).

Functions of Amnesty International

Amnesty International seeks to disclose human rights abuses accurately, quickly and persistently. It systematically and impartially researches the facts of individual cases and patterns of human rights abuses. These findings are publicized, and members, supporters and staff mobilize public pressure on

governments and others, including armed political groups, intergovernmental organizations and companies, to stop the abuses.

In addition to its work against specific abuses of human rights, AI urges all governments to observe the rule of law, and to ratify and implement human rights standards; it carries out a wide range of human rights educational activities; and it encourages intergovernmental organizations, individuals, and all organs of society to support and respect human rights.

Amnesty International's main activities are carrying out research into human rights abuses, publicizing them and campaigning to end them. Amnesty International activists campaign for change, such as the release of individual prisoners of conscience or for the commutation of a death sentence, for changes in the law and for changes in people's awareness of human rights. There is a wide range of types of action which its members take:

They make direct appeals to governments and others responsible for human rights abuses, calling for action on specific cases and changes in policy and practice.

- They lobby intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations to make human rights central to their programs, to set and implement

human rights standards and to take action on specific issues and situations.

- They lobby their own governments to take action against human rights abuses in other countries and to amend their own legislation, policies and practices, in relation to human rights issues including refugee protection, and the export of arms and other military, security and police transfers.
- They put pressure on other actors, such as companies to promote and protect human rights.
- They work in cooperation with other non-governmental organizations such as community or rights groups or professional associations, such as doctors' or teachers' organizations and provide training and support for human rights activists.
- They provide support to victims and their families by giving relief assistance to individual prisoners of conscience and victims of torture.
- They support and organize human rights education programs that help people learn about human rights and how to defend them.

- They mobilize their communities by staging local, national and international events and giving information to the news media (Amnesty International, 2002).

Besides the activities in these areas, Amnesty International stands for protection in zones of armed conflict, ending political killings and disappearances, ensuring prison conditions by international human rights standards, providing free education for all children in the world, breaking recruitment of child soldiers. This organization acts as a protector of human rights all over the world and its actions are not only supercilious for governments but also for all non-governmental organizations, institutions and individuals. It does not support and opposes any government or political system, and works even in cases when you do not agree with the beliefs of those whose rights are violated.

Amnesty International as mass movement for the protection of human rights operates on the principles of international solidarity, global security, human rights universality, impartiality, independence, democracy and mutual respect. Amnesty International acts through her voluntary membership, which stands for the cessation of human rights violations, by putting pressure on governments, armed groups, government organizations, to respect the law and to apply international standards of human rights, organized a series of

educational activities on human rights and encourages all non-governmental organizations, individuals and social institutions to support and respect human rights.

It is their work to discover the violations of human rights used array techniques, such as pressure on public opinion and on the governments in the world by organizing various actions ranging from public demonstrations to writing letters, from human rights education to concerts to increase funds from individual appeals for help for specific cases to global campaigns for some particular examples. Despite all stated conducts research organization facts, systematic and unbiased individual cases and patterns of human rights violations through interviewing victims, observing trials, working with human rights activists and all these findings it published in the media, in letters or its website.

It also issued and periodicals, reports, educational materials for the rights of man and other rights-protective literature. In these publications are published cases of violation of human rights in the world, and their readers she proposes to send letters of support for victims of inhuman acts. By taking the above actions by Amnesty International give good results in the fight for human rights. Amnesty International on its work and activities submitted official messages or reports end of each year and through them send messages to all the

world's governments to ensure decent, persistent, respect and realization of human rights anywhere in the world .

Leadership and Administration of Amnesty International

Amnesty International is largely made up of voluntary members, but retains a small number of paid professionals. In countries in which Amnesty International has a strong presence, members are organized as “sections” and are co-ordinate basic Amnesty International activities normally with a significant number of members, some of whom will form into “groups”, and a professional staff with their board of directors. As at 2019, there were 63 sections worldwide. “Structures” are aspiring sections. They also co-ordinate basic activities but have a smaller membership and a limited staff. In countries where no section or structure exists, people can become “international members”. There are two other organizational models such as international networks which promote specific themes or have a specific identity and “affiliated groups which do the same work as section groups, but in isolation.

The highest governing body is the Global Assembly which meets annually. Each Section sends its Chair and Executive Director to the Global Assembly. The Global Assembly process is governed and managed by the PrepCom (Preparatory Committee). The International Board (formerly known

as the International Executive Committee [IEC]), led by the International Board Chairperson (Sarah Beamish) consists of nine members and the International Treasurer with two members co-opted. The IB is elected by, and accountable to, the Global Assembly. The International Board meets at least two times during any one year and in practice meets face to face at least four times a year. Other board and sub committee meetings are undertaken via video conferencing. The role of the International Board is to take decisions on behalf of Amnesty International, govern the International Secretariat including regional offices, implement the strategy laid out by the Global Assembly and ensure compliance with the organization's statutes (Wikipedia). The International Secretariat (IS) is overseen by the International Board and is responsible for:

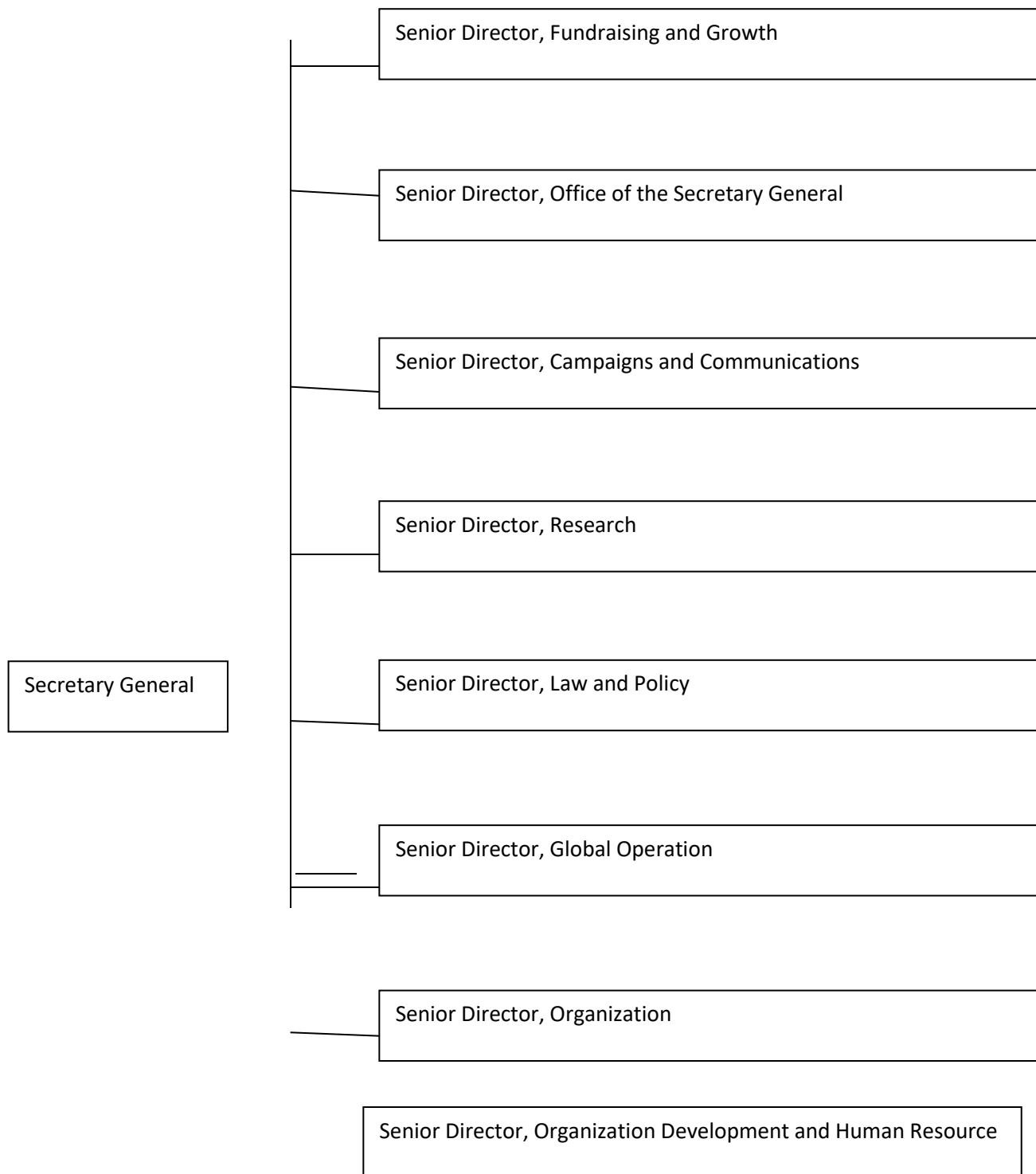
1. Conducting research and reporting
2. Ensuring Amnesty International (AI) speaks with one voice globally about the whole range of human rights themes and situations and their impact on people and communities
3. Providing expert legal analysis of our research data, forming the basis of expert lobbying of international government organizations
4. Providing endorsed materials to sections for campaigning
5. Monitoring Amnesty International's financial health

6. Supporting and maintaining systems required to ensure that Amnesty International is ready to serve 24 hours a day

The work carried out through Amnesty International's International Secretariat is organized into two legal entities, in compliance with United Kingdom law. These are Amnesty International Limited ("AIL") and Amnesty International Charity Limited ("AICL"). Amnesty International Limited is a company registered in England & Wales, limited by guarantee with registered office at 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW.

[Amnesty International Charity Limited](#) is a company registered in England & Wales, limited by guarantee (no. 02007475) and a registered charity (no. 294230), with registered office at 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW. [Amnesty International's International Board](#), is elected by our Global Assembly, which meets annually. The International Board provides guidance and leadership for the Amnesty International movement (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/about-us/how-we-run/structure-and-people/>).

[The Secretary General](#) is the operational leader of the movement, and CEO of the International Secretariat. A team of Senior Directors is responsible with the Secretary General for the leadership of the International Secretariat.



The Sections carry out Amnesty International work at a national and/or regional level. Amnesty International has sections set up in more than 70 countries.

They are responsible for:

- Lobbying local government
- Campaigning/fundraising/communications within their country/region
- Developing strategies for media work
- Recruiting new supporters for the organization
- Conducting own research projects focusing on human rights abuses in their own country, this must be developed from research work carried out by and is agreed by the International Board.

Many of our members are a part of a group based in their community, whether this is their local neighbourhood, town or their workplace, college or place of worship. AI groups are official units of the organization, and some of its most important work is done at group level. Groups carry out activities such as campaigning, education, engaging local media contacts, fundraising, and recruitment of members & activists. Groups also take part in AI decision-making contributing to national and international

consultations, attending Annual General Meetings, and participating in section working groups.

Members are individuals who pay a membership fee while supporters are individuals who make a donation and activists are individuals who take part in actions such as letter writing, signing petitions, demonstrating. Networks are made up of members who share an interest, identity or expertise which gives them a particular role to play in taking up human rights issues.

The largest AI network is the worldwide urgent action network, whose members take rapid action at short notice to protect people whose life or physical security is at risk. The International Secretariat has an annual budget of approximately £60 million, and employs approximately 530 staff, of whom around 400 are based in London and the rest at other offices around the world. The International Secretariat is funded primarily by contributions from individual donors in national Sections, which have an aggregated global income of approximately £190 million per year.

The International Board appoints and directs our Secretary General. The Secretary General is the operational leader of Amnesty International and Chief Executive of the International Secretariat, which carries out the majority of our research and campaigning work. They are the chief spokesperson for Amnesty

International and the principal political advisor to the International Board and the Amnesty International movement, as well as being its chief strategist.

Reporting to the Secretary General, Amnesty International's Senior Leadership Team is responsible for the leadership and sound management of the International Secretariat. This Senior Leadership Team works closely with the directors and deputy directors of the International Secretariat's programmes, and together they provide strategic direction, operational management and direct support to the staff and volunteers of the International Secretariat. These staff and volunteers and those of Amnesty International's national branches are the most important resources that Amnesty International has in its work to defend and promote human rights globally
(<https://careers.amnesty.org/leadership/is/>)

The International Secretariat (IS) is responsible for the conduct and daily affairs of Amnesty International under direction from the International Board. It is run by approximately 500 professional staff members and is headed by a Secretary General. The Secretariat operates several work programmes; International Law and Organizations; Research; Campaigns; Mobilization; and Communications. Its offices have been located in London since its establishment in the mid-1960s.

International Board (formerly known as "IEC") Chairpersons are Seán MacBride, 1965–74; Dirk Börner, 1974–17; Thomas Hammarberg, 1977–79; José Zalaquett, 1979–82; Suriya Wickremasinghe, 1982–85; Wolfgang Heinz, 1985–96; Franca Sciuto, 1986–89; Peter Duffy, 1989–91; Anette Fischer, 1991–92; Ross Daniels, 1993–19; Susan Waltz, 1996–98; Mahmoud Ben Romdhane, 1999–2000; Colm O Cuanachain, 2001–02; Paul Hoffman, 2003–04; Jaap Jacobson, 2005; Hanna Roberts, 2005–06; Lilian Gonçalves-Ho Kang You, 2006–07; Peter Pack, 2007–11; Pietro Antonioli, 2011–13; and Nicole Bieske, 2013–2018, Sarah Beamish (2019 to current) (Wikipedia).

Secretary General	Office	Origin
Peter Benenson	1961–1966	Britain
Eric Baker	1966–1968	Britain
Martin Ennals	1968–1980	Britain
Thomas Hammarberg	1980–1986	Sweden
Ian Martin	1986–1992	Britain
Pierre Sané	1992–2001	Senegal

<u>Irene Khan</u>	2001–2010	<u>Bangladesh</u>
<u>Salil Shetty</u>	2010–2018	<u>India</u>
<u>Kumi Naidoo</u>	2018–present ^[2]	<u>South Africa</u>

ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER FOUR

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN NIGERIA

The concept 'human rights' initiated in modern language in the 16th century. Though, it was affirmed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on 10 December 1948. The declaration portrays a global charter of rights announced 'Universal' and 'Fundamental' liberty, which exceeds national, religious, cultural and ideological aspects (Islam, 2016). The Universal Declaration has now turned into a foundation of International Law. The enshrined confirmation accordingly in the ICCPR and ICESCR deal with the rights of the individual human being and also lay down rights in perspective to globe. Human Rights are about the life, liberty, freedom, safety and majesty of men, women, youth and children. Government institution is accountable to respect, protect and perform human rights, therefore they are not the single one concerned in human rights and sustainable human development the other common associations like human rights and socio-economic NGOs, societies as well as indigenous groups also play vital job in monitoring, defending and supporting human rights²¹.

The modern idea of human rights evolved in the wake of the Second World War. Up until that time, the way in which a State treated its own

inhabitants had been considered largely an internal matter, of no legitimate concern to the outside world. Shock and outrage at the atrocities committed by the defeated Nazi regime, both against foreign nations and its own population, prompted calls for international standards for the protection of human beings. People realized that had the Nazis not invaded another country, the treatment of its own citizens, however appalling, would have been perfectly lawful .

For the future therefore some of the governments on the victorious allied side were determined to define standards of behaviour which would oblige governments to respect any person subject to their rule. When the allied nations met in San Francisco in 1945 to consider founding the United Nations (a term that up until then they had informally applied to their own coalition) there was a particular focus upon, human rights. An early attempt to secure agreement to a binding international bill of rights within the UN Charter did not find sufficient support. Instead the newly established UN Economic and Social Council were asked to set up a commission “for the promotion of human rights”.

The UN Commission on Human Rights set up a committee, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, tasked with developing set of human rights standards which would reflect, as far as possible, the shared values of all the world’s nations and cultures. The major problem faced by the committee was whether the document they were preparing could have legal force. Some countries supported a legally

binding treaty, to be ratified by all the UN's members; others preferred a moral declaration without the force of law (and in reality some countries would have preferred no mention of human rights at all). In the end, the committee decided to start with a moral declaration that could then lead, in a second stage, to a binding bill of rights .

As a result the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* (UDHR) was adopted without an opposing vote by the UN General Assembly in 1948, with the status of a moral declaration. In time two further treaties were agreed, based upon the UDHR: the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR) and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR). Both were adopted in 1966 and had, by the mid 2000s been ratified by over 150 States respectively. Collectively, the UDHR, ICCPR and ICESCR are often called the “International Bill of Human Rights”.

When the international community talks about human rights it identifies them as a set of entitlements that belong to everyone, by virtue of their humanity, irrespective of race, nationality, or membership of any particular social group. They specify the minimum conditions necessary to protect human integrity and dignity. The entitlements belong to each individual (the rights holder) and in signing the treaties specified above states agree to protect those rights, to become (duty bearers) of that responsibility.

The values enshrined in the International Bill of Human Rights were not invented. The committee aimed to find a consensus that could set standards of conduct for governments which would reflect the common aspirations of all belief systems that respected human life. To that end different religious figures and philosophers were consulted to identify the values common to all human societies and cultures. It was from that base that the values embodied in the UDHR were created. The Bill itself was significant because of its legal character. It sets out the obligations owed by States to every human over whom it exercises power. It also, and controversially, makes clear that any violation of human rights in the Bill is of concern to the international community as a whole and not just an internal affair.

The Universal Declaration and ICCPR and ICESCR, have provided the basis for many other international and regional human rights instruments, as well as elements for many national constitutions. As stated above the original International Bill of Human Rights divided human rights into two categories, civil and political rights (the ICCPR) which many argued acted as constraints upon what the state might do, for example, life, liberty, and freedom from torture. Social and economic rights enshrined in the ICESCR were seen to require more active intervention by the state by imposing obligations to provide health, education and so on. In reality the division was not so clear cut civil and

political rights are meant to constrain significant abuses of power while social and economic rights require resourcing. The division had its origins in the Cold War – with some countries privileging civil and political rights, while others argued that social and economic rights (which they interpreted in ways to increase state power) were more important and that their realization necessarily prefigured civil and political rights. With the end of the Cold war there has been renewed emphasis among the international human rights community both institutions and NGOs to insist upon the indivisibility of human rights their essential unity. Observers such as Amartya Sen also observed that civil and political rights such as freedom of expression were crucial to the realization of social and economic rights that both underpinned the other .

In recent times it has been recognized that the responsibilities of the state do not simply extend to non interference in the affairs of citizens. The state may also have a positive responsibility to protect the rights of others, even against other private actors. In the words of the European Court there is “*a positive obligation on the authorities to take preventive operational measures to protect an individual whose life is at risk from the criminal acts of another individual*”. Positive obligations may require many different forms of action by member states, from effectively investigating killings through to protecting

peaceful demonstrators from violent attacks by their opponents, to ensuring that older people in care homes are adequately treated by staff.

In recent years these positive obligations have been defined as the need for states to respect, protect and fulfill human rights. Respect requires States not to violate economic, social and cultural rights (for example forcibly and arbitrarily evicting people violates their right to housing). Protect requires States to prevent other people and or institutions from violating such rights (for example by providing adequate support for those subject to domestic violence or by ensuring private employers respect basic labour standards). Fulfill requires States to take appropriate legal, administrative, financial and other measures to realizing the rights (for example by providing some basic health care).

Evolution Human Rights in Nigeria

According to retired Supreme Court of Nigeria, Justice Chukwudifu Akunne Oputa, we in the common law countries have a common political and legal inheritance. We are co-heirs to the Magna Carta of 1215, and the Bill of Rights 1689. One of Britain's legacies to the Commonwealth is the libertarian tradition of the common law and its system of justice. During the colonial era, there were legislative encroachments upon private rights but this did not go

beyond what was necessary to administer a colonial territory. For instance, the law of sedition had to be made a little harsher to guard against the possibility of an articulate section of the population exploiting the general resentment against colonialism to incite the populace to rebellion.

Apart from such cases, civil liberties were up to the time of internal self-government enjoyed in the colonial territories. When independence was at sight, a question that agitated the minds of people was how to preserve the libertarian heritage in the face of ethnic rivalry and ambition to dominate which was a predominant feature of Nigerian politics. The 1951 Macpherson Constitution of Nigeria which introduced representative government in Nigeria provided for one central and three regional governments. And there were three major political parties corresponding to the three regions. The Northern People's Congress (NPC) was the dominant party in the North and its main objectives was to protect the interest of the Northerners. Its main supporters are the Hausas, Fulani's and Kanuri's (Muritala, 2015).

In the West, the Action Group (A.G) held sway and its main supporters were the Yorubas who are by far the largest tribe in the region. The National Council of Nigeria and Cameroun (NCNC) which was conceived as a broad-based national party later degenerated to a party for the Ibos, the dominant tribe in the Eastern region. There was unhealthy rivalry among these parties. In 1953

there was crisis at the centre arising from the motion for self-government in 1956 sponsored by the A.G and supported by NCNC but vehemently opposed by the NPC who were booed and jeered at. There was a counter action by supporters of the NPC against the A.G. members when they attempted to campaign in the North. There was also a crisis in the Eastern Region. As a result of these and other developments, the Colonial Secretary invited the political leaders to London for a review of the Constitution. The A.G. aligned with the NCNC and proposed an amendment to the Constitution which will incorporate a declaration of certain basic human rights. The aim being that such measure would allow them to campaign freely in the North. But this proposal was turned down at the London Conference in 1953 by the Colonial Secretary.

The conference culminated in the 1954 Litheton Constitution which made the Regions autonomous. Certain minority groups within the Regions, apprehensive of being dominated by the major ethnic groups, started agitating for their own states. Another conference was convened in 1957, at the 1957 Constitutional Conference, the A.G. led a number of minority groups who demanded their recognition as separate states. The party also raised the issue of the incorporation of a bill of rights in the Constitution. Both measures were calculated to weaken the predominance of the NPC in the North and to allow other parties campaign in the North. The Colonial Secretary constituted a

Commission headed by Sir Henry Willink to look into the fears of the minorities and the means of allaying them. The commission not convinced of the constitutional guarantee of rights, nevertheless recommended a long list of human rights for inclusion in subsequent Nigerian Constitutions (Muritala, 2015).

In the opinion of the Commission, the sobering fact is that any government determined to abandon the democratic course could always find ways of violating such rights, but still, their inclusion in the constitution, it is hoped, would be of great value preventing a steady deterioration in standards of rights. The commission's recommendations on human rights were accepted at the 1958 constitutional conference. The accepted recommendations consequently formed chapter III of both the independence constitution of 1960 and the Republican Constitution of 1963. The 1979 Constitution made an advance. Chapter II of that Constitution contains the Fundamental Objectives and Directives Principles of State Policy.

Though it is indisputable that Nationalists agitation and fear of minorities in the conglomerate state gave rise to the inclusion of fundamental rights in our constitution, it is not an exaggeration to say that as long as chapter II (which deals with economic and social rights) remain pious declaration which the state is merely enjoined to implement without being made justiceable,

the full enjoyment of right of a man remain elusive. A state which owes no compulsory obligation to give a child education or to provide basic health facilities or provide social securities for the unemployed youth or make housing all-embracing cannot be said that its citizens are enjoying full fundamental rights .

Amnesty International and Human Rights Defense in Nigeria

According to Amnesty International, Nigeria continues to face worsening human rights crises despite its ratification of human rights treaties. The country grapples with issues like enforced disappearances, human rights violations by security forces, torture, gender-based violence, and the impact of the oil industry on human rights. Amnesty International calls on the Nigerian government to prioritize human rights, end decades of violations, and ensure accountability for these abuses². The organization highlights ongoing challenges such as excessive force by defense and security forces, torture during police interrogations, forced evictions, and lack of basic amenities for internally displaced persons

Amnesty International plays a crucial role in advocating for human rights in Nigeria, addressing various violations and advocating for justice. One significant focus is on the protection of vulnerable groups like children and

internally displaced persons. For instance, Amnesty International has highlighted cases of enforced disappearances, sexual and gender-based violence, and the lack of basic amenities for resettled internally displaced people. Additionally, the organization has condemned the use of excessive force by defense and security forces, torture during police interrogations, and forced evictions⁴. Moreover, Amnesty International has been vocal about the need for accountability and justice, especially in cases like the 20 October 2020 EndSARS protests and the ongoing violence in regions like Southern Kaduna, Benue, and Plateau states. The organization has called for thorough investigations into human rights violations, emphasizing the importance of upholding rights to life, freedom of expression, and freedom of assembly. Furthermore, Amnesty International has engaged in educational initiatives like Human Rights Education (HRE) activities, aiming to raise awareness among children, youths, and students about their rights and responsibilities in upholding and defending human rights. These efforts include training sessions for secondary school students and members of human rights clinics in tertiary institutions, focusing on topics like child rights, human rights abuses, and non-violent actions to address violations. In conclusion, Amnesty International's work in Nigeria encompasses a wide range of activities aimed at promoting and protecting human rights. Through advocacy, education, and raising awareness,

the organization strives to address violations, seek justice for victims, and empower individuals to stand up for their rights in the face of challenges and injustices.

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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Amnesty International's impact on the global human rights landscape is profound and enduring. Since its inception in 1961, the organization has been at the forefront of advocating for the protection of human rights worldwide. Through a combination of grassroots activism, strategic campaigns, and relentless dedication, Amnesty International has consistently championed the rights of individuals facing injustice, persecution, and oppression. One of Amnesty International's key strengths lies in its ability to mobilize ordinary citizens to take action on human rights issues. The organization's early success can be attributed to its innovative use of letter-writing campaigns, which allowed individuals to advocate for the release of prisoners of conscience and draw attention to human rights abuses. By empowering people to become human rights defenders in their own communities, Amnesty International has created a global network of activists committed to promoting justice and equality. Amnesty International's advocacy efforts have extended beyond grassroots activism to include high-profile campaigns and lobbying initiatives. The organization's benefit concerts, such as the Human Rights Now! series in the late 1980s, not only raised awareness about human rights violations but also showcased the power of music and art in inspiring social change. These events

brought together renowned artists and activists to amplify the voices of those fighting for their rights around the world, demonstrating the intersection of culture, politics, and human rights advocacy. Amnesty International's commitment to impartiality and its focus on addressing political repression have earned it widespread recognition and respect on the global stage. The organization's rigorous research, documentation of human rights abuses, and advocacy work have contributed to shaping international human rights standards and policies. In 1977, Amnesty International was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of its significant contributions to promoting peace and justice. This prestigious accolade underscored the organization's impact and influence in advancing human rights globally. Amnesty International's work spans across diverse regions and addresses a wide range of human rights challenges, from political repression and torture to gender inequality and discrimination. By engaging with local communities, partnering with grassroots organizations, and collaborating with governments and international bodies, Amnesty International has been able to effect meaningful change and hold perpetrators of human rights abuses accountable. The organization's presence in over 150 countries and territories ensures that it remains responsive to the evolving human rights landscape and can adapt its strategies to address emerging issues and crises.

In conclusion, Amnesty International's tireless efforts to champion human rights have had a transformative impact on the world. Through its grassroots activism, advocacy campaigns, international recognition, and diverse regional engagement, the organization has played a crucial role in promoting justice, equality, and dignity for all. As Amnesty International continues to uphold its commitment to defending human rights, it remains a beacon of hope for those facing oppression and injustice, inspiring individuals and communities to stand up for their rights and create a more just and equitable world.

Amnesty International, a prominent global non-governmental organization established in 1961, stands as a beacon of hope for human rights protection worldwide. With a vast network of over 10 million members and supporters, Amnesty International is dedicated to advocating for justice, dignity, and equality for all individuals. This essay delves into the organization's mandate, key areas of focus, strategies, impact, successes, challenges, and its enduring commitment to safeguarding human rights. Amnesty International's core mission revolves around protecting and promoting human rights on a global scale. Through a multi-faceted approach that combines research, advocacy, and mobilization, the organization addresses a wide array of human rights issues, ranging from defending prisoners of conscience to combating torture, discrimination, and advocating for the rights of marginalized groups.

Amnesty International's work encompasses a broad spectrum of human rights concerns, including the protection of prisoners of conscience, the abolition of the death penalty, combating torture and extrajudicial executions, promoting economic, social, and cultural rights, and advocating for the rights of women, children, minorities, and indigenous peoples. By targeting these critical areas, Amnesty International aims to uphold the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The impact of Amnesty International on human rights protection is profound and far-reaching. Through meticulous research, documentation of human rights violations, global campaigns, and advocacy efforts, the organization mobilizes public opinion, pressures governments and non-state actors, and influences legal and policy changes to ensure the protection of human rights. Amnesty's strategies have led to the release of numerous prisoners of conscience, prevented torture and executions, and catalyzed policy reforms to safeguard human rights. While Amnesty International has achieved significant successes in advancing human rights globally, it also faces formidable challenges. Limited resources, political resistance, and the evolving nature of human rights abuses present ongoing obstacles. Despite these challenges, Amnesty International remains steadfast in its commitment to championing human rights and confronting injustices wherever they occur. In conclusion, Amnesty International's unwavering

dedication to human rights protection, its global impact, and its multifaceted approach make it a formidable force in the fight for justice and equality. By exposing abuses, mobilizing public support, and advocating for change, Amnesty International continues to shape a more just and equitable world. As we navigate the complexities of the modern world, organizations like Amnesty International serve as beacons of hope, reminding us of the enduring importance of upholding human rights for all.

1. Strengthen International Human Rights Frameworks: Encourage governments to ratify and implement international human rights treaties, and support the development of new treaties to address emerging human rights issues.
2. Ensure that Amnesty International's advocacy efforts prioritize the voices and concerns of marginalized groups, including women, children, and indigenous peoples.
3. Enhance Collaboration with Other Human Rights Organizations: Foster partnerships with other human rights organizations to leverage resources, expertise, and networks, and to amplify the impact of human rights advocacy.

4. Conduct Regular Human Rights Monitoring: Continue to conduct thorough research and monitoring of human rights violations, and provide timely and accurate information to the public and policymakers.
5. Develop Innovative Research Methods: Explore new research methods, such as data analytics and digital forensics, to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of human rights research.
6. Publish Regular Reports and Briefings: Provide regular reports and briefings on human rights issues, including country-specific reports and thematic reports on issues such as torture, women's rights, and economic, social, and cultural rights.
7. Develop Human Rights Education Programs: Establish education programs for schools, universities, and communities to promote human rights awareness and understanding.
8. Use Digital Platforms for Education and Awareness: Leverage digital platforms, such as social media and online courses, to reach a wider audience and provide accessible human rights education.
9. Organize Public Events and Campaigns: Organize public events, campaigns, and awareness-raising activities to engage the public and policymakers in human rights issues.

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