



International Service Human Rights Awards

8th December 2008

Presented by Jon Snow
House of Commons

Kindly sponsored by Bryan Sanderson CBE,
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International Service

International Service is a UK-based international development agency.

Working in Latin America, West Africa and the Middle East, our mission is to combat poverty and oppression by building the capacities of civil society and organisations that represent the poorest people in the countries where we operate. We also work across the UK and Ireland to increase awareness and understanding of global development issues.

We recruit experienced professionals to work with our grassroots partner organisations, and our work is focused in three priority areas: sustainable livelihoods, human rights, and sexual and reproductive health.

International Service is the oldest British volunteer-sending agency. Founded in 1953 as the United Nations Association (UNA) Trust's response to the Dutch floods of that year, it soon expanded its reach beyond Europe. Though we still maintain links with the UNA, International Service became an independent charitable company in 1998.

The International Service Human Rights Awards

Now in their sixth year, our Human Rights Awards recognise the achievements of organisations and individuals around the world who work at a grassroots level to promote human rights and change the things that cause people to be excluded, impoverished or disempowered.

Grassroots development workers, activists and development organisations often work in very politically, economically and socially challenging circumstances. Our Human Rights Awards celebrate the commitment and tenacity of these often unsung heroes. Boosting the winners' confidence and morale, the awards also have a long-term impact by raising the profile of the winners' work at national and international levels.

Through the awards, International Service promotes the importance of working in close collaboration with those who suffer poverty and injustice, and working with fundamental respect for each individual.

Awards are made to those defending the human rights of

- women
- children
- disabled people
- people living with HIV/AIDS

A fifth award is also made in recognition of high-profile work that promotes or defends human rights on a global scale.

Programme

International Service Human Rights Awards 2008

Monday 8th December
Terrace Marquee, The House of Commons

In this important year commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Service is delighted to welcome you to our Human Rights Awards ceremony.

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| 12.30 – 13.00 | Buffet and drinks reception |
| 13.00 – 13.30 | 2008 Human Rights Awards presented by Jon Snow |
| 13.30 – 14.00 | Closing remarks from Rt Hon Ann Clwyd MP, followed by an opportunity to meet the winners |





Award for the Defence of the Human Rights of Women

Ms Cherifa Kheddar

President of Association Djazairouna, Algeria

In 1996, in the middle of Algeria's violent civil war - or 'Dark Decade' - Cherifa Kheddar witnessed the torture and murder of her brother and sister. Her husband was also killed and she narrowly escaped an attempt on her own life. Forming the Djazairouna ('Our Algeria') Association, Kheddar united with the survivors and victims of terrorism. She fights to give them a voice in the wake of more than 10 years of violence.

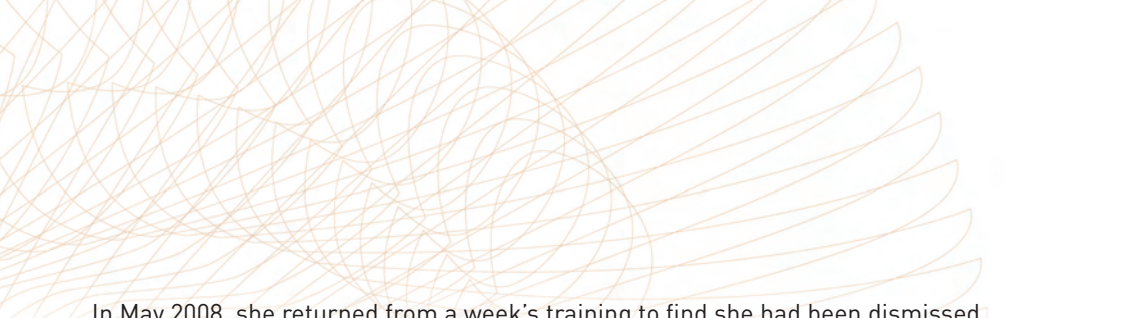
In 1991, political conflict between the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front and the state military spiralled rapidly into civil war. It is estimated that over 150,000 people were killed during the conflict. A disproportionate number of casualties were women and children.

The fundamentalists and their armed insurgency groups used violence and discrimination against women. In particular, women who were viewed as not complying with traditional gender roles were systematically attacked. Thousands more were assassinated, attacked, raped, tortured, abducted or forced into hiding. For this reason, Ms Kheddar has always labelled the civil war a 'war on civilians'.

Through Association Djazairouna, Kheddar is relentless in her mission to provide support to victims and their families: from emotional and psychological help, to organising weekend outings for survivors; from accompanying people to identify the corpses of their loved ones, to help with lengthy administrative procedures.

Kheddar campaigns tirelessly for justice for the victims of the civil war. She fiercely opposes key sections of Algeria's 'Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation' and argues that by recognising only crimes committed by the state during the war, political amnesty is provided for the armed terrorists groups. The majority of human rights abuses during the civil war were not committed by the state, but by fundamentalist groups.

Thousands of victims and families of victims are finding that no-one can be held to account for the crimes committed against them. It is now almost impossible for people to enquire about what happened to their loved ones. Kheddar is at the forefront of publicising this issue and lobbying the government.



In May 2008, she returned from a week's training to find she had been dismissed from the job she had held for 12 years - she had previously received warnings about her actions in the defence of women's human rights. In August 2008 she was, along with her elderly mother and autistic brother, forced out of her official home.

Highly Commended

National Council of Disabled Women (NCDW), Bangladesh

Disabled women in Bangladesh face double discrimination. NCDW works with disabled women to help them understand their legal and human rights. It also fights to influence the legal system and the general public so that the voices of disabled and non-disabled women are taken more seriously at all levels in society. NCDW's work means that crimes against women – such as domestic violence, rape, and discrimination in the workplace – are now being reported and the perpetrators of these crimes are being persecuted.

NAGAAD Umbrella Organisation of Hargeisa Women's NGOs, Somaliland

Nagaad is a Somali word meaning "after hardship and difficulties, we have come to rest in peace". Somaliland is a post-conflict society faced with rebuilding the nation. Nagaad works with 32 member organisations to promote women's rights. In Somaliland the traditional Islamic clan structure is dominant. Women do not belong to clans, and this can leave them disempowered. By working to end violence against women, raise awareness amongst women of HIV and AIDS, and actively promote the role of women in the country's political future, Nagaad is steadfast in its commitment to increase women's political representation and participation in public life.



Award for the Defence of the Human Rights of Children

Mr Christopher Mulenga

Executive Chairman and International Liaison Officer,
Friends of the Street Children, Zambia

Christopher Mulenga and Friends of the Street Children (FSC) advocate that street children are like any other children – bright, resilient, individual and deserving of a future. They believe that building relationships with street children based on understanding and respect is the only way to help them become responsible, happy members of society.


Street children in Kitwe, Zambia's third largest city, are anonymous. With no home and no legal papers, the street is everything – home, workplace and social space. But society generally believes they play the role of nuisance or criminal.

Many children are separated from their families due to poverty or domestic violence, and rapidly increasing HIV/AIDS infection rates are accelerating the rate at which children are being orphaned. High unemployment and inadequate child protection laws also force children onto the streets.

FSC aims to change perceptions of street children, working to find long-term solutions instead of quick fixes. In providing refuges and high quality street-based services, they also offer much-needed friendship, guidance and support. Their successful street corner education programme helps street children – who have no access to education – to develop essential literacy and numeracy skills. In 2007 alone, 144 students attended street corner classes and over half went on to further education or training.

Alongside Street Child Africa (a UK-based agency), Mr Mulenga has used his experience and expertise to train those who work with street children and the local community. He promotes an approach based on building relationships with community leaders, government, the justice system, church leaders and civic leaders. His leadership is now recognised by the local government.

Last year he presented the 'running tap' theory to the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, arguing that the real problem is not the children themselves, but the fact that they come from poor communities who face many obstacles. This has influenced measures taken by the government to address social issues; for example, making small food packages available to the poorest families has helped children remain at home rather than taking to the streets to search for food.



FSC's ultimate aim is to help re-integrate children who want to go back into their families. Since 2001, they have helped 543 children return to families and homes. 90% have never gone back to the street.

Highly Commended

Chinnamul Shishu Kishore Sangstha (CSKS), Bangladesh

It is estimated that there are over 400,000 street children in Bangladesh. Over 75% reside in the capital city of Dhaka, where CSKS has been working with street children for over 20 years. CSKS understands that despite risking violence and abuse every day, street children are highly independent. They need long-term support that is relevant to them as individuals. Not only does CSKS provide children with support for emergency care and shelter, basic life-skills, education, counselling and training; it collaborates with other organisations to campaign for better understanding of what causes children to live on the streets and the consequences of this lifestyle.

The Qattan Centre for the Child (QCC), Palestine

Based in Gaza, the Qattan Centre for the Child is a vibrant library and information centre especially for children up to the age of 15. Ongoing conflict in this part of the world makes daily life very difficult. QCC is dedicated to children's rights, and to ensuring that children have opportunity to nurture their curiosity, expand their knowledge and access other cultures. The building and all of its materials are fully accessible to disabled children, and the facility is for all children regardless of gender, religion, physical or mental status, or social background. QCC actively encourages a love of reading, and provides a range of creative activities to promote self-expression, self-education, respect for people's freedoms and differences, the sense of an Arab cultural identity, and respect and curiosity for other cultures.



Award for the Defence of the Human Rights of Disabled People

Ms Asipa Musaeva

President of the Republican Independent Association of Women with Disabilities of the Kyrgyz Republic

Asipa Musaeva lived in a first floor flat with her husband who relies on a wheelchair. With no ramps in the building he was confined to the house. Musaeva decided to act and began building an entrance that he could use. Her neighbours protested, and the local authorities broke up the ramp she was building. Refusing to give up, Musaeva appeared on TV, appealed to the government and the Mayor, and staged a mass-meeting. Eventually, officials allowed her to build an entrance with a ramp, and the law on making buildings accessible for disabled people was passed.

Asipa Musaeva, a women with restricted movement herself, founded the Republican Independent Association of Women with Disabilities in 1996 in order fight for equal rights for women with disabilities, and enable better integration into ordinary society.

The Association has established many practical resources for disabled women: from a physical rehabilitation centre, to a laundry to help with the care of those who are bed-bound; from a social club for disabled people, to holding fashion shows and sporting events.

Through the Association, Musaeva channels her commitment and physical energy into lobbying for changes in family, marriage and labour law that will end discrimination against disabled women and provide them with the same rights as other citizens. As a result of her work, disabled women now have the right to bear children and raise a family, and she has successfully lobbied for the rights of disabled women to be fully recognised as legal wives. No longer can a disabled women be left homeless if her husband has chosen to leave, and no longer is an absent father legally allowed to neglect his children.

Musaeva is widely recognised as a leader within the Kyrgyz Republic and beyond. She actively involves young women in the leadership of the Republican Independent Association of Women with Disabilities, and the government regards her as an authoritative source of opinion and argument. Asipa Musaeva is featured in the book "Outstanding Women of Kyrgyzstan".



Highly Commended

Mr Shudarson Subedi

President of the Nepal Disabled Human Rights Centre (DHRC)

Mr Subedi is one of the few disabled people in Nepal to have successfully gained a higher education. As a result of his work, he has faced death threats and been taken hostage.

In Nepal, having a disabled child is often considered to be a form of punishment and this means disabled people are not always accepted by their families, or as citizens of Nepal. In addition, disability is frequently ignored by political and development agendas. Founded in 2000, the DHRC's mission is to achieve an inclusive society where disabled people can live dignified lives knowing their rights are secured. Using radio programmes, a specialist magazine, and training for development organisations, the DHRC strives to change public attitudes towards disability. Mr Subedi also pioneered the use of Public Interest Litigation in Nepal - taking up individual legal cases where disabled people's rights have been abused to challenge and influence legislation.

Ms Maria Graciela Laynes Valdivia

Founder of The Helen Keller Association of Peru

Realising that was a severe lack of educational resources for deaf-blind young people who were either at home and 'invisible' or else in the wrong schools,

Maria Graciela initiated an educational programme in the room of a church in Lima.

Founded in 2001, the Helen Keller Association of Peru now works with more than 150 children, young people, and their families. It recognises that educational success is also entwined with the employment and social potential of both the young people and their families. The Association supports families to establish small enterprises (such as pasta and candy-making businesses). It takes an holistic approach to looking after the mind, body and spirit of the students, and provides recreational opportunities so that families can participate fully in their community.

Maria Graciela has lectured throughout Latin America, and is recognised as a pioneer in the development of models for working with young people who are deaf-blind. She is currently an advisor to the Department of Education in Ecuador.



Award for the Defence of the Human Rights of People Living with HIV/AIDS

Luapula Foundation

Zambia

In 2001, Zambian citizens Anderson and Moses Zulu, along with USA Peace Corps volunteer Linda Lahme, formed Luapula Foundation with a donation of \$870 from Louisiana, USA. Distressed by the growing number of children orphaned by AIDS and unable to attend school, the three used their fledgling organization to equip 23 orphans with the school fees, uniforms and supplies they needed.

Luapula Foundation now works directly with over 3,000 orphans, vulnerable children, care givers and families to empower those who are both infected and affected by HIV/AIDS to take long-term responsibility for their own wellbeing.

Located in the North of Zambia, Luapula Province is an isolated, rural area where the vast majority of livelihoods depend on farming. Over 50% of the population is under 15 years old.

The Foundation's work with children focuses on helping them access education and stay in school. Families faced with poverty and children without families are unlikely to have the funds necessary for school fees or other training. The Foundation supports children with educational bursaries, with literacy classes and skills training for those not in school, and with small grants for skilled children to encourage them to start income-generating activities.

Crucially, the Foundation works with the adults and families caring for orphans and vulnerable children. A conservation farming-methods training programme provides care givers with the skills to produce food for themselves and their children, and generate income by selling any surplus. This improves both the quality of family nutrition and their economic prospects. Care givers are also educated about children's rights and looking after emotional needs. One farmer in Mantumbusa said: "Now, after training, I know that they are not little adults."

A fundamental area of Luapula Foundation's work is the HIV Prevention and Education programme. It aims to curb the spread of HIV/AIDS across the province. Their Life Skills Education Clubs for young people, and their mobile HIV counselling and testing service help to build knowledge, self-esteem, and provide practical prevention advice based on the A B C approach: Abstain, Be Faithful, use a Condom. The mobile service reached over 12,000 people in 2007 alone. Demand continues to increase and Luapula Foundation are eager to integrate this aspect of their work with health, psychological and economic support services in order to improve the care available for those people who test HIV-positive.



Award for Global Defence of Human Rights

Daniel Barenboim

An internationally acclaimed conductor and pianist, Daniel Barenboim is also a prominent activist for peace in the Middle East. He is the only Israeli in the world to hold both Palestinian and Israeli passports, and he fiercely believes that the solution to the conflict in the Middle East is not a military one.

Music is fundamental to Barenboim's work with young people, which is in stark opposition to what he sees as the savage conflict denying people the possibility to continue to live and fulfil their ideas and dreams.

Together with the Palestinian literary scholar Edward Said, Barenboim founded the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra nearly 10 years ago. The Orchestra brings together young musicians from Israel and the Arab countries, enabling them to combine musical study with the opportunity for dialogue and reflection on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Their 2005 concert in the West Bank town of Ramallah was an historic occasion. Many of the young musicians were forbidden by law to either travel through Israeli land or enter Palestinian territory. That Barenboim overcame these obstacles is testimony to his ambition and dedication. The Orchestra featured in the 2008 BBC Proms.

The Barenboim-Said Foundation was established in 2004 to promote peace, dialogue and reconciliation. It does this primarily through music projects for young people which include the creation of music kindergartens in Ramallah and Berlin, a Music Education Project in the Middle East, and an Academy of Orchestral Studies in Seville.

Barenboim has said of the young musicians "what they demonstrate is not an alternative solution to the conflict but the fact that, when Israelis and Palestinians join forces, the result is not mutual destruction but rather mutual enhancement."

You can read Daniel Barenboim's journal, watch videos and download podcasts at www.danielbarenboim.com

Thank you

International Service extend their sincere thanks to:

- Rt Hon Ann Clwyd MP – our House of Commons sponsor
- Our event sponsors - Bryan Sanderson CBE, Galliard Health Communications, Matrix Chambers, and Scott-Moncrieff, Harbour & Sinclair
- The judging panel for the 2008 Human Rights Awards:
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Candy Whittome - Former Co-Director, British Institute of Human Rights
James Savage - Campaigns Manager, Amnesty International
Professor Baroness Haleh Afshar OBE - University of York
- Rt Hon Hugh Bayley MP
- Laura Kelsey, Margaret Wells, Lesley Dellagana and Nicole Piche
- Antje Werkmeister, Tabaré Perlas and Julika Weinecker
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- Rosemary Cripps Sculpture
- Katy Jeffrey



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