

ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

2013 - 2014 ANNUAL REPORT



ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

2013 - 2014 ANNUAL REPORT



“And what reason have you that you should not fight in the way of Allah and of the weak among the men and the women and the children, (and of) those who say: ‘O Lord! Cause us to go forth from this town, whose people are oppressors, and give us from Thee a guardian and give us from Thee a helper’.”

Holy Qur’an: Chapter 4, Verse 75



The Islamic Human Rights Commission is an NGO
with Special Consultative Status at the Economic and
Social Council of the United Nations.

Contents:

4	Chairman's Foreword	
5	Introduction: About the IHRC	
6	Reports / Books and Briefings	
11	Events	
15	Events attended and participated in	
27	Campaigns and Awareness	

Chairman's Foreword

In the last year the IHRC's work has seen significant progress and expansion, despite various difficulties. In particular, the year has seen the strengthening of our campaigns department with new and dynamic leadership; the consolidation of several year's work on the research side with the launch of the hate crime monitoring project, and numerous successes in casework undertaken by our advocacy team. In addition, IHRC has maintained its presence at the United Nations, as well as continuing our role in the work of the Universal Justice Network.

As usual this report, like our revamped website, www.ihrc.org.uk, can only reflect those aspects of our work that are public, and can provide only a sample of that. Much behind the scenes advocacy and campaigning must remain confidential. Nevertheless, despite the continued shortage of funds faced by all NGOs in this field, IHRC continues to make strides in the struggle for justice.

Please join us and support us however way you can.

Massoud Shadjareh



Introduction: About the Islamic Human Rights Commission

The Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) is an independent, non-profit, campaigns, research and advocacy organisation based in London, UK. Since its establishment in 1997, the IHRC has developed relations with a wide range of different organisations around the world, both Muslim and non-Muslim, in order to campaign for justice for all peoples, regardless of their racial, confessional or political background.

Our aims are manifold, but are in all cases inspired by the Qur'anic injunctions that command believers to rise up in defence of the oppressed. IHRC volunteers and campaigners come from many different parts of the world and many different backgrounds, but share a common commitment to the struggle against injustice and oppression, wherever and in whatever forms they may be found.

The IHRC's work ranges from assisting individuals in need of support, to monitoring the media for incidents of bias, discrimination or incitement; highlighting abuses through briefings, press releases and publications; advising governments and international organisations; researching human rights issues; and highlighting issues and priorities to shape the future agendas of both the IHRC and wider human rights discourse.

Further, the IHRC plays an active role within communities by organising educational seminars, and providing advice and support to local groups wishing to establish their own projects in this field. We have a particular interest in encouraging the disenfranchised to participate within society as a whole.

Through intensive campaigning, innovative initiatives, and the dedicated hard work of our staff, interns, volunteers and supporters, the IHRC has earned a global reputation as a trusted and reliable partner in all types of human rights projects. Our research, alerts and publications have made us a trusted source of information and insights, guiding struggles for justice all over the world. Data and materials produced by the IHRC have been widely utilised by governmental and other organisations. The IHRC website, recently redesigned and expanded, covers many aspects of our work and provides general information and materials for the media, students, policy makers, lawyers and activists, as well as serving as a portal for participation in our ongoing research projects.

In the 14 years since the IHRC's establishment, we have built a network of committed supporters and campaigners across the world. The year 2010-2011 has been one of our busiest and most productive to date. With your help, we are determined to continue this good work for many years to come, *insha-Allah*.

IHRC Update Report March - June 2013

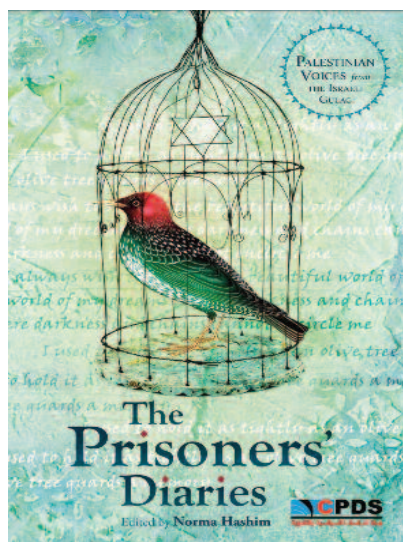
Reports / Books and Briefings

The Prisoners' Diaries: Palestinian Voices from the Israeli Gulag

Edited by Norma Hashim

This book is a compilation of first hand experiences of 22 Palestinian prisoners released from prison by Israel as part of the prisoner exchange for the release of Gilad Shalit. The prisoners were interviewed by journalists and their accounts, their diaries, were compiled into a book by Norma

Hashim. These autobiographical texts offer a rare opportunity to comprehend the inhumane indignities endured by tens of thousands of Palestinian prisoners throughout the decades of this long painful conflict.



Once Upon a Hatred: Anti-Muslim Experiences in the USA

The latest book from the IHRC Hate Crime project by Saied R. Ameli, Ebrahim Mohseni Ahooei and Arzu Merali

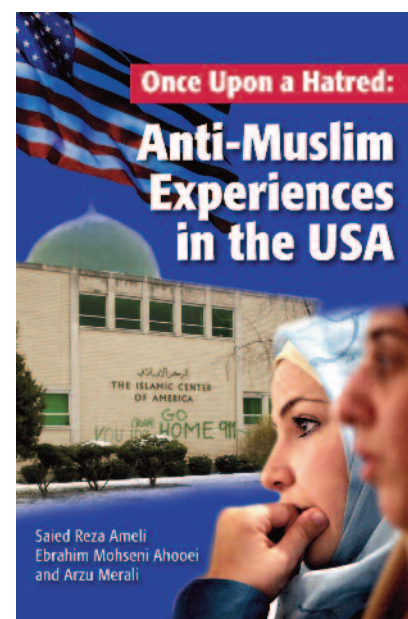
Publication date: 23 May 2013

Once Upon a Hatred: Anti-Muslim

Experiences in the USA reveals the shocking statistic that 30% of Muslims surveyed have experienced a hate-motivated physical attack. This stark figure is one of many statistics gleaned from a 1200 person survey undertaken in 2012 by IHRC, in California. A

staggering 88% reported negative experiences in everyday life, the media political discourse and policy. Whilst perceptions of the US as model of religious freedom and tolerance attract many to its shores, the reality for Muslims is revealed here as anything but.

In addition to analysing the findings of the survey, the authors provide a historical and



political context for the work they have undertaken. This includes a thorough critique of ethnocentrism in academia and in the social sciences in particular. They set this critique within the political history of the USA as a colonial enterprise from the time of Columbus through the founding of the USA until the present day. Muslims, they find, are caught up in a cycle of demonisation and social and statutory targeting that is not new but part of the US's very DNA when it comes to the treatment of people of colour within and outside its shores.

Hate Crime in Canada (working title - forthcoming, October 2013). This report is under preparation for publication in the Fall of this year.

Innocent people: The victims of western sanctions against Iran

This briefing was the third in a series highlighting the inequities and heinous nature of economic sanctions, in this case, the Iranian context. This briefing looked at the impact of sanctions on healthcare.

Economic Sanctions as Human Rights Violations: International Law and the Right to Life

This briefing makes the case that peacetime economic sanctions should be considered a form of collective punishment and outlawed under international law as with economic sanctions during war. It also argues that such sanctions violate the right to life.

Also under production is the 2013 Ramadan Newsletter.

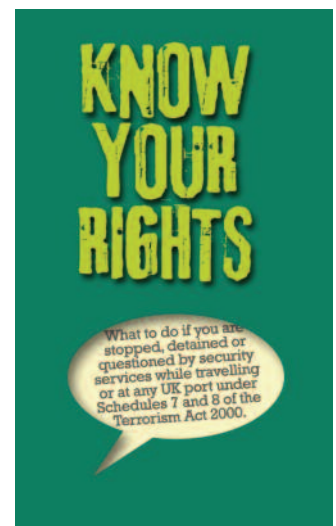
Additionally our briefings on the UK government's relationship with Saudi Arabia and Bahrain are being considered as part of evidence in an ongoing parliamentary inquiry.

The amendments to Schedule 7 Terrorism Act 2000

**This briefing comprises
IHRC's concerns over
the amendments in the
Anti-Social Behaviour,
Crime and Policing Bill
2013**

**Date of Publication – 10
October 2013**

Schedule 7 to the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill 2013[1] proposed a number of changes to Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 ('the act'). IHRC has long been concerned with Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 since we started receiving reports of abuse immediately after the Terrorism Act came into force. In this submission IHRC argued for one change above all other repeal.



Economic Sanctions as Human Rights Violations: International Law and the Right to Life

Date of Publication – 4 May 2013

Economic sanctions have become a 'peacetime' weapon which has resulted and may possibly result in hundreds of thousands if not millions of deaths and suffering on a larger scale. This briefing outlines international definitions of what sanctions are and how they violate international norms of human rights. The briefing shows how economic sanctions represent a secret weapon of mass suffering, which targets populations wholesale and causes death and destruction on a vast scale.

Assessing Hate Crimes and Backlash for Policy Change

This IHRC briefing presents a critical overview of existing methods of data collection and provides alternatives.

Date of publication – 1 July 2013

IHRC has been involved in monitoring hate crimes, discrimination and bias / hate related incidents in various settings since the organisation was founded in 1997. The following briefing sets out an overview of established methods of data collection, our experiences as an organisation, the methods we and other civil society organisations have used to collect and collate reliable data and present them to policy makers, the problems posed by these methods, as well as the methods developed to fulfil clear objectives. The primary objectives which IHRC argues for is reliable data.

Investigating Claims of Sectarianism

This is a report based on the findings of an IHRC-led delegation investigating a sectarian attack on 26 August, 2011, in which a Sunni mob attacked Shia residents and their properties in the villages of Nangkernang and Blu'uran, located in the Sampang regency of East Java, Indonesia
Date of publication 14 October 2013

In early 2013 a Universal Justice Network delegation, led by IHRC, visited Indonesia to ascertain the validity of claims that sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia had reared its head in what had hitherto been a country where different sects of Islam had lived together peacefully. This is the report of that mission which outlines the team's findings and recommendations. It makes shocking reading and its recommendations are relevant not just for Indonesia but beyond.





Life and Struggle after Boston and Woolwich

The briefing is the IHRC's response to the publication in December 2013 of the government's "Tackling Extremism in the UK" which sought to review anti-terrorism strategy in the wake of the murder of British soldier Lee Rigby.

Date of publication: 6 January 2013

The briefing examined new anti-terrorism proposals agreed by the British government's Tackling Extremism in the UK taskforce. It maintains that the proposals will further chip away at freedoms already eroded by over a decade of draconian anti-terrorism legislation and policy. More particularly, they also

represent an intensification of the PREVENT agenda to create a more deferent and compliant Muslim community.

Three years and counting: The Bahrain revolution and its imprisoned leaders

Publication date 5 February 2014

This briefing by Caterina Aiena gives an overview of the imprisonment under false pretexts of opposition leaders in Bahrain as the country's popular uprising marked its third anniversary.

It argues that the arrest of prominent opposition leaders represents an attempt by Bahraini authorities to tighten the noose on

the country's political opposition, and silence anyone seen to be critical of the ruling Khalifa regime.

Those arrested include some of the most senior opposition figures in Bahrain: assistant secretary general of the al-Wefaq party Khalil Marzook, secretary-general of the Haq Movement Hasan Mushaima, the human rights chief of the Haq Movement Abdul Al-Jalil Al-Singace, chair of the

presidency of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights Nabeel Rajab, and secretary general of Al-Wefaq Ali Salman.

The arrests invariably involve abuses of process and fundamental rights; they are ordered without a legal warrant; the arrested person's defence is denied the right to interrogate prosecution witnesses, present a verbal pleading and prevented from fully assisting the victims.



Events

Vigils for Palestine

Fortnightly vigils for Palestinian prisoners have continued during this period. These include protests at the BBC, the Houses of Parliament and G4S headquarters. As a result of the sustained campaign G4S have announced that they are divesting from some of their Israeli investments.

Film Screening and Discussion with documentary filmmaker Roshan Salih

March 2013

Film Screening and discussion with Roshan Salih about his latest documentary: MI5, Spies, Intelligence gathering and the UK Muslim Community.

This event was also broadcast live and later uploaded to the IHRC website.

Protest at 'Israel 65'

16 April 2013.

Protestors stood outside the Israel 65 celebrations chanting, 'Judaism yes, Zionism no, the state of Israel must go.' At first the police officers insisted that the protestors stand down the road and around the corner from Wembley Arena so that they could not be anywhere near the



concert, out of sight of the Zionists entering the venue. However, after peaceful talks with the Inspector the protestors managed to gain permission to stand on a pathway in front of Wembley Arena. Palestinian flags flew high alongside with placards depicting an image of the Palestinian journalist Jihad Misharawi, who works for the BBC Arabic service, holding the body of his 11-month son Omar who died after their house was hit by shrapnel.

Islamophobia Con – University of California Berkeley

19-20 April 2013

IHRC attended the annual international Islamophobia conference where Arzu Merali delivered a paper entitled 'The Mark of Muslim', the Law, the Citizen and Islamophobia in France.





Event Report - An Evening with Houria Bouteldja

19 April 2013

IHRC were privileged to welcome Houria Bouteldja from the Parti des Indigènes de la République (PiR). in France to speak

about her work as a decolonial activist and thinker. Her topic, 'Decolonising France' presented the history of PiR, as France's first decolonial political party and the challenges they have faced in standing up to Eurocentricism, Islamophobia, anti-Black racism and Zionism. This event was also broadcast live and later uploaded to the IHRC website.

Author Evening with Victoria Brittain

1 May 2013

Shadow Lives revealed the unseen side of the '9/11 wars': their impact on the wives and families of men incarcerated in Guantanamo, or in prison or under house arrest in Britain and the US. Victoria Brittain shows how these families have been made socially invisible and a convenient scapegoat for the state in order to exercise arbitrary powers under the cover of the 'War on Terror'.



Protesting the Closer to Israel Parade and Celebration

2 June 2013,

Activists and members of the public held a peaceful demonstration near Trafalgar Square to show solidarity with Palestine and outrage over the parade and rally to

celebrate 65 years of murder, rape, and ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people by the occupying forces (Israel).

Raza Kazim from the Islamic Human Rights Commission, Naomi Wimborne-Idrissi from Jews for Boycotting Israeli Goods, and representatives from Neturei Karta were among the featured speakers.

Black Star, Crescent Moon: An Evening with Sohail Daulatzai on IHRC TV

5 June 2013.

IHRC hosted US based academic Sohail Daulatzai for an author evening in which the discussion was centred on his latest book *Black Star, Crescent Moon*. The audience included representatives from Sons of Malcolm and the Free Talha Ahsan Campaign group, poets, academics, artists, activists and broadcasters, with a large live online audience (www.ihrc.tv)

Daulatzai drew parallels between Black Muslims, Black radicals, and the Muslim Third World, showing how Black artists and activists imagined themselves as part of a global majority, connected to larger communities of resistance, rather than a national minority. He said that 'those that ask for peace are the ones who hold the guns and power' and that participation in the electoral process doesn't work, highlighting the hypocrisy of the Western Imperialists and the need to consider means of resistance.

This event was also broadcast live and later uploaded to the IHRC website.

Life and Struggle after Boston and Woolwich

21 June 2013

The Poet and thinker Mark Gonzales and writer and IHRC head of research Arzu Merali discussed recent events, dilemmas and alternative narratives with Assed Baig.

Events attended and participated in

Decoloniality Europe

Arzu Merali and Raza Kazim attended the Decoloniality Europe Network's second annual meeting and presented IHRC's work.

Critical Muslim Studies Summer School

June 2013

Massoud Shadjareh and Arzu Merali attended and taught at the Critical Muslims Studies Summer School in Granada Spain. Merali presented on the topic of Hijab and Islamic Feminism. Shadjareh and Merali presented a seminar on the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Shadjareh spoke on the history preceding 1979 and Merali spoke about law after the revolution.

On 26 June IHRC hosted the launch of author and lecturer Katy P. Sian's book,

Unsettling Sikh and Muslim Conflict. The book takes a critical view of the relationship between the two communities, mistaken identities, forced conversions and post colonial formations.

August 1-Quds Day Demonstration

2 August 2013

Around 3000 people attended the annual Al Quds demonstration in London on Friday 2 August organised by IHRC making the event a huge success. Demonstrators gathered to ask for freedom and justice for the Palestinians.

Author evening with Joe Glenton

28 August 2013

Former British soldier Joe Glenton was a guest at IHRC where he talked about his book *Soldier Box*, which traces his journey from eager recruit to a conscientious objector, who was sentenced to nine months imprisonment for refusing to return to Afghanistan.

AUTHOR EVENING JOE GLENTON

Watch live on IHRC TV at www.ihrc.tv and join us for a Q&A with **Joe Glenton** discussing his first book **Soldier Box**.

Joe Glenton was the first British soldier who refused to serve in Afghanistan on legal and moral grounds. He joins us to talk about his book *Soldier Box*. This is an extraordinary account of an ordinary soldier's stance against the military establishment. After returning home from his first tour of Afghanistan Joe Glenton refused a second tour of a pointless conflict. He was threatened with years in prison but he continued fighting for his convictions. Joe Glenton is now a writer and film maker.

Do you want to be part of the studio audience? If you're based in or around London please contact events@ihrc.org and book your space.

Entry is free. To book a place please call 020 8904 4222 or email events@ihrc.org or leave your name and details in store.

Join in the discussion by sending us your questions and comments via [@ihrc](https://twitter.com/ihrc), email media@ihrc.org or posting on the **IHRC Facebook** page.

AUTHOR EVENING WITH JOE GLENTON

Date: Wednesday 28 August 2013
Time: 18:45 - 20:45 GMT+1
Venue: IHRC Bookshop, Gallery and Information Centre
202 Preston Road, Wembley, HA9 8PA
Tel: 020 8904 4222

Nearest tube / bus: • Preston Road (Bakerloo) • South Kenton (Bakerloo and Overground)

www.ihrc.org.uk

© www.ihrc.org.uk • W www.ihrc.org.uk • Twitter [@ihrc](https://twitter.com/ihrc) • Twitter [@ihrcbookshop](https://twitter.com/ihrcbookshop) • IHRC TV

SEPTEMBER

IHRC was proud to host the up and coming Saudi Arabian artist Nasreen Shaikh Jamal al-Lail's solo exhibition from 18 September 2013 to 18 February at its gallery in London. The artist's reception was attended by a wide spectrum of people, from journalists and other artists to community leaders and members and academics. Jamal al-Lail's exhibits included her series *Beyond the Veil* which is intended to challenge our preconceptions about the modern role of the veil.

On 26th September, a side panel meeting was organised by IHRC in Geneva at the United Nations on the situation in Egypt. From Revolution to Military Coup in Egypt charted the journey from optimism to disappointment, from a democratically elected government to a military coup two years later. The discussion drew in leading Egyptian activists and politicians including Muslim Brotherhood member Mohammed Ghanam and Magdy Hussein, leader of the country's Labour Party.

Islamophobia Workshops

In October Professor Saied Reza Ameli and Arzu Merali attended the Organisation of Islamic Conference's conference and workshops on Islamophobia in Istanbul, Turkey. The event brought together academics and practitioners to deal with the key areas of Media and Law in tackling the unprecedented rise of Islamophobia in western settings. IHRC's contribution focussed on media, while Professor Ameli also presented a paper on the push-pull effect of Islamophobia and Islamophobia.

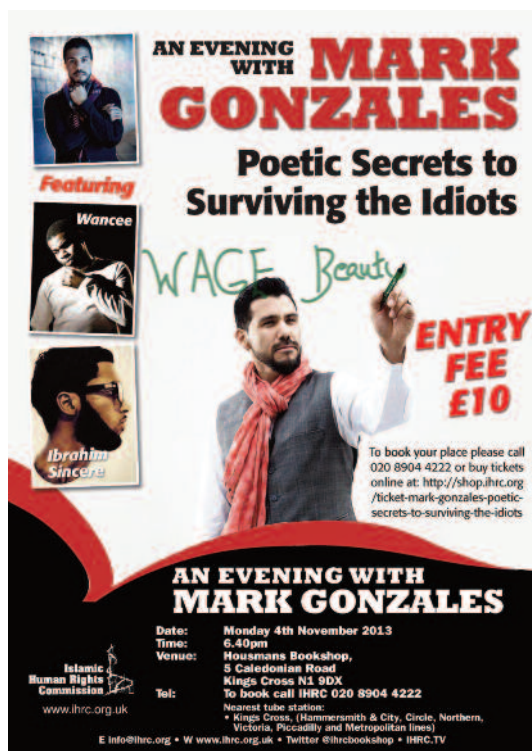
Istanbul conference on Egypt crisis

31 October 2013

In October, Universal Justice Network (UJN), through its two secretariats, the UK-based Islamic Human Rights Commission, and Malaysia based, Citizens International, convened a conference in Istanbul to discuss the issues arising out of the Egypt crisis. The event featured prominent Islamic and Arab activists. They included Egypt's Salma Ashraf, a political activist who has witnessed many of the turbulent events that have engulfed Egypt since early 2011 when protestors took to the streets to demand political change that resulted in the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak after 30 years in power, only for the achievements to be rolled back by a military coup in July this year. She was joined by Magdy Ahmed Hussein, the President of the Egyptian Labor Party, Imam Muhammad Al-Asi, a leading Islamic thinker based in the USA, and Imam Achmad Cassiem, a prominent former South African anti-apartheid activist turned global human rights activist.

Counter-white supremacy course

Also in October IHRC teamed up with the Assata-Tupac Liberation School and Soas2 (School of Occidental and Aryan Studies) to deliver a free year-long course on counter-white supremacy (racism) conducted by Dr Syed Mustafa Ali. Dr Ali has been investigating race as a systemic phenomenon for almost a decade and has facilitated a number of workshops and other events in this regard.



Poetry reading with Mark Gonzales

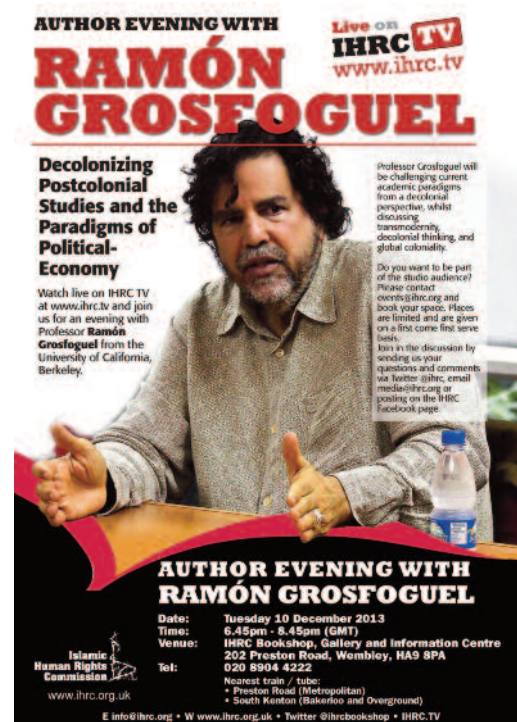
4 November 2013

IHRC hosted the American rapper-poet Mark Gonzales. Gonzales uses a unique blend of quickfire rap and poetry to concuss his audience into reflecting on the major global themes of the day. His performances have earned him plaudits worldwide. In an age where information is characterised by quantity over quality and facts are inseparable from fiction Gonzales posed the question: "How does one stay alive in a time when it is almost painful to be intelligent?"

Ramón Grosfoguel: Decolonising Postcolonial Studies and the Paradigms of Political-Economy

December 2013

IHRC was honoured once again to receive Professor Ramon Grosfoguel, one of the world's leading thinkers on decolonialism, who returned to IHRC to challenge current academic paradigms from a decolonial perspective. Central to his presentation was the idea of the Cartographies of Power, 15 hierarchies bound together by the common thread of race as the organising principle through which these hierarchies operated to colonise and continue to control peoples around the world.



Zone of Non-Being: Guantanamo

The Islamic Human Rights Commission's main cultural production this year was the documentary film, 'Zone of Non-Being: Guantanamo'. Written and directed by Turab Shah the film was released in January and looks at how the process of Guantanimisation has taken place over the last decade in the USA, and through US and allied foreign policy from the introduction of the NDAA to the use of drones. It argues that rather than being the exceptional event of the so-called War on Terror, Guantanamo is a continuation of a colonial policy that runs from 1492 and the conquest of the Americas and the destruction of Granada. IHRC held an exclusive screening in January at the IHRC Bookshop and Gallery of a director's cut of this important new film followed by a Q&A session with the producers, activists and authors working on issues related to the content of the film.



Teaching Poetry to Prisoners – with Pat Winslow & Mark Marqusee

IHRC put on a special poetry event in January with award-winning poet Pat Winslow – Talha Ahsan's poetry tutor at HMP Long Lartin – which provided the audience with an insight into the creative process of writing under detention. New poems & translations written by Talha in solitary confinement were read for the first time. The meeting was also addressed by poet and activist Mike Marqusee.



Genocide Memorial Day

Sunday 19th January marked Genocide Memorial Day, inaugurated by the IHRC five years ago to highlight and help prevent genocidal actions all around the world, irrespective of race, ethnicity or religion. With its rejection of the notion that there is a hierarchy of victims depending on their background, GMD is an important

counterpoint to Holocaust Memorial Day which remembers the suffering of Jews alone. The theme this year was 'Steps to Genocide' which sought to bring to attention the political, social and economic processes that precede all genocides and which provide an indicator of looming crisis. This year's GMD saw simultaneous events taking place for the first time in Paris and Amsterdam, through the Decoloniality Europe network.

Islamophobia Awards

21 February 2014

After an absence of six years the IHRC's Islamophobia Awards returned with a big bang. This Award show with a twist not only acknowledges and awards those who have persevered in combating anti-Muslim discrimination, but also pokes light-hearted fun at public figures who have made Islamophobic comments demonising

Muslims and their faith. Over 25,000 people visited the voting page on the IHRC website to name and shame the worst anti-Muslim personalities of 2013. Many attended the gala fund-raising dinner at the Holiday Inn, Wembley (London) at which spoof awards were given to the Islamophobes of the year and real awards presented to those who have fought Islamophobia. They enjoyed a fantastic evening of comedy, poetry, food and speeches.

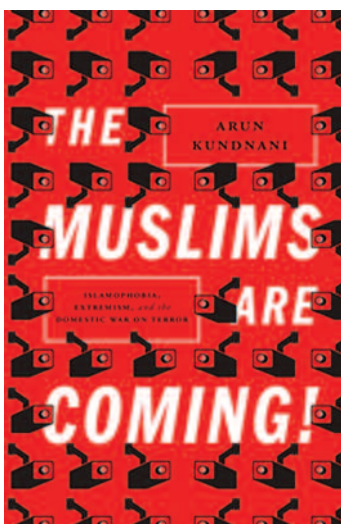




‘The Muslims are Coming’ with Arun Kundnani

14 March 2014

IHRC hosted Arun Kundnani to speak about his new book ‘The Muslims are Coming: Islamophobia, Extremism and the Domestic War on Terror’.



The book is a scathing new critique of the devastating impact of the War on Terror for Muslim communities living in the US and UK. Kundnani’s book is based on several years of research and reportage and

represents the first comprehensive critique of government counter-radicalisation strategies targeting Muslim communities. Kundnani has become a leading authority in the area of counter-terrorism strategy and its impact on Muslim minorities. In 2009 he wrote “Spooked - How not to prevent violent extremism”, a piercing critique of the the government’s Prevent strategy ostensibly aimed at combating radicalisation in Britain’s Muslim population.

IHRC at the UN: Failings of the Bangladesh Judiciary in the War Crimes Trials

**Human Rights in Bangladesh: Failings of
the Judiciary in the War Crimes Tribunal**

14 March 2014

Controversial war crimes trials in Bangladesh which have divided the country and passed death sentences against two opposition leaders came under scrutiny in a side panel meeting organised by IHRC during the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. The IHRC has consistently criticised the war crimes tribunal set up in 2010 by the ruling Awami League to investigate atrocities carried out during the 1971 war on the grounds that it is motivated by a political agenda to weaken rivals and falls far short of acceptable standards of justice.

Human Rights in Malaysia: An Overview of Concerns

19 March 2014

A second side panel meeting was held to address human rights concerns in Malaysia, namely the implantation of new terrorism laws and rising sectarianism. The 2012 Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (colloquially known as SOSMA) allows authorities to detain individuals for 28 days without trial, a period the IHRC considers far too long. The power to detain suspects for 28 days is given to the police, without judicial oversight and persons arrested under Sosma need not be produced before a magistrate. Malaysia is also experiencing an unprecedented rise in sectarianism, particularly against its small but growing Shia Muslim minority. Shia Muslims found in possession of religious literature have been arrested while some firebrand preachers have made it their mission to attack the community and put pressure on political leaders to do likewise.



Human Rights in Pakistan: Culture of Intolerance and Target Killings of Shia Muslims, Sunni Barelvi Muslims and others including Christians

20 March 2014

A third side panel meeting tackled the issue of growing sectarianism in Pakistan. The country continues to be ravaged by violence, mostly targeted at the minority Shia Muslims, Christians, but also increasingly against the majority Barelvi Muslim school of thought. Attacks on places of worship, shrines, religious processions

have become an everyday occurrence in Pakistan, particularly in the north western tribal belt bordering Afghanistan. IHRC has long campaigned against sectarianism and in 1997 initiated the project Charter 3:103 which calls for Muslims to be united in accordance with the 103rd verse of the third chapter of the Holy Quran. Charter 3:103 has since become a UJN core project, and has also been adopted by scores of Muslim organisations. In November 2013, IHRC brought together Muslim scholars from Pakistan to sign a historic agreement condemning sectarianism and vowing to remove it as a cause of conflict in the country. The Pakistan Unity Declaration was signed in the Turkish resort of Bodrum by scholars representing all of Pakistan's major Islamic sects and tendencies.



Intifada Street: Revolutionary Arts

15 March 2014

IHRC hosted first ever exhibition of up and coming artist Mohammed Hamza at its gallery. Hamza is a British-born Pakistani who has a gift for the spoken word. Through his art he tries to reflect the cries of the struggling and oppressed around the world, particularly Palestine. He is also the founder of Intifada Street, an art company whose mission is to give a platform to revolutionary artists like himself. The exhibition runs until June 2014.

Decolonising Education: How can we teach and learn a better world?

22 March 2014

IHRC, in conjunction with ALICE is a research project coordinated by Boaventura de Sousa and financed by the European Research Council (ERC), brought together leading decolonial academics and thinkers to discuss ways that educational models, curricula and concepts can be decolonialised, ie) rethought, retaught and relearned with the aim of transforming society for the better. The line-up included

Ramon Grosfoguel, University of California – Berkeley, Houria Bouteldja, founder Party of the Indigenous of the Republic (France) and Julia Suárez-Krabbe, Roskilde University (Denmark).

Film Screening & Directors' Q&A of 'Even the Crows: A Divided Gujarat'

29 March 2014

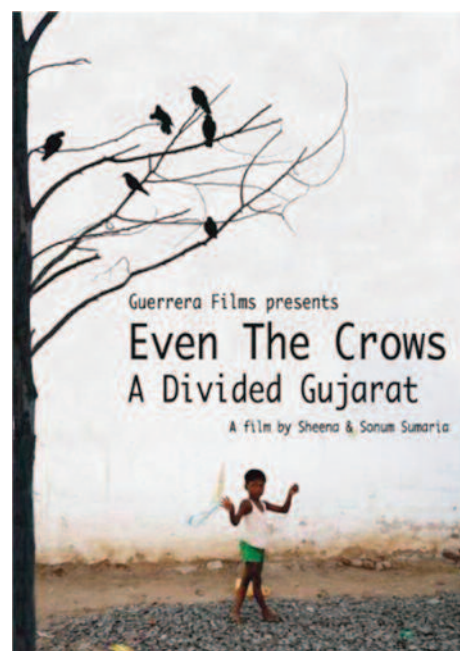
Directors Sheena Sumaria / Sonum Sumaria joined IHRC to discuss what made them follow the story of the Gujarat massacres in 2002, and what they found out on their way. At a time when the controversial Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi, is running to be India's next prime minister, *Even the Crows* explores the way in which his politics and Hindu nationalist ideology have polarised Gujarat along religious lines. Since the anti-Muslim riots of 2002, the Muslim minority population has been denied justice and marginalised to the ghettos. Meanwhile, Narendra Modi, who has been accused of complicity in the riots, has ridden a wave of popularity. Through the intimate stories of American-Gujarati Nishrin, whose father, a prominent Muslim MP, was butchered during the 2002 Gujarat riots, and British-Gujarati, Imran, who was the sole survivor when he was attacked along with his two uncles and a friend while on holiday in the state, the film explores Modi's link to the violence and the minority community's ongoing struggle for justice.

Most of the events were broadcast live on www.ihrc.tv and have been uploaded to the IHRC Youtube Channel.

Decoloniality Europe 3rd Meeting, May 2014, Amsterdam IHRC has been invited as a key network partner. Arzu Merali is invited to attend a side event on Muslim women in Europe alongside the main meeting.

Critical Muslim Studies Summer School: Arzu Merali and Massoud Shadjareh will among the Faculty again this year.

Islamophobia Conference, Paris, December, 2014 (UC Berkeley and others) – IHRC has been invited to attend this.





Campaigns and Awareness

MARCH

Action Alert: Sri Lanka – Demand an end to violence against the Muslim and Christian community in Sri Lanka

11 March 2013

IHRC urged supporters to write to the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister and the UN to demand they take action to stem anti-Muslim and anti-Christian discrimination and hatred on the island in the wake of organised campaigns by extremist Buddhists targeting the two religious minorities.

Action Alert: Myanmar – Demand an end to the massacre of Burmese Muslims by Buddhist supremacists 2

8 March 2013

A similar action alert focussed on the plight of the stateless Rohingya Muslims of Burma. Despite alleged political reforms in the country, increasing violence against the Muslim minority, including ethnic cleansing and massacres, had further imperilled the lives of a people the UN has called “one of the world’s most persecuted peoples”. In the same month IHRC published a series of articles by journalist

Assed Baig who went to Myanmar to investigate the anti-Muslim violence.

APRIL

Action Alert: Palestine/Israel - Protest BBC blackout on reporting plight of Palestinian Hunger Strikers

7 April 2013

IHRC lobbied the BBC to break its unacceptable silence on the plight of Palestinian prisoners in Israel who had been on hunger strike to draw international attention to the Israeli prison system in which torture, administrative detention and rape are commonplace in clear violation of international human rights law. IHRC asked campaigners to write to the chairman of the BBC Trust protesting its failure to cover the issue of Palestinian hunger strikers.

Action Alert: Saudi Arabia – Oppose death sentence against Sheikh Nimr

11 April 2013

In Saudi Arabia the continued detention and death sentence handed down to Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr drew an urgent response from IHRC and once again brought the country’s human rights record into focus. A report in 2011 by IHRC had found that the ultra-conservative monarchy was holding at least 30,000 political prisoners in detention.

Palestinian Prisoners Day Protest outside G4S

18 April 2013

Protests continued against security firm G4S outside its London headquarters for its complicity in the detention and torture of Palestinian children. G4S has supplied the Israeli security apparatus with a perimeter defence system and command control centre for Ofer prison in occupied Palestine, and security systems for the al-Jalame interrogation centre in Israel. Ofer and Al-Jalame are notorious for having housed Palestinian children in solitary confinement. The internment of children in solitary confinement, as well as their interrogation and torture, is made possible by the technological and logistical support provided by G4S. The pressure paid off when shortly afterwards G4S announced it would quit key contracts in Israel.

IHRC urges UEFA to relocate tournament away from Israel

24 May 2013

A decision by the governing body of European football, UEFA, to host the 2013 Under-21 Championship in Israel led to the IHRC joining a protest campaign demanding the tournament be relocated. Israel has abducted and detained numerous Palestinian football players without charge, severely tortured them, and has destroyed the Rafah National Stadium on three separate occasions between 2008 and 2012. IHRC organised a rally outside the UEFA Annual Congress in London on 24 May and a letter writing campaign to Michel Platini, President of the

Union of European Football Associations, to revoke the decision in light of Israel's treatment of Palestinian footballers.

JUNE

Bahrain action alert

5 June 2013

The continuing problems in Bahrain continued to exercise human rights activists. IHRC campaigned against Bahrain's continuing denial of the rights of four prominent political prisoners held as a result of their participation in the country's ongoing popular uprising. Prison authorities had deprived the political detainees of the right to family visits for two consecutive months as well as access to health care and other basic hygiene needs unless they agreed to wear the uniforms issued to convicts. IHRC urged people to



write to the foreign minister of their country and the UN demanding an end to the Bahraini government's torture, maltreatment and detention of the leading human rights and opposition figures.

Jordan embassy protest to demand Palestinians' release

30 June 2013

IHRC also asked supporters to petition the Jordanian government to demand the release or extradition from Israel of five Palestinian political prisoners with Jordanian

citizenship. The five had been on hunger strike in Israeli jails where they were subjected to physical and psychological torture. A protest was held outside the Jordanian Embassy in London and another protest followed in October. One hundred days into their hunger strike the prisoners thought they achieved a partial victory when Israeli authorities apparently relented and agreed to allow four of their number to receive family visits only for the Zionist regime to later renege on its promise.





Open letter to PM David Cameron

16 July 2013

IHRC was also at the forefront of publicising police and government double standards in the wake of the Woolwich killing of a British soldier. Chair Massoud Shadjareh wrote to the Commissioner of London's Metropolitan police seeking assurances that they were being vigilant and demanding they adopt a zero-tolerance policy towards right-wing racists seeking to benefit from the attack. IHRC also asked for increased security around Muslim places of worship, Muslim schools and institutes. IHRC also issued precautionary advice to members of the Muslim community to help them guard against the attacks spawned by the incident, and provided details on where and how to report such hate-crimes.

Action alert: Egypt military coup

25 July 2013

On July 3, 2013 the Egyptian military deposed the elected President of Egypt Mohammed Morsi and his government, forcibly clearing camps set up by his supporters and killing many hundreds in the process. IHRC added its voice to the worldwide condemnation of the military-led violence and the retreat towards a military dictatorship, asking supporters to write to the foreign ministers of their countries to demand they unequivocally condemn the coup.

Schedule 7 leaflet and app produced

21 August 2013

The unparalleled work of IHRC around Schedules 7 and 8 of the Terrorism Act 2000 continued with the publication of a “Know Your Rights” booklet to inform the public about their rights in respect of the widely abused legislation. IHRC later launched apps for Apple and Android phones containing the same information.

Lynne Stewart letter writing campaign

13 September 2013

IHRC organised a letter writing campaign requesting the release from prison of Lynne Stewart, Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman’s attorney of many years, who was unfairly convicted and sentenced for passing messages from her client to his followers in Egypt. Stewart was suffering from terminal cancer, languishing in a prison far away from her loved ones, until she was released later in 2013 for compassionate reasons.

Action alert: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal

9 September 2013

Mumia Abu-Jamal, the African-American writer and journalist who suffered 30 years incarceration on Death Row and who remains imprisoned for a crime that he insists he did not commit. Abu-Jamal maintains he is a victim of a corrupt system. It can be argued that he has now

become an international symbol for institutional racism and judicial abuse in the US. IHRC asked people to write to Mumia Abu-Jamal expressing their solidarity with him and encouraging him to continue to fight injustice with his writings, even though he is behind bars.

Demonstration against proposed visit of Narendra Modi

10 September 2013

Also in September IHRC joined other activists to protest outside Brent North MP Barry Gardiner’s surgery in London after he invited the ‘Butcher of Gujarat’ Narendra Modi to speak in the Houses of Parliament. Modi is widely held to be the instigator of massacres of Muslims across Gujarat in 2002. IHRC’s report on the massacres can be found online, but read with caution, the contents are quite harrowing.

Action Alert: Aafia Siddiqui must be repatriated

11 September 2013

Another victim of a massive miscarriage of justice in the US who remains the focus of IHRC efforts is Aafia Siddiqui. The mother of three was kidnapped in Pakistan by US/Pakistani forces in 2003 and rendered to Afghanistan where she was framed for shooting at US military personnel. Ms Siddiqui remains incarcerated in the US serving a prison sentence of 83 years. IHRC asked supporters to urge their respective governments to apply pressure on the US and the UN to repatriate Ms Siddiqui.

Action Alert: Bangladesh – Demand a Fair Trial for Jamat-e-Islami Activists

19 September 2013

IHRC also campaigned for fair trials for the Jamaat-e-Islami activists arrested in the Bangladesh government's dubious crackdown on collaborators and war criminals in the 1971 War of Independence with Pakistan. The arrests and subsequent trials are part of a politically motivated attack by the ruling Awami League designed to cripple the opposition by taking out its leaders. IHRC strongly condemned the hanging of

Abdul Kader Mullah in December 2013.

Protest outside London headquarters of G4S

27 September 2013

IHRC united with activists in Argentina, Canada, Chile, France, UK and Uruguay to demand the release of the Hares brothers - five Palestinian children who had been imprisoned without trial by



Israel following a road accident in which four Jewish settlers were injured. The incident in which a car carrying illegal Jewish settlers was hit by a lorry was presented by the authorities as one triggered by stone throwing youths. Following the extraction of confessions under torture, the Hares brothers were charged with 25 counts of attempted murder each, even though there were only four people in the settlers' vehicle. The five boys - Ali Shamlawi, Mohammed Kleib, Mohammed Mehdi Suleiman, Tamer Souf, and Ammar Souf are currently locked up in another G4S secured facility - Megiddo prison where G4S provides the entire central command room. IHRC demanded the immediate and unconditional release of all the children holding G4S complicit in Israel's crimes, particularly in the torture of Palestinian children.

Decolonising the Mind courses

September-October 2013

The ever popular Decolonising the Mind courses continued in 2013 led by Sandew Hira from the International Institute for Scientific Research in the Netherlands. Hira is a leading critic of the new colonial discourse and the legacy of colonialism. Decolonising the Mind aims to present new decolonised knowledge on colonialism and its legacy, develop an assertive decolonial attitude and help students master the tools of debate and discussion. Courses were held in London in September and in Birmingham in October.

Eid gifts for Muslim prisoners

15 October 2013

As in preceding years, IHRC marked Eid al-Adha by raising funds for and arranging the distribution of Eid packs to 600 Muslim prisoners in the UK. This exercise in reaching out and remembering those in our community who are unable to enjoy Eid festivals normally helps reduce feelings of isolation and encourages unity within all sections of the *ummah*.

Action Alert: Holy Land 5 – Sentenced for Funding the Oppressed

10 October 2013

IHRC continued to campaign for the release of the 'Holy Land Five' detainees in the US. The five Arab-Americans are all serving prison sentences of between 15-65 years after being wrongfully convicted of terrorism related offences connected to the Holy Land Foundation charity they ran. IHRC urged people to write to the Foreign Secretary of their counties to apply pressure on Israel to release the five who are imprisoned for crimes they never committed.

Historic anti-sectarianism declaration signed

28 October 2013

Scholars and representatives of major Islamic sects in Pakistan were brought together by the UJN (Universal Justice Network), of which IHRC is a founder, in Turkey to sign a historic declaration denouncing religious intolerance in the country. The accord is based on Charter 3:103, initiated by IHRC, which calls for Muslims to be united in accordance with the 103rd verse of the third chapter of the Holy Quran. The 11-point Declaration commits the signatories to denounce the killing of fellow human beings on the basis of colour, creed, ethnicity or religion as haram. The statement also declares excommunication or takfir against fellow

Muslims and abusing the Prophet Muhammad's family and companions to be against the Shariah.

The historic agreement is the product of IHRC's 2013 relaunch of Charter 3:103 which during the course of the year had managed to get key organisations like the Muslim Council of Britain to sign up to the pledge of unity.

IHRC keeps up pressure for repatriation of Sampang refugees

11 November 2013

IHRC welcomed comments by Indonesia's Religious Affairs Minister that all of the 200 Shia refugees displaced after sectarian



violence engulfed their villages in Sampang in 2012 may be able to return home in the near future. The announcement came after strong pressure at the national and international level, including to the International Criminal Court (ICC), by the IHRC which had led a delegation of UJN members to the region in January 2013.

December 2013 Campaign against Aung San Suu Kyi

IHRC launched an alert in response to the decision by UNAIDS to appoint Aung San Suu Kyi as its Zero Discrimination Global Advocate. IHRC urged people to write to UNAIDS and express concern about choosing the Myanmar opposition leader to head the 'zero discrimination' campaign in light of her lack of concern for the extreme suffering – include hate based violent expulsion and exclusion - of the Rohingya minority in Myanmar. Her equivocal attitude towards the mass-scale genocidal acts against Muslims in Myanmar, in particular the Rohingya, is very shocking and in sharp contrast to the anti-discrimination campaigns she supports and the peace titles she has been awarded.

Release of Lynne Stewart

31 December 2013

At the end of December IHRC celebrated the release of Lynne Stewart from jail in the US. Lynne Stewart is a former US lawyer and Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman's attorney of many years. A brave and outspoken professional she made a name for herself by defending poor and unpopular clients, often agreeing to represent them out of

political sympathy with the causes they supported. In 2005 she was spuriously convicted of passing messages to the Egyptian Sheikh's followers and sentenced to prison where she spent eight years before being released on compassionate grounds following a diagnosis of terminal breast cancer. IHRC was a staunch campaigner for her release during her time in prison.

Action Alert: Demand the Bangladeshi government to explain the truth behind the Dhaka Massacre Reports

3 February 2014-03-18

IHRC put out an action alert urging people to demand honesty, transparency and justice for the victims of a police crackdown on Hefazot-e-Islam activists on 5th/6th May 2013 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in which scores of protestors were reportedly killed. Mounting evidence points to the fact that that this incident was no less than a brutal massacre; where the authorities employed lethal force against victimized citizens. IHRC published a sample letter demanding an explanation from the Bangladeshi ruling party about the apparent violent actions that led to the deaths of so many innocent citizens.

Action Alert: 14 February Uprising leaders – Sentenced for Supporting Bahraini Revolt.

5 February 2014

In the run-up to the third anniversary of the

Bahraini uprising IHRC issued an action alert calling on people worldwide to write to their Foreign Secretary demanding that he/she apply pressure on the Bahraini government to release the uprising's leaders from jail. The opposition leaders were subjected to torture during their detention before being tried by a military court for crimes relating to sedition and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Action Alert: Bangladesh – End Bangladeshi government's abusive measures to curb opposition

14 February 2014

Continuing concerns over Bangladesh's crackdown on its opposition prompted the IHRC to issue an action alert urging people to protest to the Bangladesh High Commissioner in the UK, about the oppressive and unjust policies being implemented by his government. The sample letter drew particular attention to recent events including the hanging of Abdul Kader Mullah and the workings of the International Crimes Tribunal, and called on the government to conform to international standards of justice with regards to the other detainees. It also urged the government to provide an explanation for the reported killings of innocent, unarmed civilians at the hands of police, something which is becoming a norm in Bangladesh.

Action Alert: Bulgarian Government urged to Curb Islamophobic Groups

27 February 2014

An alarming rise in far-right Islamophobic activity in Bulgaria was the focus of this alert. IHRC urged people to write to the Bulgarian ambassador in their country demanding effective action aimed at curbing extremist groups that are inciting religious hatred against Muslims in Bulgaria and instigating attacks on Muslim places of worship. In its sample letter IHRC called on the government of Bulgaria to rein in the extremists immediately in the interests of peaceful coexistence and ensure that the rights of Bulgarian Muslims are protected and they are allowed to practice their religion in peace.

UN side panel meeting to discuss Bangladeshi war crimes trials

12 March 2014

Controversial war crimes trials in Bangladesh which have divided the country and passed death sentences against two opposition leaders came under scrutiny during the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. IHRC hosted a side panel meeting to discuss this and other concerns surrounding the lethal use of violence by police against protestors since the ruling Awami League instituted a crackdown against the country's leading opposition groups. IHRC has condemned the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) set up in 2010 by the Awami League to investigate atrocities carried out during the 1971 war on the grounds that it fails to meet international standards of justice and is a mechanism for persecuting the opposition.

IHRC Oral Statement on Myanmar to the UN Universal Periodic Review

14 March 2014

IHRC submitted an oral statement to the UN Human Rights Council drawing its attention to the continuing persecution of Rohingya Muslims in particular and Muslims in general in Myanmar. At the heart of their persecution is the continuing denial of citizenship and the Rohingyas' concomitant status as illegal aliens under the law. The Myanmar government continues to insist that the Rohingya do not qualify for citizenship under the 1982 Citizenship Law even though their presence in Myanmar stretches back many generations. The Rohingya continue, as a matter of official policy, to be subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment including rape, punitive taxation and extortion, restrictions on movement, ownership of property, and access to essentials such as water, sanitation, food, medical care, education and employment. Uniquely in Myanmar, the Rohingya are also subject to a discriminatory two child per family procreation limit.

IHRC Oral Statement on Malaysia to the UN Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

14 March 2014

Together with the Universal Justice Network, IHRC submitted an oral statement to the UN drawing its attention to demonization of Shias and their persecution in Malaysia. In the last few

years, the Shia Muslims in Malaysia and Indonesia, who have been living in harmony with their Sunni brothers and sisters for centuries, have come under persecution from certain state authorities responsible for Islamic affairs. Officials from the Islamic religious affairs department have raided Shia gatherings and arrested those participating. In the last few months the media has carried negative reports about Shias. They are accused of plotting with Jews, regarding Sunni Muslims as dogs, practising deception, and other highly inflammatory allegations which have the effect of inciting hatred against them.

IHRC Oral Statement on Saudi Arabia to the UN Universal Periodic Review

14 March 2014

IHRC submitted an oral statement to the UN highlighting ongoing human rights abuses in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Over the course of the past three decades Saudi authorities have detained tens of thousands of individuals for expressing dissent against the ruling monarchy. Many of those arrested have never been charged with committing a crime and their treatment, in which stories of torture and degrading treatment feature prominently, demonstrates a complete absence of due process. IHRC's own report of 2011-12 highlights the imprisonment of some 30,000 political detainees. The statement also called for the release of all political prisoners including Sheikh Nimr Baqir Al-Nimr, a Shia Muslim scholar who was shot and arrested in 2012 for his outspoken criticism of the Saudi monarchy and his calls for equality and reform.

Malaysia human rights: UN side panel discussion

19 March 2014

The impact of draconian anti-terrorism legislation and rising sectarianism in the majority-Muslim country featured in this side panel meeting during the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

In 2012 Malaysia replaced its much criticised Internal Security Act with the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act. Although the new legislation (colloquially known as SOSMA) did away with the power of authorities to detain individuals indefinitely without trial, the new limit of 28 days is still far longer than the 14 days maximum for other, non-security related, offences. The power to detain suspects for 28 days is given to the police, without judicial oversight; persons arrested under Sosma need not be produced before a magistrate. Sosma remains far too broad. So far the definition of “security offence” and committing acts “prejudicial to national security and public safety” has resulted in arrests for wearing a T-shirt depicting Che Guevara and other non-security issues. Malaysia is also experiencing an unprecedented rise in sectarianism, particularly against its small but growing Shia Muslim minority. Shia Muslims found in possession of religious literature have been arrested while some firebrand Sunni preachers have made it their mission to attack the community and put pressure on political leaders to do likewise.

UN side panel meeting on sectarian violence in Pakistan

20 March 2014

Rising communal and sectarian hatred in Pakistan formed the subject of this discussion organised by IHRC at the annual meeting of United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva. The country continues to be ravaged by violence, mostly targeted at the minority Shia Muslims, Christians, but also increasingly against the majority Barelvi Muslim school of thought. Most of the violence is perpetrated by groups including the Taliban who are usually characterised by a by puritanical, ultra conservative and exclusivist religious outlook. Attacks on places of worship, shrines, religious processions have become an everyday occurrence in Pakistan, particularly in the north western tribal belt bordering Afghanistan.

Advice Surgeries

Throughout the period of this report the Islamic Human Rights Commission continued to offer free weekly Information and Advice surgeries every Wednesday in which professional caseworkers provide people with information and advice on a whole range of issues covering employment, welfare benefits, discrimination and complaints against the police.

**Islamic
Human Rights
Commission**



PO Box 598, Wembley HA9 7XH, UK

T: 020 8904 4222 F: 020 8904 5183 E: info@ihrc.org W: www.ihrc.org

IHRC is a company limited by guarantee. Company No: 04716690

**The Islamic Human Rights Commission is an NGO in Special Consultative Status
with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.**