

## **A Roll**

The 10th of December 1948 – and the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - The world was recovering from the horrors of war and wanted a better future – it was designed to be a global document and was adopted without a single vote against.

Sixty years on and despite gains, justice and equality are still being fought for and fought over. The government in Myanmar used extreme violence to stop political protest; in Tibet, more protests, some violent, targeting ethnic Chinese, saw the authorities crack down, killing scores and detaining thousands and in Kenya more than a thousand died and 300 thousand were left homeless after disputed election results.

### **Interview Clip – Kenyan**

The government is not taking care of the people, of the children of this area.

### **Amnesty International Secretary General, Irene Khan**

This is the 60th Anniversary year of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is about time that Governments apologised for six decades of human rights failures and it's about time that they committed themselves afresh to living up to the promises that they made in 1948.

The powerful countries that claim to stand up for human rights have ignored them time and again. As a consequence, Amnesty International says the USA and Europe have lost respect, are losing their ability to influence other countries and aren't winning the war on terror.

### **Malcolm Nance, Ex Counter Terrorism Advisor to the US Department of Homeland Security**

Never before have nations, western nations, truly resorted to a systematic, organised, top-down, presidential-ordered, torture system. Now, the first thing that that does is help the terrorist group. You've just met all the strategic objectives of the terrorist group.

2007 saw civilians continue to suffer in long-running conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians, in Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Iraq and Colombia.

Despite widespread outrage at the continuing murder, rape and violence in Darfur, the situation there also barely changed in 2007. Meanwhile Sudan's biggest trading partner and the country best placed to press for change has its own preoccupations.

Beyond its Olympic responsibilities, Amnesty International expects China to improve its human rights record because it's now a global power and has human rights responsibilities both at home and abroad and it can't live up to those by executing more people than any other country, by

refusing to allow freedom of expression, by harassing human rights activists and their families and by detaining people without fair trials.

Russia too has global human rights responsibilities. Will a change of leader give a chance for a new start and a chance to roll back the repression that demonstrators, journalists and NGOs have been facing? Chechnya is still an open wound and the crimes committed there continue to go unpunished.

But where governments have failed their people, Amnesty International has seen people taking things into their own hands: the monks that marched in Myanmar, the lawyers in Pakistan and the vote at the UN for a global moratorium on the Death Penalty – all these have shown that in this 60th Anniversary year, there is a powerful force for change.

**Amnesty International Secretary General, Irene Khan**

On the one hand, we have seen Governments denial and on the other hand, we have seen people demand for human rights and therefore the call for accountability and that call for accountability is going to get stronger and stronger and stronger and Governments ignore it at their peril.