



Conservative Party Human Rights Commission Annual Report 2008

*‘Please use your liberty to
promote ours’* – Aung San Suu Kyi



Cover Photo:
Marcus Perkins 2008/CSW
Displaced victims of the
violence in Orissa at a
private relief camp in the
state capital.

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Foreword

by Rt Hon William Hague MP, Shadow Foreign Secretary

This December marks a special anniversary in the history of human rights and I am pleased that the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission has continued to make an important contribution to the debate on this subject over the past twelve months. As we continue to shape our Conservative foreign policy and examine ways in which we can honour and implement our pledge to make human rights an essential component, the work of the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission remains vital. I welcome the publication of its Annual Report and will study the recommendations very closely.

Sixty years have now passed since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted but sadly, as this report highlights, much of the human race exists under the shadow of conflict, oppressive regimes, ethnic tension, and poverty, starved of personal freedoms and denied the opportunity to build more open societies. A cursory glance at the stories dominating the international news agenda reveals that in places such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Burma, Zimbabwe and now, tragically, the Democratic Republic of Congo, human rights are not a reality for millions of people. The principles enshrined in the Declaration were designed to protect and advance the individual lives of the world's humanity and one of our many tasks is to ensure that these rights and freedoms are respected.

The responsibility to defend human rights, both at home and abroad, is collective and falls upon us all. As we reflect upon the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and consider how we can promote its values, we should have in our minds the words of Eleanor Roosevelt, Chairman of the UN Human Rights Commission responsible for drafting the Declaration, when she said, "Man must...through common effort raise the level of human dignity". These words are as important today as they were sixty years ago: the next Conservative government will fully play its part in this endeavour.



The Rt Hon William Hague MP

Chairman's Review - 2008: A year for celebrating human rights?

After a year in which progress on defending human rights in many parts of the world actually went backwards, 2008 should have been a year for hope, change and, with the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a year of celebration.

As Irene Khan, Director of Amnesty International, said at the start of this year: "2007 was characterised by the impotence of Western governments and the ambivalence or reluctance of emerging powers to tackle some of the world's worst human rights crises... The fact remains that injustice, inequality and impunity are still the hallmarks of our world today."

"2008 presents an unprecedented opportunity for new leaders coming to power and countries emerging on the world stage to set a new direction and reject the myopic policies and practices that in recent years have made the world a more dangerous and divided place."

As the year draws to a close, it is not easy to identify those instances where individual governments or the international community as a collective demonstrated the will and determination to end the worst forms of human rights abuse.

2008 began with chilling scenes of ethnic violence in Kenya triggered by a disputed national election in which, according to international observers, there were numerous instances of ballot-rigging and other electoral malpractice. In the ensuing conflict hundreds of civilians were killed, including dozens of people seeking refuge in a church who were burnt to death. There were widespread allegations of the use of rape and sexual violence by those who perpetrated the violence. Both sides in the dispute alleged the other was inciting their supporters to commit genocide.

The elections in Zimbabwe in March failed to produce a smooth political transition and it remains unclear how the power-sharing agreement between Robert Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirai of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) will work in practice. The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission (CPHRC) has watched the situation in Zimbabwe closely throughout the year and in October welcomed Harris Nyatsanza, a young MDC activist who had been imprisoned by Mugabe, to speak at its 2008 party conference fringe event.

A more successful transfer of power came in the Maldives Islands in October with the election of Mohammed "Anni" Nasheed of the Maldivian Democratic Party (a sister party of our own Conservative Party) as President. Over the last twenty years Anni has campaigned for political freedoms in the Maldives and, alongside fellow MDP members, has been subjected to a string of human rights abuses including wrongful imprisonment and beatings.

The CPHRC has monitored the situation in the Maldives closely over the last three years and has urged the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to investigate the numerous examples of political repression passed to us. At the 2007 party conference Anni Nasheed addressed a packed CPHRC fringe event alongside Rt Hon William Hague MP where he made a lasting impact on delegates with his testimony of courage, hope and faith in democracy.

In May, Burma was hit by a devastating cyclone which killed hundreds of thousands of people and left a humanitarian disaster in its wake. The negligent response by that country's brutal government turned a natural disaster into a much worse man-made catastrophe and highlighted again the character of the regime which rules Burma through fear and control.

The response to Cyclone Nargis led to much discussion about the international doctrine of Responsibility to Protect and whether the circumstances justified international intervention. In its report on UN reform in March 2008 the CPHRC urged a future Conservative government to take a lead within the international community in turning Responsibility to Protect into a meaningful basis for action in situations of gross human rights failure.

CPHRC member John Bercow MP is one of numerous Conservative voices demanding stronger action against Burma and a new UN Security Council resolution. There is still little progress on political reform by the Burmese generals. November saw around 150 democracy activists imprisoned for their involvement in the peaceful demonstrations of September 2007.

More than two dozen detainees, including women, were given 65-year prison sentences.

For many human rights campaigners, the Olympic Games in China became a principal focal point of the year as they sought to push the issues of Tibet and internal Chinese political freedoms higher up the international agenda. While the politicisation of the Games did not sit comfortably with many people, and caused grave offence within China itself, some took encouragement that the successful Games may act as a spur to China to move forward at a faster pace with political and human rights reforms. The CPHRC used this year to focus on China's expanding international role and its potential for influencing human rights performance in other countries, not least in Sudan where the horrors of Darfur continue with little positive change.

The summer months saw a major outbreak of inter-communal violence in India where Hindu extremists targeted the Christian community in Orissa state. The violence saw up to 50,000 Christians displaced from their homes with many being murdered or forced to 'convert' to Hinduism. CPHRC Member Mark Pritchard MP has taken a lead in the House of Commons on this issue, both in questioning the Foreign Secretary and arranging for parliamentarians to meet with religious freedom campaigners from India.

A similar bout of violence against Christians, again in contravention of Article 18 of the Universal Declaration which guarantees freedom of conscience, occurred in Mosul, Iraq in October. There were numerous reports of forced conversions, violent attacks, death threats and families displaced from their homes. The Iraqi government condemned the violence and blamed elements of Al-Qaeda. The CPHRC remains very concerned about emerging forms of extremism in Iraq and the threat to religious freedom and women's rights.

As 2008 draws to a close, the world is watching a new round of fighting in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo between government and rebel troops which has created enormous refugee flows and a dire humanitarian situation. Here again the international community discusses intervention strategies with little practical effect on the ground. Meanwhile multiple reports are emerging of widespread rape and sexual violence carried out by troops and the kidnap of hundreds of children to be used as child soldiers in the bloodiest ongoing conflict since the Second World War. At the start of 2008 the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission chose to make sexual violence as a tool of warfare and child soldiers two of its principal campaign themes for the year. Recent events in DRC serve to highlight just how far the international community is away from eradicating these two abhorrent practices.

The hopes that many people carried at the start of this year for significant improvements in international human rights have not been realised. Yet December 2008 nevertheless remains a month to celebrate the basic freedoms that were codified in the Universal Declaration sixty years ago. It is right that we consider again the importance of this document which underpins the United Nations and use the moment to reflect on the work that needs to be done to ensure that universal human rights are observed and protected equally throughout the international community.

Stephen Crabb MP
Chairman, Conservative Party Human Rights Commission
November 2008

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Human rights around the world saw little improvement in 2008, and, in many cases, deterioration. The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission has been actively monitoring and highlighting a range of international human rights concerns, in a variety of countries. The concerns presented in this report reflect some of the major themes which the Commission has campaigned on, including sexual violence as a weapon of war, the forcible conscription of child soldiers, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, reform of the United Nations with particular regard to the UN Human Rights Council, the use of international justice mechanisms such as the International Criminal Court, and China's growing role and influence in the international arena in response to human rights and humanitarian concerns.

In this third annual report by the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission, a variety of policy recommendations are made for a future Conservative Government to adopt in its foreign policy. These recommendations are summarised here, under thematic and policy area headings.

Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War

The right to be free from the fear of sexual violence should be inalienable. Unfortunately, as recent events have shown in Darfur and the Democratic Republic of Congo, this is not the case. The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission urges the next Conservative Government to introduce the following measures to prevent sexual violence being used as a weapon of war:

- To recognise that sexual violence against women as a weapon of war is a serious threat to international security and use the UK's position as a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council to ensure that the international community takes this into account in all resolutions and peacekeeping missions.
- To lead the international community in finding solutions to the obstacles to proper data gathering and reporting of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) so that future policy decisions can be better-informed by evidence. Only then can there be hope of effective containment of the phenomenon.
- To commission a joint study by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) on Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War to produce a platform for policy development on the subject and especially to address the challenges of in-country data collection, monitoring and reporting.
- To adopt and improve the UK National Action Plan to implement UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. Specifically, a reformed National Action Plan should include measurable indicators, goals and best practice so that progress can be transparently assessed and policy continually refined. The Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 should be focused on outcomes and not processes.
- To commit to ensuring that the principles of UNSCR 1325 are enshrined in the proceedings of the UN Security Council, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the UN Development Programme and other UN agencies. In particular, efforts should be made to improve consistency and ensure that all mandates for UN peacekeeping operations incorporate regular and adequate monitoring on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the field.
- To urgently call for, and lobby other member states to support, a UNSC Monitoring Mechanism for the Implementation of 1325.
- To end the culture of impunity surrounding crimes of sexual violence by adopting a zero tolerance attitude to perpetrators. The UK should actively support the ICC investigation into Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo and seek convictions of similarly high profile perpetrators of sexual violence as a war crime, crime of genocide, and crime against humanity, to establish an international deterrent.

- To seek to strengthen justice systems of fragile states before, during and after conflict through training, diplomatic measures and aid. A particular emphasis should be placed on promoting more effective vetting mechanisms in the post-conflict reconstruction of democratic, judicial, law enforcement and military institutions.
- To actively develop more and better ways to support victims and witnesses to crimes of sexual violence so that prosecutions can proceed to successful convictions. Measures to be investigated should include an international advocacy and witness protection fund for the victims of sexual violence.
- To acknowledge the right of women to participate fully in the processes of conflict prevention and peace-building and actively seek to promote their involvement at the negotiating table.
- To seek to increase the number of women deployed on UN Peacekeeping Operations and Country Missions, to senior decision-making FCO and DFID overseas posts and on all training, expertise sharing and in-country support programmes.
- To offer training on gender issues, in particular sexual violence, to UN Member States, prioritising Troop Contributing Countries, as well as to democratic, military, judicial and other law enforcement representatives in conflict prevention and resolution situations.
- To place SGBV training and justice mechanisms at the heart of all post-conflict reconstruction programmes.

The Forcible Conscription of Child Soldiers

The use of children as soldiers has been universally condemned as abhorrent and unacceptable. Yet over the last ten years hundreds of thousands of children have fought and died in conflicts around the world. The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission urges the next Conservative Government to introduce the following measures to help end this despicable practice:

- To increase understanding of the widespread use of child soldiers, and the associated human rights violations, through active promotion of international norms and standards, such as the UN resolutions, the ICC rulings and the Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups.
- To study the Child Soldier Prevention Act (S. 1175) introduced in the US Senate by Senators Richard Durbin and Sam Brownback and consider how it might be adapted into UK policy. The legislation seeks to limit military assistance to countries where child soldiers are used.

Freedom of Expression

The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission urges the next Conservative Government to introduce the following measures to ensure the right to freedom of expression worldwide:

- To increase efforts to promote freedom of expression around the world. Initiatives to promote World Press Freedom Day on 3 May should be considered, and support should be given to events such as the Committee to Protect Journalists' International Press Freedom Awards.
- To engage with human rights organisations and internet companies to discuss how to protect human rights for cyber-dissidents.

Freedom of Religion

Freedom of religion is one of the most basic human rights, and also one of the most widely violated. The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission urges the next Conservative Government to introduce the following measures to promote religious freedom:

- To expand the current Foreign and Commonwealth Office Freedom of Religion Panel, make the panel permanent and convene regular meetings of the panel.
- To appoint a Special Representative of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Freedom of Religion Panel to monitor international trends and cases. The Special Representative could be a senior diplomat, academic or human rights expert with a proven specialism in religious freedom, and should co-ordinate efforts with the UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion and Belief and the US Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom.
- To strengthen annual reporting by the Foreign Office on religious freedom.
- To train all Foreign Office staff in London and embassies around the world in freedom of religion and belief to ensure accurate reporting of violations, provision of relief and asylum for victims..
- To train Home Office asylum case workers and translators in freedom of religion and belief to enable them to accurately assess convert applications and apostasy.
- To give technical and financial support to NGOs specialising in promoting freedom of religion and belief should be provided.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission urges the next Conservative Government to introduce the following measures with regard to the structure and remit of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office:

- To maintain the practice of compiling and publishing an FCO annual report on human rights and also ensure that the report is presented to Parliament by Ministers and debated on the floor of both Houses of Parliament each year.
- The Commission repeats the recommendation made in its 2007 Annual Report that a Minister of State for International Human Rights be appointed within the FCO, and that such a minister be able to attend Cabinet meetings and senior security and foreign policy Cabinet committees.
- To create a permanent Human Rights Advisory Group, consisting of specialists from respected human rights NGOs, to meet on a regular basis with the Minister and the Ambassador-at-Large, to inform them of key human rights situations and cases, and advise on action.
- To establish a number of thematic portfolios for Special Representatives to work under the Ambassador-at-Large for International Human Rights
- To prioritise the agreement of a comprehensive, robust treaty. In order to secure this, particular efforts are needed in convincing some of the more sceptical states, such as the United States, Russia and China, of the existence and scale of the problem as it stands and the need for a treaty to address this.

International Justice Mechanisms

The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission urges the next Conservative Government to introduce the following measure to strengthen international justice mechanisms:

- To support the International Criminal Court as a vital means of bringing justice to gross violations of human rights.

Human rights and UK Overseas Aid

The UK is at the forefront of the development debate internationally and DfID is widely respected for its approach to global poverty. The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission urges the next Conservative Government to build on these strengths by:

- Demonstrating that it is serious about delaying or withholding British aid to countries which do not demonstrate real progress on human rights.
- Demanding a more rigorous approach to monitoring how our aid is spent and ensuring that aid is not misappropriated. With the increasing use of Direct Budget it is even more vital that the management of fiduciary risk is improved.
- Taking a stronger approach to addressing any institutional or policy weaknesses which result in human rights not being mainstream within its aid programmes in developing countries.

The United Nations

Fundamental changes need to be made within the United Nations to better protect human rights across the globe. The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission urges the next Conservative Government to introduce the following measures:

- To create far greater linkage between international development and international human rights.
- To advocate the following measures for strengthening the criteria for membership of the UN Human Rights Council – similar to the *acquis communautaire* for accession states to the EU:
 - a. That the UN agrees a core list of international human rights treaties to be ratified by potential member states before seeking election to the Council.
 - b. That those Governments seeking to join the Council have their human rights records reviewed before qualifying for election. This could be undertaken by Rapporteurs appointed by the Council and the report could be submitted to an appropriate regional body, such as the African Union, to enable regional bodies to take further responsibility for human rights before the regional elections.
 - c. That a Universal Periodic Review is undertaken during the first half of the term of office that a member state sits on the Council.
 - d. The President's Text for the Council established a four-year periodicity for the review despite Resolution 60/251 stating that members of the Council must be reviewed during their term of membership, which is three years. This should also require permanent Rapporteurs for each member state; and if serious abuses occur during their term of office, this should lead to a special session of the Council with a vote amongst member states as to whether that country remains on the Council.
 - e. That the membership of the Council is reduced further. This can be achieved at the next set of regional elections in 2008 which also provide an opportunity to reduce the blocking majority exercised by regional groups.

China's Foreign Policy and the promotion of human rights

China's influence can now be seen in every corner of the world. It is an economic, diplomatic, political and military superpower. The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission urges the next Conservative Government to:

- Find ways to appeal to the Chinese government on behalf of the crises in countries such as Burma, Zimbabwe, Sudan and North Korea in language that fits China's foreign policy criteria. In other words, the case must be made to China that the regimes in these countries are the cause of instability, and that they do not in the long-term advance China's interests, but rather create economic crisis and reputational damage which harm China's long-term objectives. China must be reassured that while Burma's military regime may currently be pro-Chinese, that does not mean that a future democratic government in Burma will be anti-China.

Commission Activities 2007-8

The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission engages in a variety of activities, including holding hearings in Parliament, producing reports, tabling Parliamentary Questions, contributing to debates, writing letters to the British Government and to foreign embassies concerning human rights cases, participating in demonstrations and speaking to the media.

Hearings

A central aspect of the Commission's work is to hold hearings on specific countries and policy themes, as a way of gathering information and expertise from leading specialists. Each hearing consists of a panel of experts, who present their ideas, information and recommendations. The Commission then synthesises the material gathered as a result of the hearings, and produces policy papers for the Shadow Foreign Secretary. In 2008, the Commission has held hearings in Parliament on the following themes:

- **Rape and Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War** – with a panel including Anneke Van Woudenberg, Senior Researcher on the Democratic Republic of Congo at Human Rights Watch; Dr James Smith, Chief Executive of the Aegis Trust; Sue Turrell, Chief Executive of Womankind; and Ikhlass Mohammed, a Darfuri survivor and campaigner.
- **The Forcible Conscription of Child Soldiers** – with a panel consisting of Mark Waddington, War Child; Joanna MacVeigh, Save the Children Fund; Tindyebwa Agaba, a former Rwandan child soldier; Enrique Restoy, the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers.
- **China's Foreign Policy in Relation to Conflict, Humanitarian Disaster and Human Rights** – with a panel consisting of Andrew Small, German Marshall Fund; Professor Rosemary Foot, Professor of International Relations and Swire Senior Research Fellow, St Antony's College, University of Oxford; and John Fox, Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations and former diplomat in the British Embassy in Beijing.
- **Violations of Freedom of Expression** – panel included Dr Agnes Callamard, Executive Director of Article 19; Jonathan Heawood, Executive Director of English PEN; Fariba Marzban, an Iranian writer and former political prisoner; and Steve Ballinger from Amnesty International.

Future hearings will include focuses on International Justice Mechanisms; Aid and Human Rights; Religious Freedom; and Torture.

Reports

The Commission launched its report on UN Reform at Chatham House on 19 March, with Commission Chairman Stephen Crabb MP and Shadow Foreign Minister responsible for human rights, David Lidington MP. The report is available on the Commission's website.

Later in the year, the Commission launched a report entitled *Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War*, in partnership with the Conservative Women's Organisation, which is also available on our website.

Events

At the Conservative Party Conference in Birmingham in 2008, the Commission held a fringe meeting which was addressed by the Shadow Foreign Secretary William Hague, the Director of Amnesty International UK Kate Allen, a member of the Zimbabwean opposition Movement for Democratic Change, Harris Nyatsanza and a former Rwandan child soldier, Tindyebwa Agaba.

Action in Parliament

The Conservative Frontbench and members of the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission have taken a lead in questioning Ministers and pressing for House of Commons debates on a wide range of human rights issues during 2008. The following represent a small selection of the issues raised by Conservative MPs:

"Since the start of this year, another 80,000 people have been driven from their homes, aid workers have been killed, and access to humanitarian relief has dramatically reduced across Darfur. Even areas such as el-Fasher, which I visited 16 months ago, are sometimes inaccessible because of the Janjaweed militia. Seven months ago, the Prime Minister promised quick and decisive action, but will he confirm that on any objective measure, the situation on the ground has actually got worse?" **Rt Hon David Cameron MP (Leader of the Opposition) - Prime Minister's Questions, March 2008**

"Now is the time for all nations to send the unequivocal message to the regime in Harare and the people of Zimbabwe that there is a future for the country after Mugabe, and to send the message to the African continent that its Governments cannot sit on their hands and avoid taking sides in a crisis that blights the lives of millions." **Rt Hon William Hague MP (Shadow Foreign Secretary) - Commons debate on Zimbabwe, July 2008**

"As the House debates the situation in Burma today, we are equally aware of the terrible earthquake and awful loss of life in China, particularly among children. However, it is hard not to draw comparisons between the responses of the Governments of China and Burma to the terrible disasters that have hit their countries. The Chinese Prime Minister led the humanitarian relief effort to the earthquake in his country. The full power of the state has been used to rescue and protect the citizens of China, but the position in Burma could not be more different. The regime has not only proved unable to handle the challenges it faces, but actively turned its back on helping its own citizens. **Andrew Mitchell MP (Shadow International Development Secretary) - Commons debate on Cyclone Nargis, May 2008**

"Article 18 of the universal declaration asserts the freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Too often, that freedom is denied—sometimes by Governments and sometimes by extremist groups operating within a particular state. One could cite the persecution of the Bahai's in Iran, attacks on Christians in parts of Pakistan or the destruction of churches and the displacement of 50,000 refugees in the state of Orissa in India, but what should give us in Britain particular cause for concern is the discrimination against religious minorities, particularly Christians, in countries where British troops are serving to sustain democracy and human rights." **David Lidington MP (Shadow Foreign Minister) - Commons debate on Democracy and Human Rights, October 2008**

"If the catastrophe and suffering in Burma are not sufficient, and the bloodshed, violence and economic destruction taking place in Zimbabwe are not sufficient, can the Minister please tell us what set of circumstances would warrant intervention under the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect?" **Stephen Crabb MP (CPHRC Chairman)- Foreign Office Questions, June 2008**

"I welcome the pressure that the British Government are putting on the Israeli Government to reopen the crossings and the humanitarian support that we are giving through the non-governmental organisations in Gaza. However, what steps and systems has the Secretary of State put in place to ensure that British taxpayers' money is not being diverted in Gaza to be used to create rockets to be fired into Israel?" **Gary Streeter MP (CPHRC Member) - International Development Questions, January 2008**

"Given that both the Government of Burma and the Government of Sudan continue to be guilty of the most egregious human rights abuses, that neither of those regimes is improving, and that both are propped up by what I would call the amorality of the Chinese, how does the right hon. Gentleman think that the Chinese can be persuaded to behave in a more responsible and moral fashion, in their own interest?" **John Bercow MP (CPHRC Member) - Commons debate on Democracy and Human Rights, October 2008**

"What dialogue has been held with the Government of India following the murderous events of the past two or three weeks

in the state of Orissa? Although India might be the world's largest democracy, what has happened over the past few weeks is not necessarily a sign that it is the world's most mature democracy. Allowing freedom of speech and freedom of religion is a sign of maturity, and I hope that the Minister will send the strongest signal to India that this sort of behaviour in respect of religious minorities is not acceptable." **Mark Pritchard MP (CPHRC Member) - International Development Questions, October 2008**

"Our hope is that we get a more effective and systematic humanitarian effort up and running. The aid getting through is nothing like enough to bring relief to the people of Burma. However, there is a bigger hope beyond that—that the tragic events of the past week will somehow lead to a new outlook, particularly on the part of the younger generation of Burmese rulers, who will come through when that group of ageing, corrupt and abhorrent generals finally has its day."

Stephen Crabb MP (Chairman, CPHRC) - Commons debate on Cyclone Nargis, May 2008

Thematic Concerns

The Forcible Conscription of Child Soldiers

More than 250,000 children in over 20 countries are currently serving in armed forces. In countries ranging from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Uganda and Somalia, to Burma, Columbia and Sri Lanka, children are used as soldiers, despite the fact that international law prohibiting the use of child soldiers has been increasingly strengthened. According to War Child, the problem is, in fact, getting worse. In 2006, children were involved in 40 fighting forces around the world, while a year later the number had increased to 57, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict contains the most specific prohibition of child soldiers under international law, and has been ratified by 120 countries. However, although in many conflicts children are recruited by non-State armed forces, including pro-government and resistance paramilitary groups, the forcible conscription of children into the State army continues in some countries, notably Burma, Somalia, Sudan and the DRC.

The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission held a hearing in Parliament in 2008, to gather evidence of this continuing human rights violation, and to consider policy options and ideas for addressing the issue. The Commission heard evidence from four experts, including a former child soldier from Rwanda, Tindyebwa Agaba, and representatives of Save the Children, War Child and the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. The Commission concluded that it is essential to examine the root causes of the phenomenon of child soldiers, before considering solutions. The causes include poverty, social pressure, displacement, lack of educational opportunities and coercion, whereby children are abducted and forced to join the army.

While it is important to recognise that in many situations children volunteer to join armed groups, in some countries there is no other factor besides force. In Burma, for example, which according to Human Rights Watch has the highest number of forcibly conscripted child soldiers in the world, the military regime set a target for recruitment of new troops. In mid-2006, a senior general called for the recruitment of 7,000 new soldiers every month, four times the actual recruitment rate the previous year. According to the Human Rights Watch report *Sold to be Soldiers: The recruitment and use of child soldiers in Burma*, battalion commanders failing to meet their recruiting quotas are subject to a range of disciplinary action including the loss of their command posting. "The unrelenting pressure to meet recruitment quotas has placed boys at constant risk of forced or coerced recruitment," the report claims.

Where possible, preventative measures should be taken to stop the use of child soldiers. This requires a greater involvement by the Department for International Development (DfID), to link aid and development policy with preventative measures including greater investment in education, vocational training and income-generation initiatives. According to Save the Children: "Our experience of working in conflict situations shows that where children and young people are positively engaged, in education for example, there is less chance of them being pulled towards joining armed groups."

In addition to improving access to education, and other poverty-fighting measures, it is essential to strengthen local civil society and media, to raise awareness about the rights of children and the abuses they face within their own societies, and to document and report violations and advocate for an end to the recruitment of child soldiers.

A key aspect of prevention involves addressing impunity. The forcible conscription of child soldiers below the age of 15 is a war crime under the Geneva Conventions and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Members of armed groups in the DRC and Uganda currently face war crimes charges issued by the ICC, and in 2007 the Special Court for Sierra Leone convicted four people on charges including the recruitment and use of child soldiers during the civil war. Action should be taken against other recruiters of child soldiers and the United Kingdom should increase its support for efforts to end impunity.

The UN Security Council has given the issue of child soldiers increasing prominence, through resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005), which established a monitoring mechanism and a working group on children and armed conflict, through

resolution 1612 (2005). The United Kingdom should continue to support UN efforts to develop this mechanism.

A future Conservative government should increase understanding of the widespread use of child soldiers, and the associated human rights violations, through active promotion of international norms and standards, such as the UN resolutions, the ICC rulings and the Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups. A commitment to international norms should be accompanied by increased funding for protection programmes. More attention should also be placed on the re-integration of former child soldiers, particularly girls who may have been subjected to sexual violence. Many girls who are recruited as child soldiers are regarded as the 'property' of the male soldiers, and their demobilisation is therefore more difficult to achieve. In the DRC, for example, between December 2003 and September 2004, 1,718 boys but only 23 girls were demobilised by international NGOs, even though it was reported that between 30 and 40 per cent of children in armed groups in the DRC were girls. According to Save the Children, girls are more likely to end up in sex work and other forms of sexual exploitation and less likely to gain access to education and training.

The next Conservative government should also study the Child Soldier Prevention Act (S. 1175) introduced in the US Senate by Senators Richard Durbin and Sam Brownback, and consider how it might be adapted into UK policy. The legislation seeks to limit military assistance to countries where child soldiers are used.

The issue of child soldiers requires urgent attention, and an integrated approach between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and DFID. The next Conservative government should make this a priority.

Rape and Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War

The crimes of sexual violence recorded in conflicts ranging from the former Yugoslavia and Peru to Rwanda, Liberia and currently Darfur and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) are amongst the most horrific war crimes ever committed. We urgently need to find more and better ways to bring an end to this epidemic of conflict-based sexual violence and the UK has a vital role to play in formulating, promoting and implementing such policy.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is 95% more likely to affect women than men but despite numerous NGO- and Government-led campaigns to end violence against women, a culture of violence persists worldwide with at least one in three women experiencing some form of physical or sexual abuse during her lifetime.¹ In recent years, sexual violence as a weapon of war has emerged as one of the worst manifestations of what is now understood to be a global phenomenon. Poor reporting systems, the stigma that most cultures still attach to rape and other forms of sexual assault, limitations of national justice mechanisms and an almost complete absence of witness protection in the majority of conflict and post-conflict zones mean that data on gender-based violence is woefully inadequate. But while accurate statistics remain elusive, recent work by multilateral organizations and advocacy groups mean the scope and gravity of the situation are beyond doubt. The Alliance for Direct Action Against Rape in Conflicts and Crises (*AllianceDARC*) estimates that between 1990 and 2006 a minimum of 2 million women in conflict zones were raped or otherwise subjected to sexual violence.²

The importance of women's participation in peacekeeping exercises is recognised at both national and international levels. It is also recognised that women in conflict and post-conflict situations are at serious risk of SGBV. Despite this, however, the legal and political instruments that are designed to protect women are failing to do so. The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission considers this state of affairs to be both morally reprehensible and a direct threat to global security. A Conservative Government should take urgent action to bring an end to the culture of impunity that allows perpetrators of sexual violence to flourish in conflict and post-conflict situations.

On 25 March 2008, the Human Rights Commission held a public hearing at the House of Commons to take evidence on the subject of 'Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War'. The panel of expert witnesses comprised Sue Turrell, CEO of Womankind; Anneke van Woudenberg, Senior Researcher with Human Rights Watch for the DRC; Dr James Smith, CEO of the Aegis Trust; and Ikhlass Mohammed, a Darfuri Survivor and Campaigner.³

The Commission produced a report on the issue primarily informed by the contributions of the panellists at the hearing in

March and by other written evidence subsequently received,⁴ and made a number of policy recommendations that were submitted to the Shadow Foreign Secretary with the express purpose of helping a future Conservative Government play a leading role in the fight against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence.

Recommendations

- A Conservative Government must recognize sexual violence against women as a weapon of war and a serious threat to national and international security and use the UK's position as a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council to ensure that the International Community takes this into account in all resolutions and peacekeeping missions.
- A Conservative Government needs to lead the international community in finding solutions to the obstacles to proper data gathering and reporting of SGBV so that future policy decisions can be better-informed by evidence. Only then can there be hope of effective containment of the phenomenon.
- A Conservative Government should immediately commission a joint study by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Ministry of Defense (MOD) on Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War to produce a platform for policy development on the subject and especially to address the challenges of in-country data collection, monitoring and reporting.
- A Conservative Government should adopt and improve the UK National Action Plan to implement UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. Specifically a Conservative National Action Plan should include measurable indicators, goals and best practice so that progress can be transparently assessed and policy continually refined. A Conservative Government should establish a National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 that is focused on outcomes and not processes.
- A Conservative Government should be committed to ensuring that the principles of UNSCR 1325 are enshrined in the proceedings of the UN Security Council, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the UN Development Programme and other UN agencies. In particular, efforts should be made to improve consistency and ensure that all mandates for UN peacekeeping operations incorporate regular and adequate monitoring on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the field.
- A Conservative Government should urgently call for, and lobby other member states to support, a UNSC Monitoring Mechanism for the Implementation of 1325.
- A Conservative Government should seek to end the culture of impunity surrounding crimes of sexual violence by adopting a zero tolerance attitude to perpetrators. The UK should actively support the ICC investigation into Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo and seek convictions of similarly high profile perpetrators of sexual violence as a war crime, crime of genocide, and crime against humanity, to establish an international deterrent.
- A Conservative Government should seek to strengthen justice systems of fragile states before, during and after conflict through training, diplomatic measures and aid. A particular emphasis should be placed on promoting more effective vetting mechanisms in the post-conflict reconstruction of democratic, judicial, law enforcement and military institutions.
- A Conservative Government should actively develop more and better ways to support victims and witnesses to crimes of sexual violence so that prosecutions can proceed to successful convictions. Measures to be investigated should include an international advocacy and witness protection fund for the victims of sexual violence.
- A Conservative Government needs to acknowledge the right of women to participate fully in the processes of conflict prevention and peace-building and actively seek to promote their involvement at the negotiating table.
- A Conservative Government should seek to increase the number of women deployed on UN Peacekeeping Operations

and Country Missions, to senior decision-making FCO and DFID overseas posts and on all training, expertise sharing and in-country support programmes.

- A Conservative Government should offer training on gender issues, in particular sexual violence, to UN Member States, prioritising Troop Contributing Countries, as well as to democratic, military, judicial and other law enforcement representatives in conflict prevention and resolution situations.
- A Conservative Government should place SGBV training and justice mechanisms at the heart of all post-conflict reconstruction programmes.

This report, which was launched in November by the Shadow Foreign Secretary William Hague, was informed by certain fundamental principles of human rights. Firstly, that human rights violations are not only consequences of conflict but are also early warning signs of instability, potentially indicating or even causing impending conflict. Therefore, the campaign against human rights abuses is not only an foreign policy and international development concern but also a key security priority. Secondly, that 'no country can boast of being free unless its women are free.'⁵ Women play a pivotal role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Sexual Violence is an incredibly complex social phenomenon that every culture struggles to come to terms with and few, if any countries have found effective ways of dealing with it. When sexual violence ceases to be a private crime and metamorphoses into a weapon of war, a vicious cycle of abuse and revenge takes hold and becomes an internal driver of hatred and conflict. The manifestations that characterise this form of sexual violence include the most inhumane acts ever committed in a state of war and the consequences for the victims – physical, psychological, and social – are all but impossible to repair. These consequences have a ripple effect that touches the entire nation. Human rights abuses cause instability and prevent sustainable peace and prosperity.

The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission welcomes the British Government's support for and action to promote UNSCR 1325 and raise awareness of this issue. However, the Commission believes that inadequate funding and monitoring, combined with a lack of political will, are hindering the effectiveness of UNSCR 1325, and calls on the British Government to pay closer attention to this theme. It is time to look at the outcomes, not the processes and so far all the words and promises and gender-awareness courses of the international community are failing to protect women across the world. It is time for a change.

Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression, particularly through the media, is an essential ingredient for a functioning democracy and an important barometer of human rights. The freer the media, the more responsive to public opinion a government has to be. However, in too many countries around the world, media freedom continues to be restricted, and writers, journalists and other media personnel face harassment, imprisonment and in some cases death.

Freedom House has described 2007 as the "sixth straight year of overall deterioration" in global press freedom⁶. Just 18% of the world's population live in countries classed as having a free press, with 40% living in countries where the press is 'Partly Free' and 42% where it is 'Not Free'.

Over the past twelve years more than 1,100 journalists and media staff have been killed⁷. By October 2008, at least 50 media workers had been killed, according to the World Association of Newspapers. In 2007, 95 killings of media employees were recorded⁸, and the previous year 110 deaths were reported. Although the figures for 2006-8 represent a decrease in killings of media workers, overall the number of incidents has quadrupled in the past decade. Iraq has been the country where the largest number of journalists have been killed, but Mexico is also one of the deadliest places, due to the "extremely high level of drug-related violence against journalists as well as the continued atmosphere of impunity surrounding attacks on the media"⁹.

Russia's invasion of Georgia in 2008 also displayed a complete disregard for journalists. At least four journalists were

killed and nine injured during the short conflict¹⁰.

Press freedom gained particular attention in 2008 during the Olympic Games in Beijing. In December 2007 David Cameron drew attention to this theme in a speech in Chongqing in which he expressed "deep concerns about freedom of expression, of religion, about the extensive use of the death penalty, about the degree to which the media - and access for example to the Internet – are curtailed". China promised to relax restrictions, but failed to fulfil its promise. Not only did many restrictions remain in place, China is widely considered to have actually increased efforts to stifle domestic criticism in the months preceding the Olympics.

In addition to the suppression of domestic debate, China imposed restrictions on international media in 2008. ITV News journalist John Ray was arrested while attempting to film a group of eight protesters unfurling a Free Tibet banner in the Chinese Ethnic Culture Park. He was briefly detained and his equipment was confiscated. An AP journalist and photographer were also detained, as were dozens of pro-Tibet foreign nationals who attempted to protest.

The internet is a major form of media, and as such is increasingly used by dissidents and human rights activists. Repressive regimes attempt to restrict the Internet by blocking democracy and human rights websites and some email providers. The military regime in Burma actively controls and censors the Internet, and most of the world's imprisoned cyber-dissidents are in China. According to the Open Net Initiative, China "operates the most extensive, technologically sophisticated, and broad-reaching system of internet filtering in the world". Several pro-democracy websites are permanently blocked in China, "including more than 50 Tibet-related sites, on the grounds that they "jeopardise our security and the healthy growth of our youth".

The abuse of libel laws increased in a number of countries, most notably in parts of Africa, while emergency decrees in both Pakistan and Bangladesh resulted in increased censorship. Russia has seen "a significant deterioration in the legal and political environment for the media, with hundreds of journalists facing criminal or civil cases and at least two taken into temporary psychiatric detention after criticising local authorities"¹¹. Impunity for past murders, attacks on journalists and reporters facing "a high level of personal insecurity" have become the 'norm'. State control, influence or interference affects almost all forms of media in Russia.

A future Conservative Government must increase efforts to promote freedom of expression around the world. Initiatives to promote World Press Freedom Day on 3 May should be considered, and support should be given to events such as the Committee to Protect Journalists' International Press Freedom Awards. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office should consult regularly with organisations such as Reporters Without Borders and Index on Censorship, and the Department for International Development should consider funding media development projects as part of its support for civil society and good governance. Cases of individual writers, journalists and bloggers currently in jail should be raised with respective authorities, and a future Conservative Government should engage with human rights organisations and Internet companies to discuss how to protect human rights for cyber-dissidents. The decision by Yahoo and Google to provide information on dissident online communications to the Chinese authorities has led to the imprisonment and torture of individuals – something that should be prevented in future. Much more must be done to protect and promote freedom of expression around the world.

Freedom of Religion

Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance." In 2008, sixty years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was signed, Article 18 is far from a reality for many countries around the world. As the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion and Belief said in October 2008, religious minorities continue to face discrimination in many countries, and in some places they live in "perpetual threat"¹².

Religious freedom is least tolerated in countries with significantly authoritarian systems. In North Korea religious practice

is illegal. Only two per cent are Christian, at least a quarter of whom are in prison camps. In China official churches have a limited freedom, but unregistered Protestants and Catholics face harassment, arrest and imprisonment. Prior to the Olympic Games, Chinese authorities launched a severe crackdown on unregistered churches, involving the detention of 270 house church pastors¹³. Falun Gong has been banned in China, and practitioners have faced severe persecution. Many have been sentenced to re-education through labour, and an independent investigation carried out by Canadian legal experts David Kilgour and David Matas in 2006 suggests that reports of organ harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners are true¹⁴. Tibetan Buddhists also face persecution from the Chinese authorities, as do Muslim Uighurs in Xinjiang.

Burma is ranked by the US State Department as one of the world's worst violators of religious freedom. In September 2007 the ruling junta brutally suppressed peaceful protests by thousands of Buddhist monks in what became known as the 'Saffron Revolution'. Since the crackdown, Buddhist monasteries have faced severe restrictions on activities, and many monks have disappeared. The regime also discriminates against and persecuted religious minorities, notably Christians and Muslims.

India, despite being the world's largest democracy, remains a cause for concern in terms of religious freedom. Eight states have introduced anti-conversion laws, and the worst outbreak of anti-Christian violence erupted in 2008 in Orissa. The violence first began on Christmas Eve 2007, and during the space of a few days several Christians were murdered, 65 churches burnt down, 600 homes of Christians destroyed and hundreds of Christians displaced¹⁵. For a few months the tensions simmered, and the perpetrators were not brought to justice. After the assassination of Hindu leader Swami Lakhmananda Saraswati, (VHP) on 23 August 2008, violence erupted again when extremist Hindu mobs blamed Christians for the murder. Anti-Christian violence spread throughout Orissa, and according to the All India Christian Council over 53,000 people were displaced and at least 60 killed. There were numerous reports of gang-rape, mutilation and burning of people, and some victims were buried alive. There have also been reported of forced conversions of Christians to Hinduism.

Pakistan's blasphemy laws remain a cause for serious concern. Under current legislation, a person who defiles the name of the Prophet is to be punished by death or life imprisonment. However, these laws are ill-defined and there is no requirement for evidence other than the testimony of one person. This has led to widespread abuse. Almost all blasphemy cases are entirely fabricated, either as a means of settling personal scores or targeting religious minorities. Once accused, a person is marked for life in the eyes of extremists. In prison, blasphemy suspects face the risk of being murdered by extremists, and even if subsequently acquitted, they have to go into hiding. Lawyers who defend blasphemy cases are often subjected to death threats and harassment.

Violence against religious minorities in Pakistan, including Christians, Hindus and Ahmadiyyas, has increased in recent years. In the past two years 150 girls schools have been attacked, including a Catholic school in Swat which was bombed in October 2008 by the Taliban. Forced conversion, forced marriage, abduction and rape are also widespread.

Christians and Ba'hais in Iran face persecution, and in 2008 the Iranian Parliament voted to pass overwhelmingly to impose the death penalty for apostasy.

Freedom of religion is one of the most basic human rights, and also one of the most widely violated. The Conservative Human Rights Commission urges the next Conservative Government to introduce the following measures to promote religious freedom:

- Expand the current Foreign and Commonwealth Office Freedom of Religion Panel, make the panel permanent and convene regular meetings of the panel.
- Appoint a Special Representative of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Freedom of Religion Panel to monitor international trends and cases. The Special Representative could be a senior diplomat, academic or human rights expert with a proven specialism in religious freedom, and should co-ordinate efforts with the UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion and Belief and the US Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom.

- Strengthen annual reporting by the Foreign Office on religious freedom.
- Training in freedom of religion and belief should be provided for all Foreign Office staff in London and in embassies around the world, to ensure accurate reporting of violations, provision of relief and asylum for victims.
- Training in freedom of religion and belief should be provided for Home Office asylum case workers and translators, particularly to enable them to accurately assess convert applications and apostasy.
- Technical and financial support to NGOs specialising in promoting freedom of religion and belief should be provided.
- Technical, especially legal, expertise should be offered to governments preparing legislation related to religious registration, to ensure compliance with international standards for religious freedom.
- Monitoring of UK aid to ensure that its provision on the ground does not exclude any groups on the basis of faith.
- Promotion of national and international discussion, particularly within the UN, of the subject of apostasy (the right to convert) and the protection of apostates.

Policy Dimensions

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has adopted a new strategy under the slogan “Better World, Better Britain”. Within this, it has four stated policy goals: to counter terrorism and weapons proliferation, and their causes; to prevent and resolve conflict; to promote a low carbon, high growth, global economy; and to develop effective international institutions, above all the UN and EU. While all four policy goals are without doubt fundamentally important, it is noticeable that the promotion of human rights and democracy is not among them. In contrast, the Shadow Foreign Secretary William Hague has said on several occasions since 2006 that one of his priorities will be to place “human rights at the very heart of foreign policy.”

Despite this, however, the FCO has published a significant body of work on human rights issues, notably its Annual Human Rights Report. This year, the tenth edition of the Annual Human Rights Report was issued, and it provides extensive coverage of a range of international issues and concerns. The publication of the annual report is very welcome, and a future Conservative Government should not only maintain the practice of compiling and publishing an FCO annual report on human rights, but should ensure that the report is presented to Parliament by Ministers and debated in the floor of both Houses of Parliament each year.

In 2007, the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission expressed concern that human rights is now buried in a wide-ranging ministerial portfolio, instead of being the responsibility of a Minister of State whose portfolio contained human rights and trade. The current Minister of State, Lord Malloch-Brown, is responsible for Africa, Asia, the UN, the Commonwealth, Global Issues, FCO services and human rights. In such a large brief, it is difficult to imagine the Minister of State being able to give international human rights issues the attention they deserve. The previous arrangement, whereby the Minister of State had responsibility for human rights and trade, was also unsatisfactory, because there were potential conflicts of interest. The Commission repeats the recommendation made in its 2007 Annual Report that a Minister of State for International Human Rights be appointed within the FCO, and that such a minister be able to attend Cabinet meetings and senior security and foreign policy Cabinet committees.

A Minister of State for International Human Rights should be supported within the FCO by the appointment of an Ambassador-at-Large for International Human Rights, who could be either a senior diplomat with a known commitment in this field or a prominent and respected expert from outside the diplomatic service. The Ambassador-at-Large would co-ordinate the work of embassies and diplomats around the world in promoting and defending human rights and would lead an expanded Human Rights, Democracy and Government Group within the FCO.

In addition, a future Conservative Government should create a permanent Human Rights Advisory Group, consisting of specialists from respected human rights NGOs, to meet on a regular basis with the Minister and the Ambassador-at-Large, to inform them of key human rights situations and cases, and advise on action. Thematic panels should also be expanded and strengthened. For example, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Freedom of Religion Panel, which currently rarely meets and appears to function on a sporadic, ad-hoc basis, should be convened regularly and accorded a permanent advisory status with an established programme of work and schedule of meetings. It should be required to produce regular reports, policy papers and recommendations for foreign policy.

The FCO should establish a number of thematic portfolios for Special Representatives to work under the Ambassador-at-Large for International Human Rights. A permanent Special Representative of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Freedom of Religion Panel, for example, should be appointed. The Special Representative would act in a similar capacity to the UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion and Belief, and the US Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, and would have responsibility for monitoring and addressing violations of religious freedom around the world. Similar positions covering torture, trafficking in persons, freedom of expression, sexual violence and child soldiers could be created.

Increased resources for the FCO’s human rights and democracy promotion would be desirable, including a greater financial

commitment to recruit staff to the Human Rights and Governance Democracy Department. Increased funding for specific NGO projects in the field of human rights would also be recommended, especially by indigenous human rights activists within a particular country.

The Commission supports the Government's action in building support for the Arms Trade Treaty. There is a compelling need to regulate the arms trade which gives rise to manifest human rights abuses around the world. It is a shameful indictment that 60 years after the introduction of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights there is, as yet, no coordinated mechanism or global criteria applied equally and consistently to all arms exporters and importers. It is imperative that amidst many immediate priorities, this crucial objective is not neglected. A future Conservative Government should prioritise the agreement of a comprehensive, robust treaty. In order to secure this, particular efforts are needed in convincing some of the more sceptical states, such as the United States, Russia and China, of the existence and scale of the problem as it stands and the need for a treaty to address this.

The Commission appreciates and encourages the close relationship that the United Kingdom enjoys with the United States, and believes that this relationship should be used to greater effect to advance human rights. The United Kingdom should not hesitate, as a close ally of the United States, to express concerns over the use of water-boarding and other forms of torture, and to seek a clearer understanding on the part of the US Government about the definition of torture. The United Kingdom must ensure that it is not complicit with torture, either by participation, association or indifference, and that UK airports are not used for rendition purposes by US military flights.

The Commission welcomes the steps the Foreign Office has taken to promote human rights, and will always support the Government when it acts. However, the Commission believes the Foreign Office can do much more, and should be much more pro-active. No one can afford to be complacent whilst villages burn in Darfur, elections are rigged in Zimbabwe and women are raped in the Congo. New ways, fresh ideas and unwavering resolve are constantly needed.

International Justice Mechanisms

In 1998, towards the end of the bloodiest century in history, the international community created the world's first independent and permanent International Criminal Court (ICC) to try persons accused of the most serious crimes of international concern, namely genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Ten years on, in July 2008, the Chief Prosecutor of the ICC, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, presented to the court "evidence showing that Sudanese President, Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir committed the crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur."¹⁶ He said in a statement that conditions in Darfuri refugee camps were calculated to bring about the destruction of the three tribes that have been the primary victims: "In the camps, al-Bashir's forces kill the men and rape the women. He wants to end the history of the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa people."¹⁷

The naming of Sudan's President as a suspect for genocide over Darfur is a courageous and bold step by the Chief Prosecutor, and was supported by the Conservative Front Bench. The Conservative Party has also expressed support for bringing the Generals who rule Burma to justice at the ICC. Following Cyclone Nargis which hit Burma in May, David Cameron wrote an article in *The Independent* in which he said: "We should also make clear to the generals that if they continue to frustrate the delivery of aid to their dying people, they could end up answering for their actions before the International Criminal Court." Similarly, Shadow Secretary of State for International Development Andrew Mitchell said: "They [the military regime] don't give a fig for their people. I say that such leaders should be carted off to the International Criminal Court at The Hague and face charges of crimes against humanity."

It has been suggested that in the case of Sudan, the Security Council should exercise its power under Article 16 of the Rome Statute to suspend any case before the court for a year at a time. However, the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission believes such a short-term measure would be a mistake, and could do serious harm to the wider cause of international justice. Such a measure would be devastating for the credibility of the ICC, when the situation in Darfur has not changed significantly since the same body voted to allow the Court to investigate. Instead, the Security Council should keep the prospect of a deferral in reserve as an incentive for President Bashir to engage genuinely in peace negotiations with rebel groups. Countries that supported the creation of the International Criminal Court and above all the members of

the UN Security Council who gave the ICC jurisdiction in Darfur, should now let the judicial process take its course.

A future Conservative Government should support the ICC as a vital means of bringing justice to gross violations of human rights. The Commission intends to hold a hearing in 2009 to examine the record and potential for the ICC, and possible other methods of international justice, as well as the development of the Responsibility to Protect, in order to respond swiftly to cases of genocide and crimes against humanity, and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Human rights and UK Overseas Aid

The international development budget is currently growing at an unprecedented rate in order to meet the UK's pledge to spend 0.7% of Gross National Income on overseas aid by 2013.

Conservatives support this step-change in resources for tackling global poverty. But it is right, especially given the constraints on so many other areas of public expenditure, that the aid budget is scrutinised more closely than ever to ensure that it is being used correctly and achieving the aims for which it is intended.

One area which demands much more attention is the use of our aid budget to promote democracy and human rights. Too many countries receiving aid from the British taxpayer have a poor record when it comes to governance, corruption and human rights and it is far from clear that our aid is contributing to positive improvements in these areas.

The Conservative pledge to end UK aid to China is to be strongly welcomed. Aside from the fact that overseas development assistance to China is simply irrelevant in the context of its sharp fall in poverty levels, driven by export-led growth, it is also deeply objectionable given the unhelpful stance China takes on domestic and international human rights issues.

Among the twenty largest recipients of UK bilateral aid only two countries – India and Ghana – are ranked as 'Free' by Freedom House, the independent NGO which each year reports on the state of human rights and political freedoms around the world. While most are ranked as 'Partly Free', the list also includes countries like Pakistan, Sudan and Vietnam, which, between them, receive hundreds of millions of pounds of UK aid and yet are classified as 'Unfree' because of their appalling human rights records.

A quick glance at the Corruption Perceptions Index produced by Transparency International will also confirm that most of these large recipients of UK aid currently rank among the worst countries for levels of corruption.

The UK claims that it retains the right to withhold or reduce aid if a recipient government fails to meet agreed poverty reduction outcomes, violates human rights obligations or if there is a breakdown in financial management and accountability. But this sanction is hardly ever used and never for human rights abuses. A future Conservative Government should demonstrate that it is serious about delaying or withholding British aid to countries which do not demonstrate real progress on human rights.

A hungry desire within the Department for International Development (DfID) for success stories and the tendency for certain developing countries to become 'aid darlings' of the UK mean that important human rights issues may not get the priority they deserve. A future Conservative Government must ensure that there are no blind-spots within DfID when it comes to human rights.

Human rights and democracy is unquestionably one of those areas which have suffered from the separation of the UK overseas aid from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). While the creation of DfID was a positive step forward, it has created co-ordination problems on some key issues. With DfID focussing on global poverty and the FCO retaining responsibility for human rights and the promotion of democracy, there is a risk that the important linkage between governance and development does not get addressed adequately.

In 2006, for example, only a mere five per cent of our overseas aid to Kenya was spent on improving governance. Yet the destructive violence which followed the debacle of the general election in late 2007 suggests that it should have been a far

higher priority for the large DfID team in that country. In so many countries, good governance is the key to economic development. Protection of human rights and the promotion of democratic values are at the heart of good governance.

As well as creating better mechanisms for integrating the work of the Foreign Office and the Department for International Development on human rights issues, a future Conservative Government should demand a more rigorous approach to monitoring how our aid is spent and ensuring that aid is not misappropriated. With the increasing use of Direct Budget Support (where our aid goes directly to the recipient country's general exchequer) it is even more vital that the management of fiduciary risk is improved.

In January 2008 the Taxpayers' Alliance published a report which highlighted again the risk that British aid is being used to help fund 'hate education' in Gaza where children are being indoctrinated in martyrdom theology. The response by Ministers that the evidence is out of date and that the problem has been rectified demands further investigation.

When it comes to multilateral aid, there is an even bigger challenge in tracking UK aid money to ensure that it contributes to improvements in governance or, at the very least, is not used to undermine human rights and support repressive regimes.

In Zimbabwe, for example, UK Ministers have repeatedly stated that the UK does not give aid directly to any government institution. Yet in November 2008 the international Global Fund to Fight Aids, TB and Malaria, to which the UK is a major contributor, announced that it would be giving hundreds of millions of dollars directly to the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe – an institution controlled by Gideon Gono, a key ally of Robert Mugabe. Mugabe's regime routinely misappropriated overseas aid money channelled through the Bank and many fear the same could happen with the new donation from the Global Fund.

The UK is at the forefront of the development debate internationally and DfID is widely respected for its approach to global poverty. The next Conservative Government must build on its strengths but also take a stronger approach to addressing any institutional or policy weaknesses which result in human rights not being mainstream within its aid programmes in developing countries.

The United Nations

Dictators and regimes which fail to respect basic human rights are major contributors to the causes of extreme poverty and humanitarian disaster. Through conflict, violence, oppression, investment in weapons rather than in education and healthcare, corruption and economic mismanagement, the regimes of Kim Jong-il in North Korea, Omar al-Bashir in Sudan and the military junta in Burma have created extreme humanitarian crises in those countries. The link between human rights violations and humanitarian and development challenges is rarely explicitly made. It is time for that to change.

The advent of a new President of the United States offers the opportunity for a fundamental review of several bodies under the United Nations. In particular, the performance of three bodies within the UN family - the UN Democracy Fund, the Peacebuilding Commission, and the UN Human Rights Council - could be strengthened to protect human rights across the globe.

Millennium Development Goals

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) presents a formidable challenge for the international community. According to a report by the United Nations secretariat last year, the whole of sub-Saharan Africa - the poorest region of the world - will fail to meet the goals set seven years ago to halve global poverty by 2015. Only Asia is on track to hit its target for the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day.

The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission believes that the agenda of the MDG is fundamentally a human rights one. However the link between upholding human rights and achieving effective development is too rarely made at the UN. Most notably, human rights were largely omitted from the Millennium Project report by Professor Jeffrey Sachs, then Special Advisor to Kofi Annan, which formed the basis of the 2005 UN Millennium Review Summit.

We believe the UK is well-placed to promote human rights as a driver of development. A recent review of the integration of human rights in the work of the Department for International Development (DFID), carried out by Laure-Hélène Piron and Francis Watkins, provides case studies of what is being done at country level. It illustrates an approach and a set of principles that takes the ideas of human rights right down to the level of country programming and individual projects. A future Conservative Government must develop this approach further and seek to create far greater linkage between international development and international human rights. Protection of human rights should play an integral part in meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

The new Secretary General has made the MDGs a priority for the United Nations. This is a culture change that is required at the UN so that the defence of human rights is recognised as crucial to whether the MDGs can be achieved. The UN Democracy Fund, agreed at the 2005 UN Millennium Summit, should be scaled-up to ensure that good governance, good development, and the protection of rights is at the heart of development. As of October 2007, the fund had received almost US\$87 million in contributions and pledges from UN member states. The largest donors are: Australia, France, Germany, India, Qatar and the United States – but not the UK. The UK has so far contributed just US\$609,350 – one of the smallest contributions from OECD donors. Whilst donations to the Fund are almost US\$17 million more than the previous financial year, the UK's contribution has remained static. A future Conservative Government should lead the way with contributions to the Fund from existing FCO resources.

Peacebuilding and the Responsibility to Protect

It is also absolutely vital that the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is involved in crisis prevention and monitoring. This will allow for situations to be dealt with before they develop into crises. Prevention not only saves lives – it is also a far more efficient use of resources.

The cost of post-conflict reconstruction can be enormous. Not only does infrastructure have to be physically rebuilt, but social groups and civil society need to be reformed and restored. The Carnegie Commission estimated that a force of 5,000 peacekeepers would have prevented the genocide in Rwanda. In purely financial terms, this would have cost US\$1.3 billion. The cost of rebuilding has so far been estimated at US\$4.5 billion.¹⁸

We believe a future Conservative Government should challenge the Secretary General to return to the original purpose of the Peacebuilding Commission and develop the dual role of prevention as well as reconstruction. More than this, however, the remit of the Commission must be extended: Responsibility to Protect must be operationalised.

Responsibility to Protect (R2P) means more than conflict resolution; it must also mean conflict prevention. Given that the funding for the Peacebuilding Commission remains voluntary, refocusing the body will also be a more effective use of its resources. At the moment the Commission is restricted to protecting select, chronic situations. This remit should be extended.

The UK must also intensify the debate about expanding the objectives of NATO to include peacemaking and humanitarian intervention. The idea is to support UN or regional peacekeepers through NATO in order to prevent more human rights atrocities. The shadow International Development Secretary, Andrew Mitchell MP, acknowledges that "this is a controversial proposal. NATO remains a regional organisation, whose members regard activity beyond Europe as the exception. Humanitarian intervention has rarely been a NATO objective... But these objections can be overcome, and Britain can take the lead."¹⁹ Darfur again illustrates the need – with NATO so far playing a limited role in Sudan, restricting its actions to airlifts and training troops. In 2005 the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1591 prohibiting the use of military force against civilians in the airspace over Darfur, such a "no-fly" zone has never been enforced. With NATO, it should be a priority.

For R2P to be truly operationalised, it will require further resources and the support of regional organisations, such as the African Union and NATO. It will also require more financial support from member states. Our aim is not to undermine the UN by working with other international institutions but to increase effectiveness by engaging with active partners. We strongly believe that successful humanitarian intervention and conflict resolution needs to remain the primary focus of the

UN, but both of those aims will be aided by seeking to improve security.

The Human Rights Council

The UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) was created by the UN General Assembly in March 2006 with the express purpose of addressing situations of human rights violations and to make recommendations on them. Far from being a fresh start, however, the UNHRC continues to be beset by problems relating to the size and structure of its membership. Evidence from its early sessions suggest that it is already aping some of the worst characteristics of its predecessor, the United Nations Commission for Human Rights.

The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission believes that the Human Rights Council has failed to bring to the attention of the international community the worst human rights abuses. Eighteen of the nineteen states dubbed "the worst of the worst" by the monitoring group Freedom House are being ignored by the Human Rights Council. Furthermore, we share the concerns voiced by several NGOs regarding the removal of Iran from the list of countries being monitored for human rights abuses. If the Council is to do anything, it has to bring a spotlight on abuses which the world would otherwise ignore. To provide the UN with a credible voice on human rights matters, the Council must show that it has the will and the means to pursue gross violations of basic rights wherever they occur. So far, the Council has provided little evidence that it intends to do so.

One of the key disappointments of the current structure of the UNHRC was its failure to cut down on membership. Instead of the substantial cut in numbers envisaged by many human rights champions, the membership of the new Council was only reduced by five countries to 48 members. Low income countries which have some of the worst human rights records continue to enjoy a structural majority.²⁰ These include countries such as Algeria, China, Cuba, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Russia, who won seats in 2006²¹. Indeed, members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) held a majority of seats in the first year, and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) won 17 seats, more than a third.²² Countries are not subject to scrutiny of their rights before taking their seats on the Council and it remains unclear whether the Universal Periodic Review will be undertaken during a country's membership term or afterwards when it will have less effect.

A future Conservative Government should advocate the following options for strengthening the criteria for membership of the UN Human Rights Council – similar to the *acquis communautaire* for accession states to the EU:

- (i) That the UN agrees a core list of international human rights treaties to be ratified by potential member states before seeking election to the Council.
- (ii) That those Governments seeking to join the Council have their human rights records reviewed before qualifying for election. This could be undertaken by Rapporteurs appointed by the Council and the report could be submitted to an appropriate regional body, such as the African Union, to enable regional bodies to take further responsibility for human rights before the regional elections.
- (iii) That Universal Periodic Review is undertaken during the first half of the term of office that a member state sits on the Council. The President's Text for the Council established a four-year periodicity for the review despite Resolution 60/251 stating that members of the Council must be reviewed during their term of membership, which is three years. This should also require permanent Rapporteurs for each member state; and if serious abuses occur during their term of office, this should lead to a special session of the Council with a vote amongst member states as to whether that country remains on the Council.
- (iv) That the membership of the Council is reduced further. This can be achieved at the next set of regional elections in 2008 which also provide an opportunity to reduce the blocking majority exercised by regional groups.

These reforms may well make China's membership of UN Human Rights Council untenable, in which case it should be given 'observer' status.

There have been significant human rights challenges over the past year, from the unfolding situation on the Congolese-Ugandan border and the flashpoint in Kenya at the time of the presidential election to the current crisis in eastern Congo. We need strong bodies to oversee and protect human rights. The UN should be the right forum through which to conduct this dialogue, but its fledgling institutions are yet to make their mark.

China's Foreign Policy and the promotion of human rights

China is now an economic, diplomatic, political and military super-power. Its influence can be seen in every corner of the world, particularly in Africa and Asia, but also further afield in Latin America as well. Increasingly, when tackling some of the world's worst human rights and humanitarian crises, it is impossible to act without China. The most obvious cases that illustrate this fact are Sudan, Zimbabwe, Burma and North Korea. China has vetoed attempts at the UN Security Council to pass a binding resolution requiring Burma's regime to engage in tripartite dialogue with the democracy movement and ethnic nationalities. It has also proven to be the major obstacle to progress in Sudan, Zimbabwe and North Korea. However, China has also been, albeit to a limited extent, a helpful lever for gaining access to Burma for the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy Ibrahim Gambari, some limited movement on Darfur, and a certain amount of engagement on the issue of nuclear proliferation in North Korea. China cannot therefore simply be dismissed as a block to progress in human rights and humanitarian crises – it is vital that China's foreign policy is understood, in terms of the factors that drive it, and that the United Kingdom and other countries seeking to promote international human rights engage China in a meaningful way to access its potential leverage.

In 2008, the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission held a hearing in the House of Commons on this subject, with testimonial evidence and advice from three Western experts: Professor Rosemary Foot from St Antony's College, University of Oxford; John Fox, a former diplomat in the British Embassy in Beijing and now Senior Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations; and Andrew Small from the German Marshall Fund.

China's foreign policy is entirely driven by self-interest. Whereas some countries adopt a foreign policy shaped primarily by national interest but influenced by moral factors, often incorporating morality into national interest and arguing that the two are synonymous, China has little regard for pure humanitarian moral thinking. Instead, China's approach is shaped by the following influences: economic interests and development; a concern for the principle of national sovereignty; a desire to protect and advance China's sphere of influence and the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party; and promoting 'stability', as determined by the Chinese government. It is therefore essential that a future Conservative Government in the United Kingdom find ways to appeal to the Chinese government on behalf of the crises in countries such as Burma, Zimbabwe, Sudan and North Korea in language that fits China's foreign policy criteria. In other words, the case must be made to China that the regimes in these countries are the cause of instability, and that they do not in the long-term advance China's interests, but rather create economic crisis and reputational damage which harm China's long-term objectives.

To develop that theme, China must be reassured that while Burma's military regime may currently be pro-Chinese, that does not mean that a future democratic government in Burma will be anti-China. Furthermore, the case must be made to China that the military regime's irrational conduct, the perpetration of crimes against humanity, its gross and deliberate negligence during Cyclone Nargis, its deliberate and brutal suppression of the Saffron Revolution led by Buddhist monks in September 2007, and the resulting economic and political sanctions placed on Burma by the United States and the European Union all damage China's interests. China wants a pro-Chinese government in Burma, but it also wants an effective government – and the current regime is not providing good governance by any definition.

China demonstrated a clear shift in its position on Sudan when a threat to its reputation, in the lead-up to the 2008 Olympic Games, arose at the same time as threats to its economic interests in southern Sudan. China moved from intransigent opposition to any form of UN Security Council action, to a willingness to exert some pressure on Sudan, including dispatching its own special envoys to Sudan, pressuring Sudan to accept an African Union peace-keeping force, and abstaining from vetoing the referral of Sudan to the International Criminal Court.

In Zimbabwe and other parts of Africa, China's interests are primarily economic. China became a major supplier of arms

to Robert Mugabe's regime, until dockworkers in South Africa stood up and opposed the arms shipments. Again, China feared reputational risk and suspended its arms sales to Zimbabwe.

However, despite some small signs of movement, China has not demonstrated in any way an acceptance of the principles of human rights and humanitarian values in foreign policy. It has responded to pressure because of concern for its reputation, and its economic and political interests. Even then, such movement has been limited, and only as a result of severe pressure.

In response to this, then, British foreign policy must find new ways of influencing China to go further, without demonising China. John Fox suggested to the Commission in the hearing that: "We need to behave a little more like China in dealing with China. We need to get much better at defending our interests with China, not presume that the power of our systems is going to do the job for us. This means being prepared to fight hard to press China to move. It also means responding to China as it behaves, not treating it as a special emerging economy or worrying overtly about political backlashes from China. We need to systematically use the mechanisms and tools of the multilateral organisations to make China behave by the rules." This, John Fox added, could mean imposing sanctions on Chinese companies that ignore corporate social responsibility requirements, for example, or being more critical when China vetoes measures within the UN designed to promote human rights or humanitarian responses to major crises. Much of this should be done through the EU-China dialogue.

Emphasis should be placed on China's responsibility on the world stage. As Professor Foot argued, British foreign policy should seek to "take some advantage of China's desire to be recognised as a responsible great power". China's rhetoric continues to promote harmony, but its policies have the opposite effect in many cases. China should be reminded of this, and encouraged to play a constructive role in conflict resolution. Capacity building within China, including training in the rule of law, human rights protection and international humanitarian law should be expanded, with a view to improving China's domestic human rights record as well as its foreign policy approaches. Ultimately, only when China's treatment of its own people changes will its attitude towards victims of human rights violations in other countries change. Both have seen some improvements, but there is a long way to go.

About the Commission

The Conservative Party Human Rights Commission was established by the Shadow Foreign Secretary in 2005, with a mandate to highlight international human rights concerns, and to inform, advise and develop the party's foreign policy by making human rights a priority. Freedom and human rights should be at the heart of foreign policy.

The Commission's day-to-day work is led by the Chairman and a Steering Group. The full members of the Commission include:

- **Stephen Crabb MP** – Chairman; Member of Parliament for Preseli Pembrokeshire and a member of the House of Commons International Development Committee.
- **Benedict Rogers** – Deputy Chairman; former Parliamentary Candidate for the City of Durham and a human rights activist and writer.
- **Jenny Parsons** – Treasurer; Chief of Staff to the Shadow Secretary of State for Health.
- **Michael Gove MP** – Member of Parliament for Surrey Heath
- **John Bercow MP** – Member of Parliament for Buckingham
- **Gary Streeter MP** – Member of Parliament for South West Devon
- **Mark Pritchard MP** – Member of Parliament for The Wrekin
- **Edward McMillan-Scott MEP** – Member of the European Parliament for Yorkshire and the Humber and Vice-President of the European Parliament
- **Baroness Verma** – Member of the House of Lords
- **Jo Barker** - Jo Barker is a businesswoman and conservative campaigner who wants to see human trafficking stopped
- **Nicola Blackwood** – Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Oxford West and Abingdon
- **Richard Blakeway** – Director of Housing for the Mayor of London
- **Samuel Burke** – a trainee barrister and Parliamentary Researcher for a member of the House of Lords
- **Ross Burley** – Senior Researcher to David Lidington MP, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs with responsibility for human rights
- **Samuel Coates** – speechwriter to the Leader of the Conservative Party
- **Warren Davies** – barrister
- **James Meller** – Conservative Party adviser
- **Martin Smith** – a Conservative activist in Bermondsey and Southwark North who specializes in Belarus and Central Asia, and has been active with centre-right organizations in Belarus
- **Sarah Son** – specialises in North Korea, and previously served as National Co-ordinator of the Conservative Christian Fellowship
- **Rado Tylecote** – a specialist in China, serves South-East Asia Director of the Henry Jackson Society and previously worked at Policy Exchange and Wave Network

- 1 War Child submission to the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission hearing.
- 2 Save the Children submission to the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission hearing.
- 3 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers submission to the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission.
- 4 Population Reports: *Ending Violence Against Women* (1999).
- 5 *Alliance Darc* Concept (2006), p. 1:
http://www.alliancedarc.org/downloads/alliancedarc_concept_2006_11.pdf
- 6 For a more detailed analysis see Annalise Moser: *Women Building Peace and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict-Affected Contexts: A Review of Community-Based Approaches* (UNIFEM Research Paper: 2007), pp. 1-2.
- 7 See Appendix for biographical details.
- 8 Transcripts of the hearing can be found on the Commission website: www.conservativehumanrights.com
- 9 Tambo, Oliver, former president of the ANC, South Africa quoted in speech by Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, then South African Health Minister, to the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing, 6 Sept 1995: <http://www.un.org/esa/gopher-data/conf/fwcw/conf/gov/950910174126.txt>
- 10 Freedom House – see
<http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/fop08/OverviewEssay2008.pdf>
- 11 International Federation of Journalists - <http://ifj.org/>
- 12 World Association of Newspapers - <http://www.wan-press.org/rubrique873.html>
- 13 International Federation of Journalists - <http://ifj.org/>
- 14 Index on Censorship - <http://www.indexoncensorship.org/?p=536>
- 15 International Federation of Journalists – <http://ifj.org/>
- 16 Asma Jahangir, Special Rapporteur on the freedom of religion or belief, interview with the UN News Centre, 23 October 2008
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- 18 <http://organharvestinvestigation.net/>
- 19 Christian Solidarity Worldwide
- 20 Moreno-Ocampo, Luis, in press release: ICC Prosecutor presents case against Sudanese President, Hassan Ahmad AL BASHIR, for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur. The Hague, 14 July 2008
- 21 Ibid.
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- 24 Andrew Mitchell MP, “UN Peacekeeping and the Failure to Protect: A Contribution to the Debate on UN reform”, Conservative International Development Publications, 2007.
- 25 Cited in The UN Human Rights Council: First Impressions, House of Commons Library, 20 July 2006.
- 26 Brett Schaefer, *The United Nations Human Rights Council: A Disastrous First Year and Discouraging Signs for Reform*, Heritage Lectures, September 5, 2007, No.1042.
- 27 *ibid.*

