



# GOVERNANCE & NEW FORMS OF PRESENCE

## CHAIRS ASSEMBLY 2012

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS ONLY

AI Index: ORG 30/005/2012

To: Sections and Structures  
From: IEC Governance Committee  
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### **SUMMARY**

This background paper for the consultation at the Chairs Assembly June 2012 concerns governance and new forms of Amnesty International presence, following Decision 8 of the 2011 ICM.

### **DISTRIBUTION**

This is an internal document which is being sent to all Sections and Structures

### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

Please ensure this document is brought to the attention of the Chair and Director of your Section or Structure.

## Governance and New Forms of Presence

Traditionally AI has developed around the world through the creation of sections or structures in response to local demand. Various developments have led us to consider whether this is the only way for AI to develop and to accept that, to become a truly global organisation, we need to be more flexible. We have adopted a growth strategy for AI<sup>1</sup> which involves us growing around the world, and particularly in the global south. Work on the growth strategy has highlighted that ‘what is appropriate and effective in one place in terms of structure and activity may not be so- or maybe less so- in another’. This realisation has led to increasing our consideration of different types of entities that may be appropriate and possible to grow Amnesty International and to maximise our impact for human rights. This work continues in accordance with the International Executive Committee (IEC) resolution adopted at the 2011 International Council Meeting (ICM) instructing the IEC to review the forms of national entity used to establish AI presences in new countries and to prepare guidelines and criteria for these new entities.<sup>2</sup>

The IEC has tasked the Governance Committee with undertaking the review and doing the work to develop guidelines and criteria. The purpose of this paper is to provide you with some background information on the issue of new forms of presence, to explain the current status of the work, and to start your thinking about the issues involved in advance of the Chairs Assembly (CA). At the CA, we want to get your initial input on some of the issues that the Governance Committee is considering. After the CA, a further consultation will take place in the second half of 2012. It is anticipated that this work will result in resolutions for the 2013 ICM.

### Background

There has already been a variety of work done in this area within AI. New forms of presence have been developed and tested, sometimes through necessity and sometimes to take advantage of exciting new possibilities for working with and reaching new places and people. During the Integrated Strategic Plan (ISP) for 2004–2010 a number of new forms of presence were tested.<sup>3</sup> These forms are continuing to operate under the current ISP. In summary, the forms of presence and the reason for the adoption are set out below.

### New Forms of Presence in OP2

Significant work has already been done on developing and analysing new forms of presence in AI. In the interests of developing a common understanding about the different forms, the tables following provide you with information about the different types of entities that are being developed and implemented in OP2.

<b>Partnerships for Presence<sup>4</sup></b>	
<b>Brief description of the form of presence</b>	Amnesty International creates a formal partnership with a local, regional or global organisation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximise capacity to have human rights impact in countries where AI has no entity through increased mobilisation and visibility.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> (ORG 30/003/2010)

<sup>2</sup> See the ICM decision 8 at the end of this paper

<sup>4</sup> For an overview of partnership projects see ACT 10/003/2011 Partnership for change: Introduction to strategic partnerships projects



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a constituency or members, supporters and activists in the country supported by a partner organisation</li> </ul>
<b>How does this contribute to Growth for Human Rights impact.</b>	<p>AI can create human rights change under common strategic priorities of both AI and the local partners, in a way that plays to the strengths of each party.</p> <p>By investing in pre-existing organisations and local civil society, rather than creating new structures, sustainability of the work is ensured and resources are used more effectively.</p> <p>By mobilising international members (see below) in the country alongside the partners local pressure is created for change (often by rights holders themselves) with the power of AI's global identity.</p>
<b>Structure of the form of presence.</b>	<p>Formal relationships developed in country and managed at a distance by the IS. There is a strong link between AI and the local organisation, but the organisation does not seek to become AI.</p> <p>International membership continues to be the norm in country for people wanting to formally join AI.</p> <p>Examples: in OP2 we have formal partnership agreements with organisations in Cambodia, Haiti, Indonesia, Romania and Timor Leste and are planning to develop these in Qatar, Nigeria, Central Asia and the DRC.</p>

<b>Affiliation</b>	
<b>Brief description of the form of presence</b>	<p>Affiliation involves the development of a formal relationship with an existing organisation in a country where AI does not have a presence. This relationship encompasses a level of alignment in principles, activities and goals between AI and the existing organisation, as well as mutual influence in governance. This would ultimately lead to the existing organisation becoming AI's 'entity' in a country.</p> <p>There will be a formal process towards affiliation that an organisation would go through in order for it to become an affiliated organisation. It is anticipated that there would be an assessment at various stages against a set of defined criteria and then access to incremental rights within AI.</p>
<b>How does this contribute to Growth for Human Rights impact?</b>	<p>Where AI has an identified need to grow a long term presence for human rights impact in a country, affiliation offers a possible solution for local mobilization, growth in membership, advocacy, media work and other such functions that a Section would ordinarily fulfill.</p> <p>By taking this approach it is possible to develop a presence without the usual vast investment required to open an office etc. It also reduces the risk that an entity will fail as the organization has been operating effectively for a number of years and therefore the risk is</p>



	minimized.
<b>Structure of the form of presence.</b>	<p>An affiliation process is instigated, managed and assessed by the International Secretariat (IS) Members in these countries will continue to be classed as ‘International Members’ but will be engaged directly by the existing organisation as it works towards affiliation. The intention is that once ‘affiliated’ an organisation will be autonomously operating as an AI entity within agreed parameters. Once the organisation becomes a formal affiliate, international members of AI within the country will transfer to become members of the national affiliate. It is anticipated that most of these organisations will already have their own boards in place.</p> <p>Examples: This process is being piloted with Mozaika in Latvia</p>

<b>Supported Global constituency (International Membership)</b>	
<b>Brief description of the form of presence</b>	<p>Amnesty International support, grows and engages group/s of members, supporters, activists and volunteers in countries where AI does not have a physical presence in order to create human rights change on the ground.</p>
<b>How does this contribute to Growth for Human Rights impact?</b>	<p>AI has over 45,000 international members in countries where AI has no physical presence and many more who take action in support of our campaigns but who have not joined as members. At the current time the international membership is serviced and supported mostly through online means and primarily as a homogenous group. However, there is potential for servicing, building and mobilising particular segments of the global constituency to support human rights change in a more targeted way.</p> <p>The tactical engagement, mobilisation and participation of these global constituencies in ways which do not require AI to have a physical presence in a country enables AI to increase our legitimacy, demonstrate our diversity and creates the possibility of tactical or mass mobilisation creating influence and impact.</p>
<b>Structure of the form of presence.</b>	<p>Members in these countries are classed as ‘International Members’ although not all people connected with AI in this way will be formal members.</p> <p>The change in approach would involve developing a mechanism where the international membership is strategically engaged with either by the IS or by a section on its behalf within agreed parameters based on AI’s shifting priorities to maximise impact. We could also focus on recruiting international members in targeted countries.</p> <p>Examples: in OP2 it is planned to target people in Kenya, Nigeria, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, Romania, and Egypt to develop constituencies of international members.</p>



<b>Deferred Governance Entity</b>	
<b>Brief description of the form of presence</b>	Amnesty International develop a new national entity (or adapt an existing one) in a country where there is a need to grow for human rights impact on a more permanent basis. The national entity is developed initially as an IS managed entity until such time as it is deemed sufficiently sustainable after which it becomes an autonomous AI national entity. <sup>5</sup>
<b>How does this contribute to growth for Human Rights impact?</b>	By deferring the challenges that are presented to a new organisation from managing a membership and governance structure, Amnesty is able to establish a strong foundation upon which a national entity can continue to thrive once these elements are introduced. This foundation involves developing skills in achieving human rights change in alignment with AI's priorities with integrated planning with the IS and movement, establishing strong organisational policies, human resource practices and financial systems, and intensive coaching and training for new Directors.
<b>Structure of the form of presence</b>	The entities are managed by the IS for the period of deferred governance. The plan is that they will become self-governing, including through their own board.  Examples: Kenya, India and Brazil

<b>Virtual Section</b>	
<b>Brief description of the form of presence</b>	Amnesty International develop an Online Section, which is managed virtually. Secure platforms are in place through which Section members can interact, take action, participate in discussions, volunteer and participate in e-learning.
<b>How does this contribute to growth for Human Rights impact?</b>	In countries where it is not possible for AI to have a presence (eg due to risk to people on the ground), it is possible to engage, grow and mobilise a membership in AI's work via online means. This enables the section to have a national identity and to participate in AI's governance, despite the challenges on the ground.
<b>Structure of the form of presence</b>	The entities are managed by the IS. Members are classed as Section Members. Example: Colombia

*Please note: In relation to the variety of new forms of presence discussed above, the issue of hubs has also been raised. The hubs are being developed as a separate process as part of modifying the IS and its organization. This means that the hubs are not actually new forms of presence and are not part of this process. The hubs will instead be part of the IS, and will continue to be governed by the IEC as the legal board of the IS as they will be IS offices. There is no intention that they*

<sup>5</sup> ORG 30 003 2010 Review of Amnesty International Growth Strategy 2004 – 2010 (pg. 30)



*become self-governing offices separate to the IS. In addition, there are currently various IS offices. Most of these have been in place for some time and they are not part of the discussion on new forms of presence. Some of them may become hubs through moving closer to the ground. IS offices which exist at present include Kampala (Africa Regional Office), New York Office, Beirut Office, Hong Kong Office, and Russia Resource Centre.*

### **The main issues in a nutshell**

While the development of the new forms has now entered into a more substantial phase, the IEC is fully aware that there are several important questions that have to be addressed before full implementation of the new forms. From the governance perspective, there are two important areas of focus. The first is how the new forms of presence will be represented at, accountable to and participate in AI's international governance. The second area is to discuss and agree the guidelines and criteria for the new entities, including specifically which form of the entities detailed above should be developed where, and when and how and when these entities could be assessed as being able to self-govern (if appropriate). While these two large areas are interlinked (for instance, it may be that entities should only participate in AI's governance once they have reached certain milestones or fulfilled particular criteria), these two questions can be considered separately. For the purpose of the discussion at the CA, the focus is on the first question. The second question will be the subject of further consultation and development in the second half of 2012.

With regard to *participation*, the main path to participation in AI governance for people in a country or region where there is no formal Amnesty presence is currently international membership.<sup>6</sup> In theory this means that in any country where there is a new form of AI presence, the only route through which members in those countries would participate in Amnesty International's governance would be through the international membership, unless the form of presence becomes recognised as a section (e.g. Colombia online section). The international membership is able to appoint representatives to attend the ICM and the CA in a similar way to sections and structures.

This raises questions about whether the current international membership system should be considered to be the best way for the 'global governance route' to be established; e.g., should the Growth Strategy succeed especially in India and Brazil, the number of international members in these countries would be greater than in any other new region. The dominance of the international membership by members in these two countries may mean that the existing routes to governance for international members may not be sufficient means through which to have the diverse voices of the international membership represented in AI's decision making. If our plans succeed, we will have a large number of new activists in Kenya, India and Brazil, among other places. These activists will regard themselves as being part of AI, yet under the current structures they will not have access to our democratic decision making processes, except through being international members. It is important to consider whether this is acceptable or appropriate within an organisation such as AI. Accordingly, it is necessary to consider what processes we should put in place to include people who come to AI through these new forms of presence and how we want to include them in our decision making, such as at the ICM and the Chairs Assembly.

Also on the Governance Committee's task list is the issue of deferred self-governance in some new forms of presence. There has been some exploration of the transition towards full governance in new

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<sup>6</sup> From the Statute of Amnesty International (POL 20/001/2011): *Individuals residing in countries, states, territories, or regions where there is no section or structure and who are not members of an affiliated group, may, on payment to the International Secretariat of an annual subscription fee determined by the International Executive Committee, become international members of Amnesty International.*



entities, but it seems likely at this stage that there will be no 'one size fits all' approach to models of governance. For OP2 there are a number of deferred governance entities which will be operational. In India and Brazil, governance transition timelines are yet to be established. Kenya however is a little more advanced. Again, standards have to be laid out that an entity would need to meet in order to enable it to transition to full governance. This is also an area where statute changes will be required in order to enable AI to operate in this way. For the purpose of the discussion at the CA, the focus is on the engagement of deferred self-governance entities in AI's international governance rather than on these questions. As noted above, these issues will be part of the consultation in the second half of 2012.

Again, it is important to understand that when discussing the new forms of presence and governance, we are in fact looking at two different dimensions of governance: the governance of the entity itself, and the link to the global governance decision-making of the movement. For the consultation at the CA, the Governance Committee will be focusing on the latter.

### **The questions for the session at Chair Assembly**

At the Chairs Assembly in June, the Governance Committee will hold a session with background information and perspectives on the governance issues of the new forms of presence. At the end of the session, table discussion will be held where the question below will be debated. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and will use your feedback to inform the development of our thinking in the area of new forms of presence. In advance of the session at the CA we ask you to consider the following question:

- What considerations are relevant for you in deciding how different types of new AI entities should be engaged in our international governance?



## **ICM 2011 Decision 8**

### **New Forms of Amnesty International Presence**

#### **The International Council**

**DECIDES** that Amnesty International should review the forms of national entity that it uses to establish presences in new countries, including in the BRICS countries, taking into account:

- the long-term desirability of Amnesty International having strong democratically led, self-governing entities with vibrant activist memberships and high levels of activism in as many countries as possible;
- the diverse realities of country contexts and the need to start Amnesty International presence in some countries with operations that are initially managed under delegated authority from the International Executive Committee (IEC);
- the options that may exist in some countries to invite partner organizations to become affiliated members of Amnesty International;
- the importance of ensuring that international members in such countries are appropriately represented and involved in Amnesty International's internal democracy.

**DECIDES** that the same review should also cover the development of trans-national or sub-national AI entities.

**INSTRUCTS** the IEC to

- prepare guidelines and criteria for these new entities clarifying their status, mission and competence;
- prepare any amendments necessary to bring the Statute in line with these developments;
- set up a full consultation process for these matters including updates and discussions at the 2012 and 2013 Chairs Assemblies and resolutions for the 2013 ICM.

