



MID-WAY THROUGH THE ISP: MAPPING THE FOUR KEY AREAS OF IEC STRATEGY

CHAIRS ASSEMBLY 2012

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS ONLY

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To: Sections and Structures
From: International Executive Committee
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SUMMARY

As we prepare for the 2012 Chairs Assembly in Barcelona on June 22 to 24, the IEC sets out the overall strategic framework it is driving for Amnesty International.

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.

Introduction

As we prepare for the 2012 Chairs Assembly in Barcelona on June 22 to 24, the IEC would like to set out the overall strategic framework we are driving for Amnesty International. It is very important when we come together in these global governance meetings to have clarity and shared thinking on the big picture we are working towards.

As an IEC we seek to be strategic, direction setting, and creative. As a movement we have a vision and the 2009 ICM decided upon an Integrated Strategic Plan to move us all forward. We have solid guidance and decisions from the movement that must be implemented. And we are very conscious of the rebuilding work that is required, and the new approaches needed, to strengthen governance.

With these pointers in mind, this short paper seeks to do two things:

- We aim to present the various strands of reform and innovation that we are pushing in a clear and integrated framework, setting out the current governance agenda in one narrative.
- We want to point to the future, to frame the key strategic issues that will focus thinking at the Chairs Assembly and help the IEC to provide the affirmative leadership needed now.

The recent conviction of Charles Taylor at the Special Court for Sierra Leone in The Hague, and the news that Connecticut became the 17th state in the US to abolish the death penalty, show how long term human rights work leads to big wins. Now an international Arms Trade Treaty is finally within reach as we continue our campaigning in the run up to July 2012. Yet while we celebrate these steps we know that so much more is needed.

Human rights defenders being arrested in Bahrain, ongoing killings in Syria, discriminatory laws in Romania, talk of secret courts in the UK, and so much more. These are the issues that brought us to Amnesty, the outrage that pushes us to be more effective, more ambitious and speedier. With that in mind, let us continue to work together in Barcelona to ensure we are taking solid steps towards our goals.

The 2011 ICM: clear directions for change

At the ICM in August 2011 we discussed a range of key issues which are critical to enhancing our impact as an organization:

- We heard how the Critical Pathways and Global Priority Statement 2 were used to identify clear human rights outcomes that we will achieve by 2016.
- We supported the five goals in the Growth Strategy to ensure that AI grows its activism, membership and financial resources, and committed ourselves to ambitious targets.
- We heard with excitement about plans for the BRICS countries, in particular for Brazil and India.
- We agreed a new assessment system and talked about the Resource Allocation Mechanism, then approved by the IEC in September, to ensure effective allocation of AI's resources in alignment with our priorities.
- We considered the reorganization of the International Secretariat to ensure that we are delivering human rights impact through *integrated teams* located close to the rights holders we work with.
- We looked at creating new forms of presence in countries where AI does not yet have sections or structures.
- We discussed how empowerment and active participation of rights holders is fundamental both as a way of working and as a human rights objective for Amnesty.
- We committed to developing and implementing agreed governance and operational standards to strengthen the overall functioning of One Amnesty.



- And we said we must review the way the IEC operates and embark upon governance reforms to strengthen the leadership and effectiveness of our movement.

These were not unexpected, and did not arise in isolation with respect to the programme of work Amnesty endorsed two years before. You can easily associate each of these bullet points with the famous ‘boxes’ of the Integrated Strategic Plan the movement agreed in 2009.

This is an ambitious and complex agenda, which you entrusted to the IEC in August 2011. Therefore, it is important to consider that complexity. What we are committed to achieving here is **integration for impact**. We are bringing together our human rights work, the necessity to grow, the alignment of resources (money and people), and the stronger governance and leadership needed to make all of this happen. This transformation programme, endorsed by the ICM, has implications for all parts of the organization, and we all have responsibility to take it forward if we are to succeed.

Where are we now?

Eight months on from the ICM and almost half-way into our ISP journey we are pushing this agenda hard.

On the **leadership** side there is a strong working relationship between the IEC and SG. We are now coming out of a period of transition for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Salil has appointed all but one of his senior directors, creating new portfolios and appointing a number of new people. Key leadership appointments have been secured also, under the leadership of the Secretary General, for Brazil and India, two countries where in these last eight months we restarted operations successfully after several years. The IEC and in particular the IEC officers worked closely with Salil in discussing the new SLT structure. Doing so, we listened also to the comments made by sections and structures reacting to the main document (the “Blueprint”) circulated at the ICM. The SLT is a strong and united group working closely with the IEC and the Global Management Team (GMT) to implement our change agenda.

The IEC has overseen the implementation of ICM 2011 Decision 1¹ and implemented a range of leadership development initiatives linked to this. These range from organizing a full skills audit and related development programme for IEC members, to creating a stronger Board Development Committee (BDC). It includes the appointment of a co-opted member, agreement on a range of developmental workshops and a mentoring programme for the IEC Chair. Furthermore, within the IS we will now have a new Governance Programme to support cutting edge governance systems across the movement. While we have done a great deal of work arising from the Dame Anne Owers and Board Review Group reports, we know we have a long way to go, and we are totally committed to further enhancing the IEC and our global governance machinery.

With sections and structures, the training programme with directors organized at the Directors Forum in February and the regular induction training for new directors is matched with the increasing range of training opportunities for chairs. For example, in Barcelona we will have a wide range of training programmes for the elected leaders and regional workshops have been held already in Latin America and Africa and a new one will be held in Barcelona for Asian chairs just after the Chairs Assembly. We are placing an increasing emphasis on the leadership development programmes as part of the work programme being agreed with key sections, for example the Big 5.

The **Global Transition Programme** is essential. When the Secretary General joined our organization he embraced our ISP and he was challenged by the IEC on how to best equip Amnesty to implement it. The new

¹ Implementation of ICM 2011 Decision 1 and IEC comments to the BRG report are discussed in a separate document, please refer to it for more details.



Global Model expresses this. It is all about increasing our human rights impact and growing Amnesty in the global south. The IEC is totally committed to this direction. The feedback collected from sections and structures at the ICM and during the September 2011 consultation reiterated our shared ownership of this agenda. The ICM also made a strong request for a solid project management approach, with clear plans and costings. The SG created the Transition Management Team (TMT) at the IS with experienced IS managers seconded to work with consultants from Accenture. They developed a plan to design and implement in a phased way the new operating model that will ensure the level of integrated delivery required closer to the ground.

This initiative to operationalize the strategic commitment we have set out in the ISP, at the ICM, and as an IEC, is a major change programme. It involves all parts of the organization and will change the way we work across the board. We are convinced as an IEC of the absolute need to increase our impact, and know that we should be achieving more for human rights with the resources that we have. And that we can attract far greater levels of activist support and funding to do our vital work if we can change in ways that will allow us to grow in the global south.

We are proud of the way the IS staff, and the members and staff in sections and structures have embraced this transformation agenda which AI can no longer postpone. One of the great things about this process is our people, and the way in which so many of you are really seeking to work in a different way together.

There are challenges. We know that the necessary operational reforms at the IS are proving complex and slow. They include – necessarily and rightly as any of you can guess – negotiations with the union. We have seen also how sometimes leaders across the movement have had different views or concerns of where and how we change. The SG is entirely aware of all of this, as are the IEC members. We truly value the open way in which you raise these questions with us. As you have seen in the recent round of meetings at AGM or board meetings we attended, we openly engage with you on this matter as well. But let's keep in mind this is very complex. It is hard. We are trying to fix some things that we know have not worked well for years, decades in fact.

We know that there are elements of this process that must improve, for example, communications and the involvement of sections/structures. As the IEC we are working increasingly closely with Salil and his team to push and ensure these steps are finally happening. We deeply understand the high level of expectation and anxiety about this change process, and how insufficient communication may be frustrating. On the other hand we invite you to consider that while we are still in a design phase, the number of updates are naturally limited. We are very confident this will change in the second half of the year.

The IEC is keeping an overarching oversight approach and will check carefully that these reforms do deliver the increased impact when the implementation begins. Being at the end of the detailed design phase just now, we are preparing for this role, discussing and developing together with the SG meaningful indicators of impact.

Besides our obvious fiduciary responsibilities as a board, the IEC maintains a particular emphasis, working with the SG, on three areas:

- How we manage our human resources: the co-option the IEC decided in December has been instrumental to improving the skills of the IEC in this key area to better support the SG;
- How sections are/will be involved in discussions while the new Global Model is developed, tested and deployed;
- How, as stated above, the whole process is communicated.



In summary we are committed to working with all of you to ensure that we can deliver on these necessary reforms together as One Amnesty.

The **One Financial Amnesty** and the **Resource Allocation Mechanism** initiatives are the primary tools that will underpin this change agenda. Our financial resources fuel our human rights work. We all accept that we have to change how we allocate our funds to do our human rights work differently, with greater recognition of the dependency on growth for human rights impact, increased integration, and moving closer to the ground.

Since the 2011 ICM the implementation of the new assessment system has progressed. We are hearing first hand about the concerns and the challenges that several sections are facing with both the economic environment and the imperative to allocate a bigger share of their income to the international budget. The International Secretariat and, among us, the International Treasurer are working with sections to ensure these issues are being addressed in a proactive way.

The new Resource Allocation Mechanism will form the framework for the budget process for 2013. So decisions made on resources for next year will be aligned with our Global Priorities Statement, the Critical Pathways, and the Country Priorities. The level of resources that will flow to the priorities, for example to the India and Brazil national offices, our MENA human rights programme, growth in Africa, etc. will be increasing as agreed. While on the other hand investment in other areas will decrease or remain flat.

Regarding financial support for sections and structures this means that we are transitioning from the IMT system. As investment in section and structure capacity has increased and our direction to empower sections more is realized, the need to have a grant support team in London providing detailed processes for planning, reporting and budgeting is reduced. Sections and structures will soon receive proposals from the IS on how the Resource Allocation Mechanism (RAM) will work, for your consideration. Sections and structures will be submitting plans and budgets in a manner similar to IS programmes, and will be expected to report in the same way, linked to delivery of our operational plan and priorities. Of course the Movement Building Directorate will continue to provide support to sections with these processes, and sections will also have support from Finance, a new Strategy and Planning Programme, and other IS programmes. All this will enable us to allocate resources to our key sections and structures in the global south in a way that is integrated with our operational plan, aligned with our regional strategies, and contributing to increased impact.

The Resource Allocation Mechanism is all about managing financial resources. It also includes investments in self-sufficient sections requiring targeted support. As part of this strand of work, as the IEC we are actively working together with the SG for the Big 5 project and we are developing further related guidelines (for investments and reserves) to be best equipped to make informed and consistent decisions.

The IEC is moving forward on the development of **Core Standards** for governance, management and operations, and ICM Decision 7. This initiative is vital in our view. The transformation programme we have been outlining above will only work if we can effectively strengthen the way we work together and hold each other to account. We are committed to a shared vision, mission and values. We have a single ISP and Global Priorities Statement. We are moving towards stronger global governance and leadership. We are transforming global operations to deliver in a more integrated way. And we are aligning our global resources better with the priorities for investment. For all of this to work we recognize the need for stronger, mutually binding standards, backed by strong compliance mechanisms.

The Governance Committee has started work on this process and will be consulting with sections and structures in the near future. It is clear that the number of core standards and globally binding obligations



that all parts of the movement must adhere to should be relatively low and manageable. In areas like trademark, legal compliance, audit, and brand we will want to agree that all sections should adhere to the same standards and would want to have risk management, compliance and sanction systems in place. Secondly, we are hearing from many of you that sections and structures need more detailed guidelines and toolkits on best practice, and the organizational norms that we should all be seeking to replicate. So in the area of global people management standards, for example, which will be discussed with chairs in Barcelona, we will have a list of best practice guidelines, but for the very most part these probably should not and could not be binding on sections.

Conclusion

To close, taken together these four areas of **leadership, global transition programme, managing financial resources** and **core standards** are the tracks on which we as the IEC are moving forward with our vision and strategy for the movement. If we deliver on them we will achieve our agreed growth and human rights agenda and, ultimately, our ISP.

