

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



Chairs Assembly and Directors Forum 2014

Strategic goals

Amnesty International members and staff only

AI Index: ORG 41/012/2014

To: Section and structure chairs
Section and structure directors
International Board

From: Secretary General

Date: 22 May 2014

Amnesty International
International Secretariat
Peter Benenson House
1 Easton Street London WC1X 0DW

SUMMARY

This document summarises work on the development of Amnesty International's next Strategic Goals (2016-19) and proposes issues for discussion and debate during the Chairs Assembly and Directors Forum 2014, including (a) whether the Strategic Goals should be all-encompassing and (b) the criteria to be used when making decisions about what to prioritise.

DISTRIBUTION

This is an internal document, distributed to section and structure chairs and directors and the International Board.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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

Strategic Goals

Introduction

Amnesty International's next overarching strategy will be 'Strategic Goals' covering the four years from 2016 to 2019. The Strategic Goals will replace what has been known as the Integrated Strategic Plan (ISP) with the key differences being a stronger focus on outcomes (instead of mapping out broad thematic areas), sharper prioritisation (replacing the need for multiple mid-level strategies), a tighter link to resource allocation, and a four year lifespan (ISPs have had a six year life span). The change in language also signifies a commitment to developing a movement-wide strategy that is more focused, clear, flexible, responsive and oriented towards impact¹. The Strategic Goals will set out our priorities and what we want to achieve towards delivery of our vision and mission over the coming four year period and will guide decisions about what to work on, ways of working and how to use our resources.

Building together - a movement-wide 'conversation'

By making development of the Strategic Goals a shared enterprise we can harness expertise and perspectives from across the movement, jointly test and refine ideas, make the right judgment calls about what Amnesty International's next priorities should be, forge ownership and ensure the Strategic Goals become a regular point of reference for all in the movement.

In order to maximise the time for boards, members, activists and staff in shaping the Strategic Goals, the movement-wide conversation was launched as soon as the basic parameters were agreed by the International Board at the beginning of February 2014. This allows 1.5 years for discussions in the lead up to adoption of the final Strategic Goals at the ICM in August 2015, with stakeholders able to choose their level and kind of involvement in each phase.

Phase 1	Analysis about our context and priorities and early ideas	Feb – May 2014
	CA/DF and shared drafting through working groups	June – July 2014
Phase 2	Consultation focused on first draft	Aug – Oct 2014
	Redrafting based on inputs; International Board agreement of draft ICM resolution	Nov – Dec 2014
Phase 3	Consultation on second draft (draft ICM resolution)	Jan – May 2015
	Re-drafting based on inputs and issuing of ICM papers	June 2015
	International Council discussion and approval	August 2015

In keeping with our commitment to crafting the Strategic Goals 'from the bottom up' and learning from the evaluation of developing the current ISP², the first (almost pre-consultation) phase has provided flexibility for entities to determine how to conduct discussions and provide input prompted by a set of 'starter' questions. A mix of participatory methods are being used including: ideas boards, workshops and presentations at AGMs; discussions at International Board and section board meetings; sub-regional, regional and inter-regional meetings involving staff (and often board members) from national entities and the IS; national-level consultation sessions with activists; a 17 country international survey on human rights with questions geared towards our Strategic Goals; external speaker events on the human rights landscape; inputs from the Global Management Team and first Regional Advisory Group; interlinked thematic discussions such as the consultation on human rights in the digital age; analysis of

¹ See Decision 24 ("Strategic Goals") of the International Council in 2013: ORG 53/006/2013

² Dörte Pommerening and Alasdair Collins, "Amnesty International – Integrated Strategic Plan Process Evaluation", 9 September 2010 available (in English, French and Spanish) at <https://intranet.amnesty.org/wiki/display/SPI/3.2+Evaluations+and+Impact+Studies>

'meta' learning from monitoring and evaluation of work under the current ISP; IS Senior Leadership Team away day workshops; and a range of IS and national entity team and all staff meetings.

Key elements of the first phase of the conversation are at Appendix 1 and a visual representation of inputs flowing into the development of the Strategic Goals is at Appendix 2. Further information – including links to tools, key reading and forecasting analysis – can be found at: <https://intranet.amnesty.org/wiki/display/StrategicGoals/Strategic+goals>.

The national, sub-regional, regional, inter-regional and global perspectives generated via these activities will form the basis of the situational analysis and first version of the Strategic Goals, which will likely contain options and/or examples. This will be consulted on more formally between August-October 2014, including through a digital platform to assist members across the world, rights holders, partners and the general public to share views on this first version of the Strategic Goals. We also encourage national entities to be ready to proactively engage with members, partners, rights-holders and communities, and external experts in this period.

Responses to the August-October consultation will inform a second and more refined version of the Strategic Goals to be consulted on as a draft ICM resolution from January 2015.

Themes emerging from phase 1 of the conversation

At the time of writing, phase 1 of the conversation was still underway with many important meetings still occurring and most written submissions expected in late May. More detailed feedback - including about debates about what should be prioritised in our human rights goals - will therefore be shared at the Chairs Assembly and Directors Forum but the following *provisional* themes have been extracted from the inputs to date. It must be stressed that this reflects initial views at the beginning of this 1.5 year movement-wide conversation and does not cover inputs received from 5 May onwards. Reactions from Chairs and Directors will assist us to better gauge where consensus and different points of view lie and therefore where more development and support work connected with this process is best focused.

- The **shift to 'goals' has been widely welcomed** for its focus on *outcomes* and *changes* we want to deliver.
- Without detracting from this, many have pointed to successes in the death penalty, international justice and arms control to caution that **we must not abandon our commitment to tough issues requiring a long term approach in favour of 'low hanging fruit'** that will more easily yield wins within the four year timeframe.
- There is continued agreement that **the current ISP is too broad** and that we are stretched too thinly, limiting impact and creating inefficiency as further prioritisation exercises are required. There is also a general acknowledgement that **Amnesty International needs to get better at exiting out of or scaling back work** to enable us to address more pressing issues, often requiring new approaches and a shift in resources.
- While **the next Strategic Goals must be narrower in scope**, discussions about where to focus in the best interests of the movement are often marred by individual commitment to a specific interest. This could inhibit development of shared (and sound) analysis about where Amnesty should best direct its energies. While there have been isolated suggestions to drop/considerably reduce, maternal health is the only issue which has been suggested multiple times, usually with the rationale that others are better placed for this work.

- We have continued to hear that the **structure of the current ISP is too complicated** and that a simple format and style is needed, including to more easily communicate our work.
- The International Board recommended a maximum of 10 Strategic Goals, with up to six human rights goals and up to four organizational goals. Some inputs have indicated that **10 Strategic Goals may be too many** – while it is too early to make a call on this, it may be worth keeping in mind as the content emerges.
- In order to maintain both our relevance in a changing world and our past achievements, we need a **balance between prioritising issues that are traditionally part of our agenda and those that are new**. Digital rights is the most frequently cited example of a new issue requiring investment. There is an ongoing debate about whether climate change should become a stronger focus. The death penalty, torture, freedom of expression and criminal justice are cited as issues that it would be '*inconceivable*' for Amnesty to de-prioritise.
- There is a general consensus that **Amnesty International should continue to work across the spectrum of civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights** but there is much debate about how best to work on socio-economic rights and whether we should focus on enabling rights and leave work requiring detailed analysis of social and economic policy to actors with stronger expertise in these areas. Similar arguments are made on climate change.
- In relation to our **organisational goals**, loose proposals have been made in the following areas: a more explicit focus on fundraising; further strengthening our new global operating model and integration / collaboration through One Amnesty; improved diversity performance; and organisational effectiveness, including programme quality and accountability. Suggestions relating to our approaches and **ways of working** include growth of human rights activism and engagement of youth; greater focus on partnership; being more tech-savvy across all work.
- We need to make the most of this opportunity to **strengthen our approach to impact assessment** and ensure our methodologies are as strong as possible and embedded within the structure of the Strategic Goals enabling easy monitoring and evaluation. This IS is collaborating with a number of external experts and will be testing methodologies in evaluations this year to ensure learning can be incorporated into the structure of the Goals.

Critical questions for discussion at the Chairs Assembly and Directors Forum

1. Should the Strategic Goals be all-encompassing?

Prior to sharing the first draft of the Strategic Goals for consultation, the International Board will decide³ whether the new Strategic Goals will be all-encompassing – meaning that all work undertaken within the movement must contribute to achieving them – or whether the Strategic Goals will represent the movement's highest priorities with some space for work outside.

Views of Chairs and Directors are sought on this matter bearing in mind the following considerations, some of which may conflict:

- the need to increase our local relevance and responsiveness, particularly in the context of 'moving closer to the ground' and efforts to grow a more diverse movement;
- the importance of solidarity, integration and global coherence ('One Amnesty');

³ Towards the end of developing the ISP, a decision was taken that all work in the movement had to fit within the Strategic Goals. This was likely a driver for the overly broad nature of the ISP and strong views have been expressed since that a decision should be taken earlier.

- the ever widening domain of human rights issues and the resource and planning implications if the IS is required to support activities outside of the Strategic Goals, and/or entities are requested to campaign on these areas;
- the need to reserve capacity within the movement for reactive work.

Specific questions for chairs and directors to consider include:

- If a decision is taken that the Strategic Goals will *not* be all-encompassing, what maximum proportion of resources should be left for national entities and the IS to devote to other areas? 20%?
- What would be the parameters for entities to determine these areas of work without undermining efforts towards integration and 'One Amnesty'?
- How would the resource and planning implications be managed?
- How could the risks of fragmentation/incoherence be mitigated?

2. What criteria should be used for taking decisions about what to prioritise?

Regardless of whether they are all-encompassing or not, the next Strategic Goals must identify a more limited set of movement-wide priorities for 2016-19 and this requires firm decisions about what to focus on. It is essential that a decision-making framework with clear criteria is adopted to ensure these decisions are robust and transparent.

The following draft decision-making criteria and suggestions for how they should be applied draw on discussions across the movement in phase 1 of the conversation including a workshop on decision-making frameworks and criteria involving various sections and structures and a submission on decision-making criteria developed by sections and structures working within the Campaigns Management Team.

Inputs have emphasised the need to: (a) unpack each criterion, (b) have a small number of criteria or a ranking system if there is a larger number, (c) use participative methods to apply the criteria, (d) ensure that application of the criteria is based on sound situational analysis and focused on the aims of the four year period and (e) also applied as a whole rather than to just each criterion separately.

We have proposed below four criteria for assessing each draft human rights goal and one criterion for assessing each draft organisational goal (while acknowledging that some goals may combine human rights and organisational outcomes), with suggested scoring values to enable the comparative strengths of different proposals to be assessed.

Criteria for assessing proposed human rights goals:

Criterion	Guidance	Rationale
1. Gravity of the problem addressed by the goal Scoring value: 1-2	1 point: There is a strong case for prioritising this goal because of the scale/impact of the problem on victims and communities 2 points: There is an urgent need for this goal to be prioritised because of the scale/impact of the problem on victims and communities and because it would address a structural cause of human rights abuses or a wider deterioration in the human rights situation	Encourages us to invest our energies where the needs are greatest

<p>2. Playing to Amnesty's strengths and ensuring we are 'adding / creating value'</p> <p>Scoring value: 1-5</p>	<p>1 point: Amnesty would add value by bringing our expertise and international reputation to bear by 'shining a light' and because we are able to mobilise people towards realisation of the goal</p> <p>2-3 points: As well as adding value by 'shining a light'/mobilising, Amnesty would bring a strong human rights angle that is otherwise missing from the current framing of the issue/existing efforts</p> <p>4 points: There is a significant gap among organisations working on the issue that Amnesty is uniquely well placed to fill <u>or</u> Amnesty is already the recognised leader in this area and exit/de-prioritisation would create a serious risk of regression</p> <p>5 points: As well as recognised leadership or identification of a clear gap for us to fill, rights holders/other relevant actors have made a powerful case for Amnesty to prioritise this</p>	<p>Harnesses our substantive expertise and capacity to mobilise</p> <p>Promotes a more strategic division of labour with other organisations working on human rights and wider social justice issues</p> <p>Consistent with the value we place on being 'inventive' including ground-breaking and fresh-thinking (see movement Values)</p> <p>Helps us to be responsive to the needs identified by rights holders/other relevant actors and to avoid jumping on already crowded 'bandwagons'</p>
<p>3. Work across regions and at multiple levels</p> <p>Scoring value: 1-3</p>	<p>1 point: The goal is relevant to a good range of countries (eg in different regions, in both the Global North and South, in small and large countries etc)</p> <p>2 points: As well as being relevant across a good range of countries, there is strong potential for coordination/integration of work across Amnesty entities of different sizes in these regions</p> <p>3 points: There is also a shared sense that the issue would benefit from a significant investment from multiple Amnesty stakeholders from across (and within) regions and that we will be able to harness our unique ability to connect from the local to the global from a human rights perspective</p>	<p>Promotes solidarity and global coherence</p> <p>Harnesses our global capabilities and ability to link work at multiple levels</p>
<p>4. High possibility of positive impact</p> <p>Scoring value: 1-5</p>	<p>1 point: Some potential to deliver positive impact (possibly towards a long term change) e.g. because we can work directly with rights holders or make the case for accountability even if it is not politically timely for us to prioritise this right now</p> <p>2-3 points: Medium potential to deliver positive impact towards a long term change within this specific four year period e.g. because there is good potential to mobilise including among target groups (e.g. youth or local constituencies) even if there is no concrete opportunity to coalesce around</p> <p>4-5 points: Strong potential to deliver high impact in this particular four year timeframe because there is strong potential to mobilise key constituencies and a big push by Amnesty would also be politically timely e.g. because there is a key 'moment' at the national, regional or international levels to deliver policy change or accountability or a looming crisis we could help avert</p>	<p>We exist in order to deliver positive human rights change in accordance with Amnesty's four dimensions of change (people's lives, activism and mobilisation, policies, accountability) – and we must expect that anything we invest resources in can deliver this, either in the short and/or long term</p> <p>Note that when considering timeliness we must also bear in mind that halting/minimising attacks on rights is also a positive impact</p>

Criterion for assessing proposed organisational goals:

Aim	Guidance	Rationale
<p>Equipping Amnesty to deliver our mission and our human rights goals</p>	<p>1 point: Delivery of the goal would tackle an area of organisational weakness identified via our learning, accountability and impact evaluation work, staff engagement exercises, or by our governance, management or advisory structures</p>	<p>Ensures we invest in efforts to be "fit-for-purpose"</p>

<p>Scoring value: 1-5</p>	<p>2-3 points: Delivery of the goal is an important step towards transforming Amnesty’s effectiveness in one or two key areas prioritised in our human rights goals</p> <p>4-5 points: Delivery of the goal is critical for further progressing changes we have already embarked on that are aimed at transforming Amnesty as a whole by revitalising and ensuring the long-term sustainability, connectedness and impact of our movement in a changing world</p>	
---------------------------	---	--

Other considerations:

Bearing in mind that calculated risk-taking is an important element of developing as a movement and increasing Amnesty’s impact, assessment of any serious risks – either in taking on/ not taking on an issue – should also be undertaken at an early stage so that the risks can be assessed and mitigation options explored. Where they apply, the following serious risks should be identified and explored as part of any proposal for a Strategic Goal:

- high risk to Amnesty if we fail to prioritise this area e.g. risk of irrelevance/falling on the wrong side of history;
- high risk to Amnesty (that would be difficult to mitigate) if we do prioritise this e.g. risk to perception of our impartiality.

The following general considerations should be factored into the construction of each of the Strategic Goals:

- each Strategic Goal (human rights and organisational) should identify a clear outcome that is specific and measurable;
- simple, clear, inspiring language should be used, including providing a clear rationale for choices made.

Once the criteria have been applied and there is a stronger sense of which proposed goals are likely to be selected for the first draft of the Strategic Goals, the package of goals as a whole must be assessed to ensure that, among other things, the goals: are coherent and mutually supportive; promote integration of our work across the movement ('One Amnesty'); include strong campaigning opportunities; demonstrate the indivisibility of civil, cultural, economic, political rights; and reflect gender perspectives. At this point, our capacity and the fundability of the package as a whole must also be carefully considered (during phase 1 discussions, movement stakeholders advised that resources - people and financial - should be factored in at this stage so as not to preclude strong goal proposals requiring Amnesty to invest in order to innovate).

Inputs on these two important issues – whether the goals are all encompassing, and criteria for decision-making – will be crucial in the next stages of the development of the goals and will help frame the draft presented for consultation in August. More information on next steps is available in the Appendix.

Appendix 1

Key points in the conversation to date

At the time of preparing this paper, Phase 1 of the conversation (ending 31 May 2014) was still underway. The table below sets out key information to the movement and indicative examples of discussions that have occurred at the sub-regional, regional, inter-regional and global levels.

Most activities at the national level and within individual teams at the IS are not captured in this table, however where information from these discussions has been shared it is available on the Strategic Goals section of the intranet (see link above). To continue to build an inclusive conversation, chairs and directors are encouraged to share information from discussions at AGMs and other methods used to engage members, activists, staff and external stakeholders. Please send information to strategicgoals@amnesty.org.

Who	Lead	What
FEBRUARY		
Chairs and Directors	Chair of International Board	Overview of Strategic Goals
Chairs and Directors	Secretary General	Strategic Goals Consultation Part 1 – key questions for consultation
IS Management Team	Strategy and Evaluation Unit	Overview of Strategic Goals and consultation process
IS staff	Internal Communications Manager	Overview of Strategic Goals and consultation process
MARCH		
International Board	Chair of International Board and Strategic Goals lead	Informed the next period of the consultation and papers
Global Management Team	Secretary General	Informed the consultation process from a national perspective and provided early insights for content
IS Management Team	Strategy and Evaluation Unit	Follow-up discussion on phase 1
Staff from entities in some priority countries	Strategy and Evaluation Unit	Suggestions for content and construction of Goals (as part of leadership workshop)
Senior Leadership Team	Secretary General	Workshops on the Strategic Goals (continues in April / May)
IS Staff	SLT and Strategy and Evaluation Unit	All Staff meeting on 'meta' trends
APRIL		
Chairs and Directors	Secretary General (supported by Strategy and Evaluation Unit)	Update and launch of 'home' for Strategic Goals on Intranet
Sub-regional - East Asia (IS and s/s)	East Asia Regional Office	Issues and suggestions from sub-region
MAY (some upcoming – expected before CA/DF)		
Mix of IS and some national entities	Strategy and Evaluation Unit	Workshop on decision-making framework by teleconference
Open to all IS and national entities	Various - Strategy and Evaluation Unit coordinating	'Meta' trends event series starts
Regional – Americas	Movement Building	Workshop

Sub-regional – East Asia (IS)	East Asia Regional Office	Workshop
Inter-regional – Europe/MENA	European Directors Forum	Workshop at European Directors Forum (including Directors from MENA, and separate MENA workshop)
Regional – Africa	Global Operations	Discussion at Regional Advisory Group and by African regional management

Looking ahead to phase 2 - key steps

A number of discussions will help us move from the end of the first phase (the most “open” phase, where we have been building an understanding of trends and analysis, brainstorming ideas and gaining an insight into areas where there is high movement “energy”) into a more focused second phase (involving discussion of more concrete proposals based on a situational analysis built from the “bottom up”). These include items at the Chairs Assembly and Directors Forum and meetings of the Global Management Team and International Board. In addition, working groups drawn from across the movement will help draw on the inputs to date in drafting goals to then share for consultation.

Who	Lead	What
AUGUST		
National entities, led by Chairs and Directors	Chair of International Board	Launch of consultation on first version of the Strategic Goals
IS staff	Secretary General	Launch of consultation on first version of the Strategic Goals
AUGUST – OCTOBER		
Rights holders, general public, international and other members	Each entity – with Strategy and Evaluation Unit coordinating overall	Digital engagement platform launched in August
Key partners and rights-holders	Each entity	Input (in addition to digital engagement – see above)
Leaders in various key sectors (individuals and organisations)	Strategy and Evaluation Unit - with discussions led by various people from the movement as appropriate	Semi-structured interviews
External organisations	Strategy and Evaluation Unit	Benchmarking against other organisations’ strategies and processes, including resource allocation and impact assessment methodologies

Appendix 2

