

Bulletin 28 May 2009

SDV News and events

Easyfundraising and Easysearch for SDV

Please remember both these very easy ways to raise funds for SDV. Details on the website:

<http://www.sdv.org.uk/id15.html>

Immigration, asylum and detention news

Britain sending refused Congo asylum seekers back to threat of torture

The British government is sending refused asylum seekers back home, a Guardian investigation has revealed, despite the fears of human rights campaigners and lawyers that deportees could encounter persecution on their return.

The government claims that those forcibly returned will be safe.

There are an estimated 10,000 Congolese asylum seekers in the UK, many of whom are at risk of being forcibly removed. The sending back of such people to the Democratic Republic of the Congo was suspended in 2007 but recently resumed.

The revelations about the possible torture in Congo came as the government intensified its operation to forcibly remove Congolese nationals from the UK. Last Thursday there was a charter flight carrying 24 Congolese bound for Kinshasa, the first such flight for more than two years.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/may/27/drc-congo-deport-torture>

Anger as asylum girl sent south despite Scottish legal challenge – story featuring SDV's Alison Swinfen

Academics and politicians have reacted with anger after a girl seeking asylum was detained in Dungavel and then moved to a detention centre in England, avoiding a judicial review started in Scotland.

Campaigners condemned the action as a breach of the Westminster government's promise to end detention of children at the Dungavel detention centre in Lanarkshire and to respect due legal process in Scotland.

Rima Andmariam from Eritrea was, according to her baptism certificate, born on July 1, 1992, and as such should be treated as an unaccompanied minor. However, the Home Office contested her age, and after spending the past two-and-half months staying with a professor at Glasgow University, she was last week detained at Dungavel.

Despite putting in for judicial review on Friday, she was moved to Yarl's Wood immigration removal centre in Bedfordshire at the weekend and is due to be deported.

http://www.theherald.co.uk/news/news/display.var.2509230.0.Anger_as_asylum_girl_sent_south_despite_Scottish_legal_challenge.php

Other news and events

Three Amnesty International Events in Glasgow

All are free and take place at the Hillhead Library, 348 Byres Road, Glasgow, G12 8AP (just next to Hillhead underground).

1) Euro Elections Hustings Thursday 28 May, 7pm to 8.30pm

Amnesty International and the Federation of small Businesses host a panel debate in association with Feisty Productions. Candidates from the main parties contesting the European Parliament elections will be quizzed by members of the public, with the show broadcast on BBC Radio Scotland's "Riddoch Questions" programme the next day. Chaired by Lesley Riddoch.

Confirmed panel members: - Ian Hudghton MEP (SNP) - George Lyon (LibDem) - Struan Stevenson MEP (Conservative) - Catherine Stihler MEP (Labour)

2) Amnesty Question Time - Tiananmen Square 20 Years On, Thursday 4 June, 7pm-8.30pm

On the 20th anniversary of the crushing of democracy protests in Beijing's Tiananmen square, Amnesty brings together a panel of experts to consider the state of human rights in China. Should we in Scotland promote human rights through engagement with China? And if so, how?

3) Heroes and Heroines Exhibition 1-30 June, Mon, Tue, Thurs 10am-8pm. Wed 10am-5pm, Fri, Sat 9am-5pm, Sun 12am-5pm

Twelve remarkable individuals from around the world are profiled in this exhibition, which celebrates freedom of expression and the strength of the human spirit in the face of adversity. Each has dared to speak out against human rights abuses in the face of repression and they are presented here as an inspiration to us all.