

Welcome to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee E-mail Bulletin.

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee: advancing human rights and social justice in the United States and throughout the world.

(If you are receiving this bulletin for the first time, please read this introductory letter: <http://www.uusc.org/info/emailthanks.html>.)

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UUSC, UUA join in humanitarian relief for earthquake/tsunami victims

In the wake of the catastrophic disaster caused by the earthquake and tsunamis in South and Southeast Asia and Eastern Africa, UUSC and the Unitarian Universalist Association have joined forces to help bring humanitarian relief to the victims and their families.

The relief funds will be channeled to grassroots organizations in the region that are able to provide assistance in the most appropriate manner as quickly as possible. "In disasters of this magnitude, there is a danger of a repeat tragedy when international relief efforts begin to fade and infrastructure has yet to be restored," said UUSC President Charlie Clements. "That is often when disease and death stalks the survivors."

Donate now to help survivors of the tsunami disaster! Visit:
<http://www.uusc.org/info/article123004.html>.

To read a letter from Charlie Clements to UU ministers, visit:
http://www.uusc.org/info/article123004_2.htm.

Action alert: Voice concerns about nomination of Alberto Gonzales for attorney general

In November 2004, President Bush nominated White House Counsel Alberto Gonzales to the position of United States attorney general. This nomination has raised numerous concerns throughout the international human rights community. These concerns are based on the various legal memoranda authored by Mr. Gonzales during the ongoing war against terror, which advised Mr. Bush that as president and commander in chief of the armed forces, he was not bound by the Geneva Conventions or other humanitarian limitations on the conduct of war.

Act now and contact members of the Senate Judiciary Committee to let them know you oppose the nomination of Alberto Gonzales. For an action alert, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/news/alert120804.html>.

Second annual civil rights journey set for historic southern cities

UUSC is excited to announce the second annual civil rights journey that will travel to several southern cities to learn firsthand about the struggles of the 1960s. The Freedom Summer workcamp: A civil rights journey is scheduled for July 9-16, 2005.

The intergenerational trip will bring together youth and adults from around the country to travel by bus to historical sites that were significant during the civil rights movement. The inspirational journey will begin in Atlanta and move to Selma, Montgomery and Birmingham, Ala.

For more information, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article121004.html>.

Agreement reached in landmark Burmese rights case

On Dec. 13, California-based Unocal Corporation announced that it had reached an out-of-court settlement in a landmark case alleging that the energy company was complicit in human rights abuses committed as part of the construction of a gas pipeline in Burma. The case against Unocal was seen as a key test for human rights activists who want to hold multinationals responsible in U.S. courts for atrocities committed in other countries.

UUSC members and supporters have responded to many action alerts in defense of human rights in Burma and the abuses in which Unocal now agrees it was complicit as part of construction of the gas pipeline. To learn more about this important human rights victory, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article122004.html>.

UUSC partner describes wave of killings in Eastern Congo

The town of Goma, located in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and home to two of UUSC's program partners, has been subject to nightly killings in recent weeks. Since Nov. 1, unidentified armed men in uniform have stormed into homes shooting Goma residents. Residents have also reported several attacks outside Goma.

A UUSC program partner in the Congo has shared their firsthand accounts of these disturbing incidents. Visit: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article121704.html>.

Shareholder advocacy makes a difference in company policies

UUSC, the UUA and other investors have been working with communications company ALLTEL for years, encouraging the company to include sexual orientation in its non-discrimination policy. This year, our efforts paid off and the company amended its non-discrimination policy to include sexual orientation, improving its zero rating on the Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index.

The Little Rock, Ark.-based company is the last major telecommunications firm in the United States to include sexual orientation in its non-discrimination

policy. UUSC believes the inclusive non-discrimination policies will enhance Alltel's long-term shareholder value by building its reputation as a fair employer.

To learn more about UUSC shareholder advocacy efforts, visit:
<http://www.uusc.org/info/shareholder.html>.

Prominent activist released in Haiti

Thanks to an outcry from people around the world, including many UUSC members and supporters, Father Gerard Jean-Juste was released after 50 days in jail on suspicion of fomenting violent protests after a judge found no evidence to hold him.

Father Jean-Juste is a prominent activist for peace, justice and the rights of immigrants in Haiti and the United States. In October, Haitian police forcibly entered St. Clare's Catholic Church in the nation's capital of Port-au-Prince and arrested the pastor, Rev. Jean-Juste, without a warrant. For more background about this case, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/news/alert111604.html>.

Take action for justice on Justice Sunday 2005

On Justice Sunday 2005, participants will work together to defend the human right to water around the world. On March 13, your congregation can join others across the United States to make a difference on this important and pressing human rights issue. By joining UUSC to celebrate Justice Sunday, members of your congregation--including youth and young adults--will be empowered to take action in support of this critical human right.

To learn more, and to place your order for Justice Sunday materials today, visit: www.uusc.org/justicesunday.

Holiday card consignment order returns due Feb. 1

To all holiday cards sales coordinators: Please be sure to submit your unsold cards, and sales proceeds, to UUSC as soon as possible. Unsold cards must be received by Feb. 1, 2005. For more information, e-mail orders@uusc.org.

UUSC announces "Campaign for Our Future"

In order to support increases in advocacy work and communication with constituents, UUSC has announced the first adjustment in its membership levels in over a decade. The new rates will take effect July 1, 2005. For more information, visit: <http://www.uusc.org/info/article121904.html>.

More about UUSC

We are counting on your membership.

Become a UUSC member today for only \$25. Especially in these critical times, the Service Committee depends on the support of individuals like you to continue to protect human rights here in the United States and around the world. Your

unrestricted gift of \$60 or more will be matched dollar for dollar by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset, N.Y.

To learn more about UUSC membership or to make a donation today, visit:
<http://www.uusc.org/info/support.html>.

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