



American ideals. Universal values.

2014
annual report



Welcome

AS WE ASSESS the state of our world, it is easy to despair. The brutality of ISIS, the war in Syria, Russia's continued aggression—the headlines forecast a perfect storm of instability. And here at home, our union is far from perfect. Whole communities feel that law enforcement and the justice system have failed them. And we find ourselves challenged to respond humanely to children coming across our southern border in search of a safe haven from violence. Refugees are a barometer of distress, and there are more in the world today than at any other time since World War II.

These challenges can seem overwhelming, even incomprehensible. Yet they didn't arise from nowhere. They are the predictable result of human rights violations left to fester.

And just as rights violations lead to crisis, respect for human rights is the pathway forward. Forged out of the ashes of World War II and drafted with U.S. leadership, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is grounded in the belief that respect for human dignity is essential for peace and security. At a time when the world seems to be coming apart, we should remember the wisdom of those who sought, after unspeakable horror, to put it back together.

At Human Rights First, our mission is to challenge the United States to live up to these ideals. When the United States respects human rights at home, it can better advance them abroad. When it falls short, authoritarians and extremists fill the void. Recently, nothing has

harmed U.S. credibility more than its fateful decision to embrace torture after 9/11.

Ten years ago, we began to build a coalition of retired generals and admirals who believe that torture undermines America's security. Together we helped secure President Obama's 2009 executive order banning torture. It was a major victory, and the first step in a long journey back from the "dark side."

Next, we set out to get the findings of a classified Senate report on the CIA's torture program released, confident it would be critical in building a durable national consensus against torture. We joined forces with our military and intelligence allies, employed our policy expertise and communication savvy and, against long odds, succeeded in bringing the report to light.

In December, the report's 500-page executive summary, which detailed dark truths about CIA abuse, was released. Now we're pushing for a new law to strengthen the ban on torture.

This was just one of our many accomplishments in 2014. Whether we're defending the rights of refugees or pressing to close Guantanamo or combating antisemitism, we are challenging our country to live up to its ideals. When it does, it can change the world.

Thank you for joining us in this important work.



Elisa Massimino,
President and CEO,
Human Rights First



"Human Rights First is a premiere institution devoted to the noblest of all causes."

-Senator John McCain (R-AZ)



PHOTO Phil Humnicky

USA TODAY

OP-ED COLUMNIST

Torture a frontal assault on our values

By Joseph Hoar/Charles Krulak

December 11, 2014

PRIZED LEADERSHIP: Elisa Massimino (center) presents Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) with Human Rights First's 2014 Beacon Prize for their extraordinary work opposing torture.

MILITARY LEADERS CHAMPION HUMAN RIGHTS

We built a powerful coalition of retired flag officers led by four-star Marine Corps Generals Joseph Hoar and Charles Krulak. The coalition helped secure public release of the Senate intelligence committee's report on the CIA's post-9/11 torture program.

Keeping Human Rights in the News

We focus the spotlight on the issues that matter most

"At Guantanamo Bay, 12 years later, the masterminds of the September 11 terrorist attacks still haven't been convicted of any crimes."

-Op-Ed by Daphne Eviatar,
Human Rights First



Slate

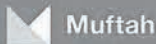


"Trafficking is an issue that needs American leadership, both because of the scale of the problem and because the United States is a source and destination country in the trafficking supply chain."

-Op-Ed by Elisa Massimino,
Human Rights First



"When Anastasia Smirnova, who's coordinating Russia's LGBT advocacy efforts around the Olympics, met with Human Rights First, she told the group she was worried about what happens after the flame goes out and the global attention moves on."



"In both Greece and Hungary, many voters appear to be either overlooking the neo-fascist message or embracing it."

-Op-Ed by Sonni Efron,
Human Rights First



The size of each media outlet's logo is relative to the number of times Human Rights First was quoted in it in 2014.



MAIN ST

Chicago Tribune

HOUSTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

The Times-Picayune



Defense One

The New York Times

"There's a difference between loyalty and leadership," said Elisa Massimino. "Leadership would be if Brennan used this crisis as an opportunity to make clear what the standards [on torture] are going forward."

The New York Times

The Philadelphia Inquirer

TPM
TALKINGPOINTS MEMO



POLITICS.HU

San Francisco Chronicle

"That's the contradiction at the heart of the anti-ISIS coalition put together by the United States: it includes regimes that contribute mightily to the problem."

-Op-Ed by Brian Dooley,
Human Rights First

Defense One

onfaith

POLITICO



DefenseNews



"Safeguarding religious freedom isn't secondary to our national security interests, but vital to them."

-Op-Ed by Tad Stahnke,
Human Rights First

onfaith

HOUSTON CHRONICLE



Military.com

"Our clients here are terrified," said Jocelyn Dyer, a staff attorney with Human Rights First, a nonprofit that represents immigrants seeking asylum."

The Washington Post

Mother Jones

"Human Rights First claimed that the number of people arrested because of their sexuality has risen since the coup and that the trend has increased fears about a rising crackdown on personal freedoms within Egypt."

TIME

npr

National Journal

Portland Press Herald

THE PROGRESS

TIME

Driving the Debate

Our credibility and reasoned approach cuts through the noise



BETWEEN THE 24-HOUR NEWS CYCLE and a toxic political climate, there's often more heat than light around the issues that really matter. We have a proven track record of cutting through the noise, strategically shaping critical debates about human rights and American leadership—on Capitol Hill and around the world.

We are able to influence the dominant discourse not because our voice is the loudest or most strident, but because our experts, analysis, and research are eminently credible. Over more than 35 years, we've built a reputation for pragmatic, results-oriented advocacy that is politically astute, grounded in facts, and driven by sophisticated

legal and policy analysis. That's why media outlets seek our opinion, members of Congress from both sides of the aisle ask us to testify, international bodies seek our perspective, and policymakers take our recommendations.

Case in point: the much-discussed release of the "torture report." Supporters of torture—accustomed to dominating the debate—bashed the report. We made sure the facts got out and the right voices broke through, from professional interrogators who had extracted key intelligence from terrorist suspects using lawful methods, to people who had blown the whistle on torture after 9/11. ■

Elisa Massimino, president and CEO of Human Rights First, delivering the keynote speech at Europe's preeminent intergovernmental meeting on human rights.

"We are grateful for your tireless advocacy."

-Senator Chris Coons (D-DE)



At a House committee hearing, Tad Stahnke testifies on the link between religious freedom and national security.



Appearing before a House committee, Eleanor Acer explains how to protect the rights of refugees and strengthen the U.S. asylum system.



Elisa Massimino, testifying on the importance of the Leahy Law banning U.S. arms shipments to serial human rights abusers.

TOP LOBBYISTS 2014
Our President and CEO Elisa Massimino made the *Hill's* 2014 list of top "influencers." The paper cited our work combating "human rights violations such as the government crackdown on LGBT citizens in Russia."

THE HILL

Top Lobbyists 2014: Grassroots

By The *Hill* Staff

October 22, 2014

Human Rights is Everybody's Business

Our 2014 Human Rights Summit highlighted opportunities and challenges for American leadership



PHOTO: Phil Humnicky

ABOVE: Shireen Ahmed, advocate for Muslim women in sports; Greg Louganis, four-time Olympic diving champion; Christine Brennan, *USA Today* sports columnist; and Eli A. Wolff, Inclusive Sports Initiative, Institute for Human Centered Design.

RIGHT: Bill Rausch, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America; Rye Barcott, U.S. Marine Corps veteran; Maura C. Sullivan, Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and, Yochi Dreazen, *Foreign Policy*.



PHOTO: Phil Humnicky

"Human Rights First makes sure the United States keeps fighting for—and living by—our values, both around the world and at home."

—Tom Malinowski, Assistant Secretary of State



Human Rights First President and CEO Elisa Massimino welcomes General John F. Kelly, United States Marine Corps Commander, U.S. Southern Command, to the Summit.

Defense One

OP-ED COLUMNIST

You Can't Fight Terrorists By Partnering With Guys Like Maliki

By Michael Quigley

July 16, 2014

TO FIGHT VIOLENT EXTREMISM, FIGHT HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES
Human Rights First's Michael Quigley, a former Naval intelligence officer, explains how brutal governments empower extremists and calls on the U.S. government to find better partners for the struggle against terrorism.



FROM LEFT: Clare Byarugaba, Ugandan activist; Michael Lavers, *Washington Blade*; Representative David Cicilline (D-RI); Syniat Sultanallewa, Kyrgyz activist; and Gleb Latnik, Russian activist.

A Crisis Calls Us to Act

We scaled up our pro bono program and pressed for the protection of refugees on the southern border



LAST SPRING AND SUMMER, thousands of vulnerable people—including unaccompanied minors and mothers with young children—crossed the southern border. Many were seeking safety from persecution and horrific violence in Central America, yet their welcome was far from warm.

In response to this humanitarian crisis, the United States fell short of its ideals as a safe haven for the persecuted. Immigration officials deported some of the immigrants without giving them a fair hearing and detained most of the rest, warehousing families in detention facilities that quickly garnered national and international criticism.

The situation presented a crisis in legal representation. With decades of experience recruiting and training volunteer lawyers to protect the rights of refugees—and with our new office in nearby Houston opened just months before the crisis erupted—we were well-positioned to respond.

We scaled up our award-winning pro bono program to respond to the need, recruiting new lawyers from the private bar to help. And we expanded our staff capacity to meet the specific needs of Central American refugees by hiring additional lawyers, legal assistants, and—for the first time—social workers in all three of our offices.

At the same time, we investigated conditions at detention facilities, key border points, border patrol stations, and asylum offices in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California, documenting and reporting on the problems we found. Employing this research and lessons learned from years of providing direct services to refugees, we advanced common sense reforms.

We pressed the U.S. government to stop detaining families and instead take advantage of proven alternatives to detention and to remedy the “rocket docket” that fast-track cases without essential due process protections. We also called on the government to adequately fund immigration courts to address the backlog that forces refugees to wait months and even years for a hearing.

Amid a contentious national debate over immigration and a global refugee crisis, what the United States does sets a standard for others. We’re fighting to ensure that our government lives up to its moral and legal responsibilities to people who need protection. ■

"Human Rights First is the premier defender of the rights of refugees."

—Alex Nowrasteh, Immigration Policy Analyst, Cato Institute

HUMAN RIGHTS FIRST SAVED MY LIFE

As a transgender woman of West African descent, Lisa faced double discrimination in her home country of Honduras. Ultimately it was the violence she endured for being transgender that forced her to flee the country.

Shortly after marching in a Pride parade where she dressed as a woman for the first time, Lisa was attacked and raped in her home by a group of men. Several years later, two of the men—along with others—returned and attacked Lisa again. Calling her their "sex slave," these men returned again and again. Lisa went to the police, but they refused even to take her statement. "You should just do what they tell you," they said.

Fearing for her life, Lisa fled to the United States. But when she arrived in Texas, immigration authorities put her in a detention center, where she was isolated along with other detainees who identified as gay or transgender. She and the other LGBT detainees were unable to work, participate in recreational activities, or go outside regularly. "At times I wanted to give up," she said.

Human Rights First met with Lisa and matched her with a pro bono lawyer. Preparation for her case was difficult. "Talking about it was like reliving it. But we worked so hard and prepared so much. And when the judge said, 'You are granted asylum,' I felt such relief. Human Rights First saved my life."

Lisa's lawyer, Alicia Handy of Latham Watkins LLP, said, "It was a very enriching experience. There were times



PHOTO Ashley Panzera

when she told her story and we were all in tears. I am grateful I was able to represent Lisa and help her receive much-deserved asylum."

Now Lisa lives in New York City where she hopes to go to beauty school and launch her own salon. "It's a radical change," she said, "living in a place without fear. It's really beautiful. I don't know what would have happened if Human Rights First hadn't come into my life." ■

CALLING ON THE UNITED STATES
TO PROTECT THE PERSECUTED
Human Rights First's Eleanor Acer
denounces new restrictions "turning away
people who may very well have been entitled
to asylum protection."

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Illegal Immigrants Seeking Asylum Face a Higher Bar

By Ana Campoy

September 28, 2014

Freeing the Truth on Torture

We secured public release of a landmark report

WHEN PRESIDENT OBAMA signed an executive order in 2009 banning torture, our country started its long journey back from the dark side.

But after years of a constant chorus from torture proponents that abuse was necessary to save American lives, we knew it would take more than an executive order to build a durable national consensus against torture. In the absence of a thorough public accounting, proponents of torture could continue to sell the myth that it “worked.”

Americans needed to know the truth about torture. So we set our sights on the classified Senate investigation into the CIA’s post-9/11 “enhanced interrogation” program. Drawn from the CIA’s own documents and described by Senate intelligence committee Chair Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) as “one of the most significant oversight efforts in the history of the United States Senate,” the report ran to more than 6,000 pages.

Our goal was to secure public release of the report’s findings, which we believed would refute the claims of torture apologists. Teaming up with professional interrogators and our coalition of retired military leaders, we made this effort an organizational priority over many months.

SERVING OUR COUNTRY— AND ITS IDEALS



In 2004, we began to assemble a group of retired generals, admirals, and interrogators—men and women who had devoted their lives to defending American ideals and who believed that torture was a betrayal of those ideals.

“I never thought I’d live to see the day when a group of generals was working closely with a human rights group,” Vice President Biden said of our alliance. He wasn’t the only one who expressed surprise. But we pride ourselves on mobilizing unconventional human rights advocates. With their credibility on national security, these distinguished military leaders made a strong national security argument against torture, neutralizing the “soft-on-terror” charge, and gained a prominent platform that they used to explain that the best security policies are those rooted in respect for human rights and the rule of law.

President Obama said they “made an extraordinary impression” on him during his presidential campaign. That’s why they were standing with him in the Oval Office when he signed his executive order banning torture.

These American heroes went on to play leading roles in securing the release of key sections of the Senate report on CIA torture, and they’re continuing to champion American ideals by pressing the U.S. government to shut down the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. ■

The New York Times

OP-ED COLUMNIST

Stop the C.I.A. Spin on the Senate Torture Report

By Antonio Taguba

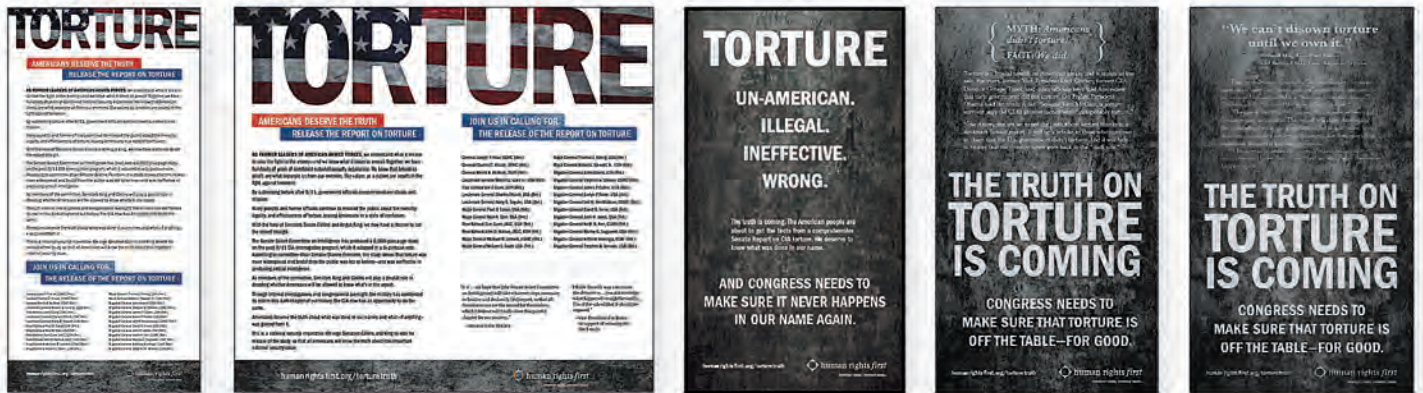
August 5, 2014

A TRUTH-TELLER TELLS THE TRUTH AGAIN

While on active duty, Major General Antonio M. Taguba (USA, retired) was tasked with conducting the first investigation into torture at Abu Ghraib prison. This year he took to the *New York Times* to challenge the CIA spin on the “Torture Report” and argue that oversight would strengthen the intelligence agency, as it had the military.

"The Senate's torture report might never have been released if it weren't for Human Rights First assembling a group of former generals adamantly opposed to torture."

—Chris Stone, President, Open Society Foundations



Through private meetings, public appeals, and targeted op-eds, we pressed key members of the intelligence committee and nailed down support from influential figures, including Vice President Biden. We published fact-based reports, legal analyses, and other materials to show that releasing the report would serve the national interest. And, at pivotal junctures, we produced a series of print ads that ran in the *Washington Post*, a television spot that key audiences saw as they watched Sunday morning talk programs, and online advertisements.

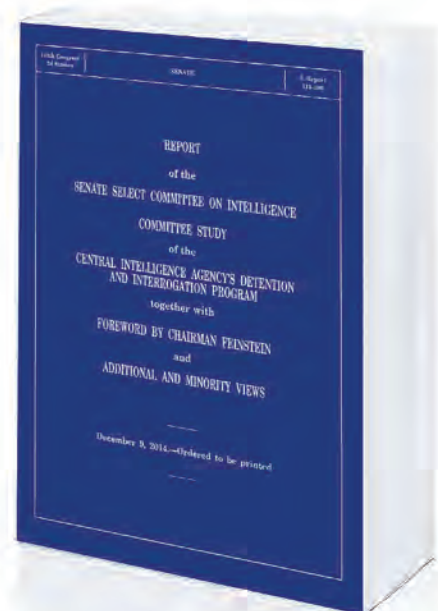
In the spring of 2014, the intelligence committee voted 11-3 to declassify key sections of the report. In December, after a bitter fight with the White House over redactions, the Senate publicly released the report's 600-page executive summary.

The report makes for tough reading. The brutality betrays our most cherished ideals of human dignity. The report also reveals that torture was more widespread than Americans had been led to believe—and was an abject failure as an intelligence-gathering technique. The report makes a strong case for improved oversight of an agency that was not only reckless and cruel, but misled Congress, and the American people.

As hard as it is to face what was done in our names, release of the report could not be more important. This is how a strong democracy deals with its mistakes: we take a hard look at what we did, and we take the necessary steps to make it right.

That's what we're focused on now—making it right. We are working to ensure that Americans learn the right lessons from the report, and that Congress and the administration take steps to make it harder for politicians in the future to view torture as a legitimate tool of American policy. ■

To keep the pressure on to release the report, we ran targeted ads at strategic moments in the *Washington Post* and *Politico*, and because both Maine senators were key, in the *Bangor Daily News* and the *Portland Press Herald*.



DECLASSIFIED

Closer to Closure

More detainees released from Guantanamo than in any year since 2009

THIRTEEN YEARS AGO, General Michael Lehnert was tasked with setting up a prison camp at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to hold detainees in the “war on terror.” Today, as part of our coalition of retired military leaders, General Lehnert is leading the charge to close it down. “Gitmo” has become synonymous around the world with torture, indefinite detention, and unfair trials. Its continued operation betrays American ideals and undermines U.S. national security and commitment to the rule of law.

In 2009, President Obama pledged to shut down Gitmo, an effort that fell victim to congressional obstruction and his own lack of political will.

We believe that the president has the authority he needs to close the prison, and we published a blueprint outlining, step by step, how to get it done. Based on our years of monitoring military commissions at Gitmo, we also argued that the right place to try terrorist suspects is in the federal court system, where hundreds of terrorism suspects have been tried and convicted without a hitch.

As President Obama’s administration enters its last two years, the sense of urgency around closing Gitmo is growing. If he doesn’t close it, it may never close. Perhaps this realization about his legacy became clear in 2014, because our arguments started to gain traction.

Using long-existing authority, President Obama transferred a record high of 28 prisoners out of Gitmo in 2014 and ramped up the Periodic Review Board process, to assess whether more prisoners can be cleared for release. Of the detainees who remain at the camp, nearly half have been cleared for transfer by U.S. intelligence and security agencies.

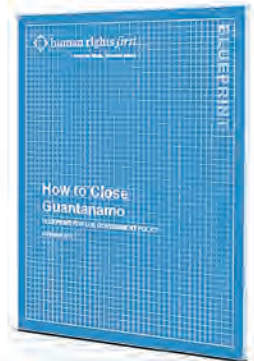
The government relies on a law passed right after 9/11—the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force—as the legal basis for detaining people at Gitmo, and for other counterterrorism actions that raise human rights concerns. The government continues to cling to—and expansively interpret—this authority while at the same time citing the decimation of “core Al Qaeda” and the rise of new and different threats.

Meanwhile, President Obama has repeatedly argued that perpetual, unbounded war is bad for our democracy. “This war, like all wars, must end,” he said. “That’s what history advises. It’s what democracy demands.”

So we set about trying to get the administration and Congress to refine war authorities, to narrow the scope of extraordinary powers and better target the threat. As part of this effort, we pressed the Obama Administration to seek authorization for its use of force against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), rather than shoehorning that effort into the 2001 law.

We assembled a group of national security lawyers and helped them develop principles to guide the war authorities debate. Congressional staff used these principles to craft a measure that passed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in December.

Going forward, we’re building support on both sides of the aisle in Congress for rolling back the “forever war.” ■

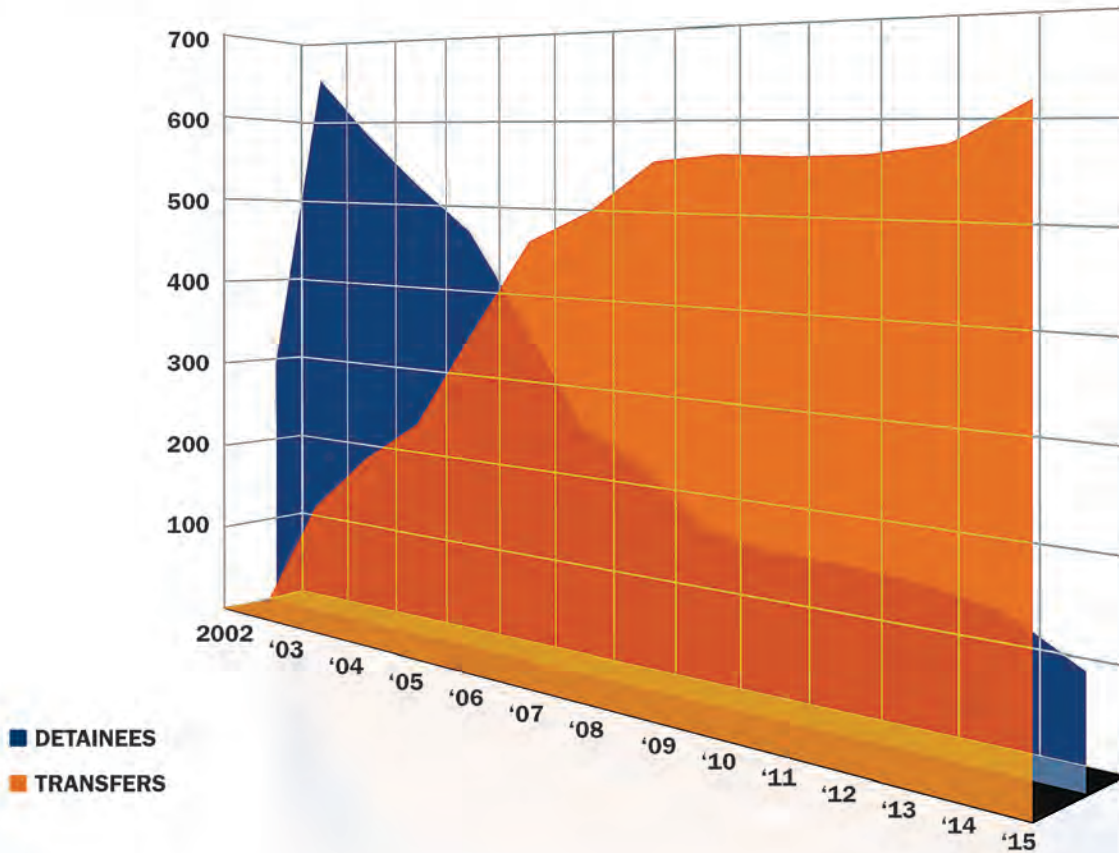


"What your group has done is very important for our country."

-General David Petraeus, former CIA director

REAL PROGRESS ON GUANTANAMO

As of press time, despite continued congressional obstruction only 116 detainees remained in the camp.



JOB: CLOSE GITMO. NEEDED: POLITICAL WILL
On the *Rachel Maddow Show*, Human Rights First's Raha Wala explained that the biggest obstacle to closing Gitmo was "political intransigence," but that progress is possible.



Politics, ignorance slow Guantanamo closure

By Rachel Maddow

January 3, 2014

An Olympic Victory for Human Rights

From Sochi to a major IOC policy change, we fought for equality

IN THE TWO YEARS since Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a bill banning so-called “gay propaganda,” the law has threatened the human rights of LGBT people in Russia, creating an enabling environment for hatred and violence.

While the anti-LGBT law led some western activists to call for a boycott of the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, we took a different approach: we used the games to spotlight Russia’s backslide on human rights, including its targeting of the LGBT community. We worked directly with LGBT activists in Russia, who helped shape our advocacy, and together we made a difference.

In the run-up to the Olympics, we drew attention to the growing danger for LGBT Russians and published a much-cited report that placed the “anti-propaganda” law in historical and cultural context. At the same time, we pressed the U.S. government to make the issue a priority in dealings with Russia and we urged the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to abide by the anti-discrimination clause in its charter by denouncing Russia’s discrimination against LGBT people.

During the games, we sent a delegation to Sochi that included LGBT activist and former Olympic diver David Pichler. Our delegation met with the press and activists, calling attention to the “anti-propaganda” law and lending support to athletes who chose to speak out for equality.

Our work contributed to an international furor that unsettled President Putin, though it didn’t stop him from cracking down on activists during the games. Soon after we met with LGBT activist Anastasia Smirnova, Russian authorities arrested her. We worked hard to ensure that the voices of activists like Anastasia’s were not silenced.

After Sochi, we knew that other anti-LGBT governments hoped to host future Olympic Games, so we took the fight to the International Olympic Committee. We called on the IOC to add sexual orientation and gender identity to Principle Six, the Olympic Charter’s nondiscrimination clause, and to hold host countries accountable to respect it.

We won. In September 2014, the IOC added the anti-discrimination clause to its host city contract, and in December it voted to add sexual orientation explicitly to its Principle Six protections. Now governments seeking to host the Olympics must respect the human rights of LGBT people.

This is an important step, but our victory was incomplete. We will continue to push for the IOC to make discrimination based on gender identity unacceptable as well. ■



Los Angeles Times

OP-ED COLUMNIST

Greg Louganis on the Sochi Games: The best response to repression is engagement

By Greg Louganis

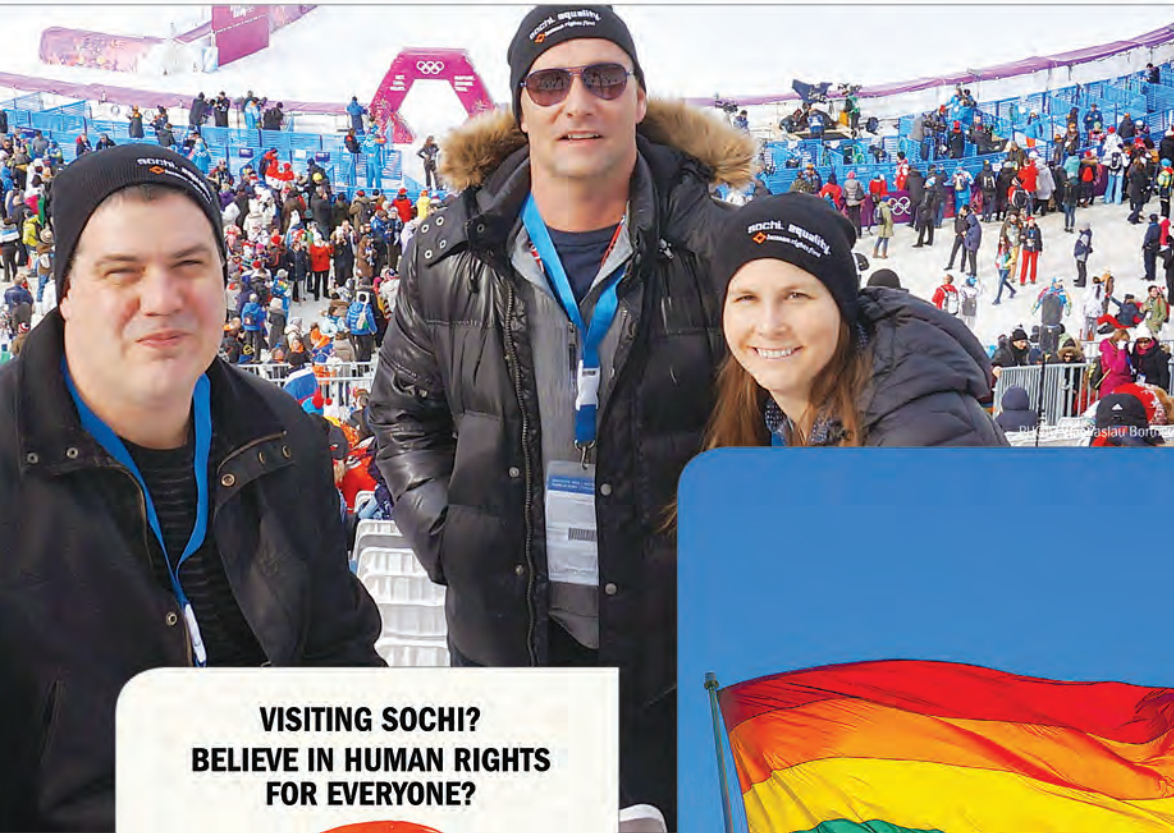
February 5, 2014

AN OLYMPIC LEGEND DIVES IN

To spotlight Russia’s crackdown on LGBT people ahead of the Sochi Olympics, we teamed up with Olympic gold medalist Greg Louganis, who argued that boycotting the games would be a losing strategy.

"Thank you Human Rights First, for doing so much to promote the safe experience of gay and lesbian and transgender people all over the world."

-Representative David Cicilline (D-RI)



LGBT activist and Olympian David Pichler, and Human Rights First's Shawn Gaylord and Mary Elizabeth Margolis, in Sochi.

**VISITING SOCHI?
BELIEVE IN HUMAN RIGHTS
FOR EVERYONE?**



 **human rights first**



A VOICE FOR GLOBAL EQUALITY IN THE GOVERNMENT

In 2014, we worked with Senator Edward Markey (D-MA) on a bill to establish a special envoy at the State Department for the rights of LGBT people. By teaming up with the Log Cabin Republicans, we secured bipartisan support for the bill, which passed the House. President Obama named an envoy in 2015.

SHHH!

Human Rights First distributed this postcard, reminiscent of Soviet propaganda posters, to educate the U.S. Olympic delegation and media in Sochi on the basics of Russia's "gay propaganda" law.

Supporting Leaders in the Fight for Freedom

From Egypt to North Korea to Russia, we partnered with courageous activists

AS ACTIVISTS GO, so goes the human rights movement. The advance of human rights worldwide is dependent on the ability of activists to operate free from fear and persecution. That fact is not lost on repressive governments, which try to protect their power by cracking down on activists, making their work more difficult—and more dangerous.

We support activists in our target countries around the world, not by imposing our ideas on them, but by listening to them, discerning their needs, and working alongside them. We amplify their voices and seek to protect them by spotlighting their struggle.

And as an integral part of our effort to foster American leadership on human rights, we press the U.S. government to support activists. To that end, because activists are their own best advocates, we connect them to leaders in the U.S. government.

Virtually all of our work draws on our alliances—and friendships—with front-line activists. ■



PHOTO Viachaslau Bortnik

RUSSIA

During the Sochi Olympic Games, our team (including Olympian David Pilcher, far right) met with many LGBT activists, including Anastasia Smirnova (far left). She was arrested the day after taking this photo for displaying a banner promoting Principle Six, the nondiscrimination clause of the Olympic Charter.



Bahrain extends activist's custody despite UN outcry

By Ali Khalil

September 6, 2014

A COURAGEOUS ACTIVIST IS JAILED—AND RELEASED
Maryam al-Khawaja is a leading Bahraini activist forced to live in exile. She's also a longtime partner of Human Rights First. When she returned to Bahrain in 2014 in hopes of visiting her ailing father, the government arrested her. Human Rights First's Brian Dooley was quoted saying she was "targeted because of her international advocacy work."

“Human Rights First is at the forefront of promoting fundamental human rights of all people.”

–Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL)



NORTH KOREA

In 2014, Human Rights First took part in oral arguments as amicus counsel in *Kim v. DPRK* (North Korea), a case before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Reverend Kim Dong Shik (left) was kidnapped from Southern China by North Korean agents in 2001 in retaliation for his work in support of North Korean refugees. Kim was disappeared into North Korea and interned in a *kwan-li-so*—North Korea’s penal colonies for political dissidents—where it is believed he was tortured and killed. In a groundbreaking decision, the court refused to let North Korea avoid liability for the torture and killing of Reverend Kim Dong Shik.



EGYPT

At our Human Rights Summit, women’s rights activist Kholoud Saber Barakat accepts the 2014 Roger N. Baldwin Medal of Liberty. Barakat was selected for her courageous work providing psychological support to sexual assault and rape survivors in Egypt.

Combating Extremism in Europe

We responded to the resurgence of antisemitism, racism, and fascism



IN 2014, after a series of attacks on Jews and gains by far-right parties, the world community finally took note of the rise of hate-motivated violence in Europe. As one of the first human rights organizations to begin tracking antisemitic violence in Europe more than a decade ago, we were well positioned to respond.

We believe strongly that antisemitism is a fundamental challenge to human rights. This insidious hatred threatens not only Europe's Jews but also its other minorities. Left unchecked, it leads to further oppression, threatening the democratic values at the heart of Europe. And because the European Union is America's most important ally, it's also a serious problem for the United States. In congressional testimony and other advocacy, we urged the U.S. government to make it a priority.

We launched an investigation into two neo-fascist parties, Golden Dawn in Greece and Jobbik in Hungary. And we exposed the connection between repressive governance and extremism. Ground zero for this dynamic is Hungary, where Prime Minister Victor Orbán coopted parts of Jobbik's agenda and rejected liberal democracy.

We urged the U.S. government to press Hungary to recommit to E.U. ideals. Responding to our call, the Obama Administration banned six Hungarian officials tainted by corruption from entering the United States.

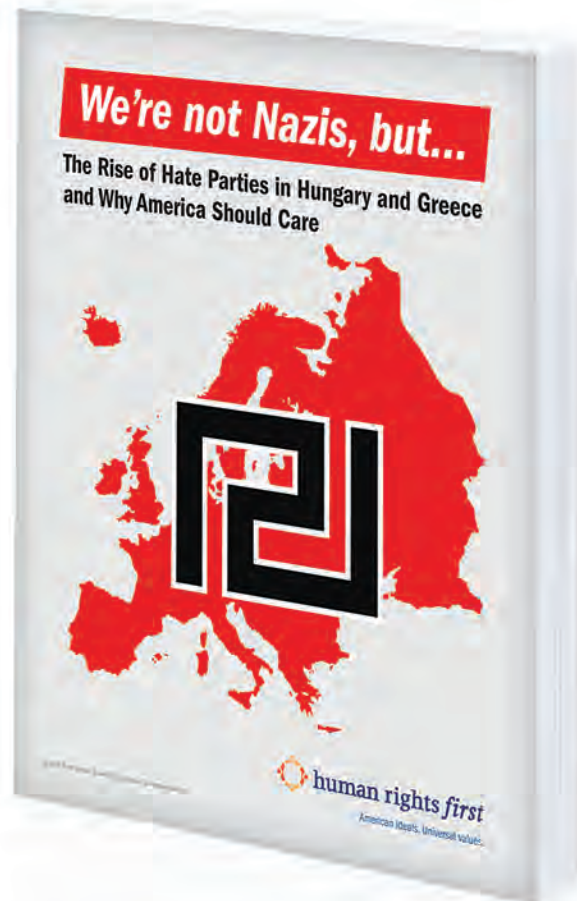
We are ramping up our efforts to respond to the rising threats, because in the effort to beat back extremism in Europe, the stakes could hardly be higher. ■

"This report is excellent... it answers lots of questions."

–Dimitris Christopoulos, International Federation for Human Rights (Greece) commenting on "We're Not Nazis, but..."

A HUMAN RIGHTS FIRST INVESTIGATION

As extremist political parties made gains in Europe in 2014, we produced a major report examining "the bloody tip of the far-right spear"—Jobbik in Hungary and Golden Dawn in Greece. These two neo-fascist, openly antisemitic parties have exploited and exacerbated anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim, and anti-Roma sentiment to get political traction. Based on extensive documentary research and interviews with activists, public officials, victims of hate crimes, and members of the parties themselves, our report tracks the rise of these parties and should serve as a cautionary tale to other European countries facing threats from the far right. We report that both the Greek and Hungarian governments indulged extremist parties. But in the case of Greece, the government finally cracked down, arresting many top Golden Dawn officials for alleged involvement in violence. Prosecutions may not be an option in Hungary, where Jobbik has managed not to be implicated in attacks. But as our report points out, Prime Minister Victor Orbán—and all ruling politicians—should be doing more to challenge these forces of hatred.



FP Foreign Policy®

Europe's New Problem With Anti-Semitism

By Elisa Massimino

Dec. 16, 2014

A NEW SURGE FOR AN ANCIENT HATRED

Elisa Massimino calls for a strong response to the resurgence of antisemitism in Europe. "It is not 1939 in Europe," she writes, "But the recent rise in antisemitism is a serious human rights problem, and unless the governments there get serious about opposing extremism, it's going to get worse."

Human Rights First Arrives in Houston

Our new office broadens our effort to help refugees

FROM OUR OFFICES in New York and Washington, we recruit and train lawyers to provide pro bono legal representation to refugees seeking asylum from persecution, helping thousands of vulnerable people begin new lives in safety and freedom.

When it came to time to expand this award-winning effort, Houston was a natural destination. Thanks to Houston's generosity, Texas leads the nation in welcoming resettled refugees; about 6,000 arrived in 2012. Refugees have helped Houston become our country's most ethnically diverse city.

But Houston's eight legal service providers are overstretched, and most do not specialize in helping refugees seeking asylum. As a result, some 75 percent of immigrants detained in Houston have no legal representation; the rate is only somewhat better for those not detained.

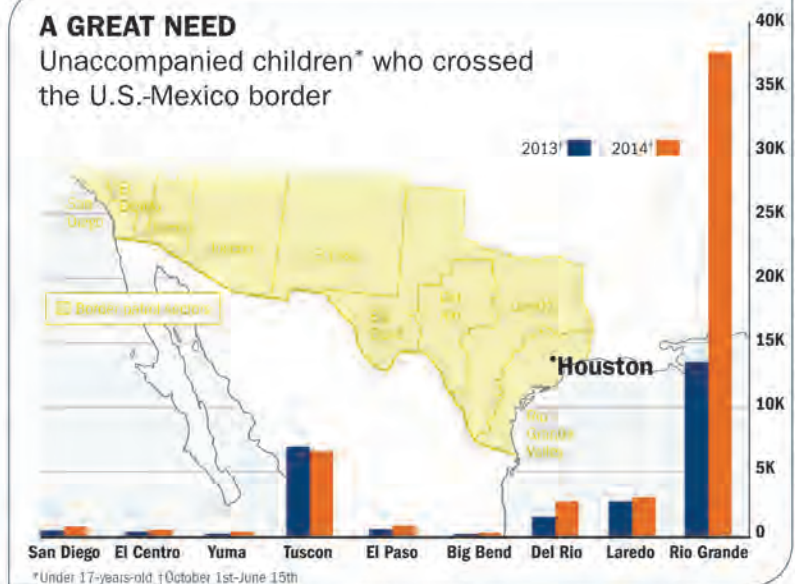
To meet this urgent need, in April 2014 we opened an office at Houston's South Texas College of Law, which graciously agreed to host us.

By June, that decision seemed prescient, as tens of thousands of terrified immigrants, many of them women and children, fled violence in Central America, crossing the southern border to seek safety in the United States.

Because of our Houston office, we were especially well-positioned to help. We added new staff, including social workers, to supplement our

A GREAT NEED

Unaccompanied children* who crossed the U.S.-Mexico border



Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Economist, June 26, 2014

fledgling office. Our Houston staff has already more than tripled in size. Along with our teams in Washington and New York, they're helping to protect the persecuted and hold the U.S. government to its ideals. The Obama Administration responded to the refugee crisis by using detention as a deterrent to would-be immigrants, holding thousands of women and children in "family detention centers" in Texas. Thanks to our presence in Houston, we have a front row seat to that inhumane policy, and we're working hard to change it. ■

OUR FIRST EXPANSION IN MORE THAN 20 YEARS
Elisa Massimino and Rear Admiral Don Guter (USN, Ret.)
explain why Houston is an ideal home for our refugee
representation operation.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

OP-ED COLUMNISTS

Human Rights First brings pro bono operation to Houston

By Elisa Massimino, Donald J. Guter

March 18, 2014

"The staff at Human Rights First's Houston office were great mentors and advisors."

-Alicia Handy, Associate at Latham Watkins LLP



PHOTO: Justin Slocum/Getty Images

HOUSTON, WE HAVE NO PROBLEM

A member of our Board of Advocates and a longtime partner in our work to end torture, Rear Admiral Don Guter helped bring our award winning refugee representation program to Houston. Guter [right, with our Vice President of Development Mary Hedahl] is dean of the South Texas College of Law, home of our new office.



Leadership

A diverse and accomplished group guides us

In the late 1970s, thousands of Haitians fled the brutality of their country's dictator, Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier. On makeshift boats, they sought refuge in the United States. But our government intercepted many of the boats and sent the refugees back to Haiti. Those who made it ashore were detained and denied due process.

Into this crisis stepped a new organization called the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights—which later would become Human Rights First. A team from the Lawyers Committee documented the plight of the Haitian detainees and launched a nationwide effort to recruit and train lawyers to represent them. This evolved into our current asylum representation work, which has helped thousands of refugees receive protection.

Last year, our country faced another such crisis: tens of thousands of refugees fleeing horrific violence and persecution in Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador crossed our southern border. Many were children who made the dangerous trek alone or mothers with young children.

And once again, sadly, the response of our government was unworthy of a nation that holds itself out as a safe haven for the persecuted. It summarily deported many refugees back to danger and locked up most of the rest in detention centers where they had little chance of getting a lawyer.

Human Rights First called our country back to its ideals. We helped secure lawyers for the refugees, traveled to detention centers to spotlight human rights violations, and pressed for legal and policy reforms that would remove cruel and unnecessary barriers to protection.

Our mission at Human Rights First is to press for American leadership on human rights. And one of the

most powerful forms of leadership is by example. When it comes to protecting vulnerable children, we must do better. In addition to the threats in their home countries, children who travel alone in search of protection are vulnerable to human traffickers.

As we often do, Human Rights First is tackling that challenge from different angles. We have launched a campaign focused on disrupting the human trafficking business—a highly lucrative criminal enterprise. This approach is sorely needed; despite laws prohibiting trafficking and despite the hard work of many activists, human trafficking is growing.

Why? Because the profits are high and the risks are low. We aim to change that equation. We're bringing together a diverse group of leaders from business, law enforcement, the military, and the nonprofit sector in a campaign to raise awareness, strengthen criminal investigations, increase punishments, and cleanse corporate supply-chains of slave labor.

We are confident that our efforts will protect children and others vulnerable to abuse, and I look forward to reporting on our successes next year. Meanwhile, please enjoy reading about our 2014 accomplishments, and thank you for your support, which makes all of this possible.



William D. Zabel
Human Rights First Board Chairman



"Words can say very little, when someone does so much for me. Thank you."

—Human Rights First asylum client from Sri Lanka

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Board of Directors Vice-Chair and Dinner Co-Chair Michael Rozen addresses the 2014 Human Rights First Award Dinner.

TO HELP REFUGEES, LIVE UP TO AMERICAN IDEALS
As Central American refugees crossed the border in large numbers, our board member James Ziglar—a former INS commissioner—called for a more humane response from our government, one “consistent with our country’s ideals and laws.”

The Washington Times

OP-ED COLUMNIST

ZIGLAR: Let’s not abandon families that seek refuge

By Jim Ziglar

July 11, 2014

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THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

**Barbara Harrell-Bond
gives refugees what
they say they need
most – legal aid**

By Stell Simonton
Feb. 24, 2014

A HUGE DIFFERENCE FOR REFUGEES

Having a lawyer can mean the difference between life and death for a refugee. As this piece notes, "90 percent of asylum seekers represented by Human Rights First had a favorable ruling."

"Human Rights First made it so easy for us. We appreciate your insight and thank you for giving us the opportunity to represent Dr. T."

–Pro bono attorney, Foley Hoag LLP

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The Marvin Frankel Award

This award pays tribute to lawyers and law firms that have carried on Judge Marvin Frankel's dedication to human rights by demonstrating an extraordinary commitment to pro bono service.

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Laura Atkinson-Hope and Sadie Holzman Diaz accept the Frankel Award on behalf of Latham & Watkins LLP in New York City.



Cathy Scheineson and Raymond Paretzky accept the Frankel Award on behalf of McDermott Will & Emery, in Washington, D.C.

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2014 HUMAN RIGHTS FIRST AWARD

Elisa Massimino, our president and CEO, presented the 2014 Human Rights First Award to Ryan Boyette, founder of Nuba Reports in southern Sudan.

When war broke out in 2011 in southern Sudan, the aid organization Ryan Boyette worked for ordered its staff to evacuate. Boyette stayed behind, committing himself to exposing the Sudanese government's brutal campaign to obliterate the Nuban people of southern Sudan. Armed with nothing but video cameras, solar-powered laptops, and satellite phones, Boyette and the Nuba Reports team risk their lives to produce short documentary videos about attacks on civilians and the growing famine in the region.

Nuba Reports is often the only source of vital information for news media and policymakers about the dire situation in southern Sudan. Following the Human Rights First Award Dinner, Nuba Reports secured a new partnership to provide video content for MSNBC's online news channel.

"It's a great honor to receive this award—it's so encouraging—and I hope to bring back some of this encouragement to my team in Sudan."

—Ryan Boyette, founder of Nuba Reports in southern Sudan and 2014 Human Rights First Award honoree

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AMERICAN LEADERSHIP ON HUMAN RIGHTS, EMBODIED
Ryan Boyette documents the brutality of the Sudanese
government's attacks on the Nuban people. Our Human Rights
First Award recognized his heroic efforts, as did a piece on NPR.



In a Remote Corner of Sudan, an American Takes his Stand

By Michele Kelemen

October 31, 2014

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2014 SIDNEY LUMET AWARD FOR INTEGRITY IN ENTERTAINMENT

At our annual Human Rights First Award Dinner, Kenneth Morris, founder and president of Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives, presented the 2014 Sidney Lumet Award for Integrity in Entertainment to actor Alfre Woodard, who accepted the award on behalf of the film *12 Years a Slave*, written and directed by Steve McQueen.

"I am very hopeful with Human Rights First because we're taking a proactive approach to disrupting the business of human trafficking."

—Ken Morris, President and Founder, Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives

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TIME TO ABOLISH MODERN DAY SLAVERY
We've worked with former Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Charles Krulak, to end torture. Now he's leading our effort to bankrupt the business of human trafficking.

FOX NEWS

OP-ED COLUMNIST

Human trafficking: US must do more to help victims, fight scourge

By Gen. Charles C. Krulak (Ret.)

July 8, 2014

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"Human Rights First discusses the negative impact of human trafficking and begins the process of exposing it to the rest of the world."

—William Bell, Mayor of Birmingham, AL

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A GO-TO SOURCE ON TERRORISM TRIALS
Like many other media outlets, *Newsday* relied on our
research showing that the U.S. federal courts are the
right—and just—place to try terrorism suspects.

Newsday

Terror conviction shows strength

By *Newsday* Editorial Board

March 26, 2014

2014 Financials

Nearly \$40 million of in-kind contributions

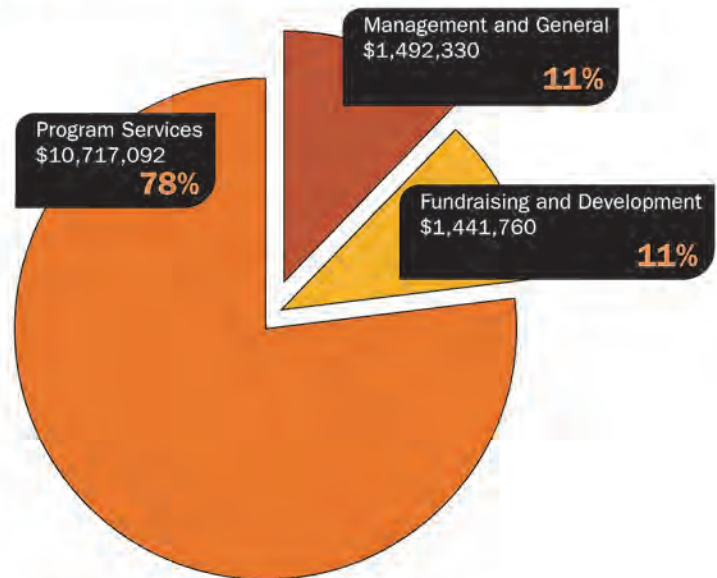
Human Rights First works with hundreds of committed pro bono lawyers who dedicate their time and talent to protecting the rights of refugees seeking asylum in the United States. In the past year, volunteer attorneys in the New York and Washington, D.C. metro areas, New Jersey, and Houston put in nearly 80,000 hours to represent hundreds of asylum seekers. Their participation—worth nearly \$40 million—is almost four times the value of each dollar we spend on program services.

Human Rights First is a 501(c)(3) registered charity, has an annual independent audit performed, and files informational returns with various governmental regulatory agencies. A copy of the full audited financial statements by BDO LLP is available upon request.

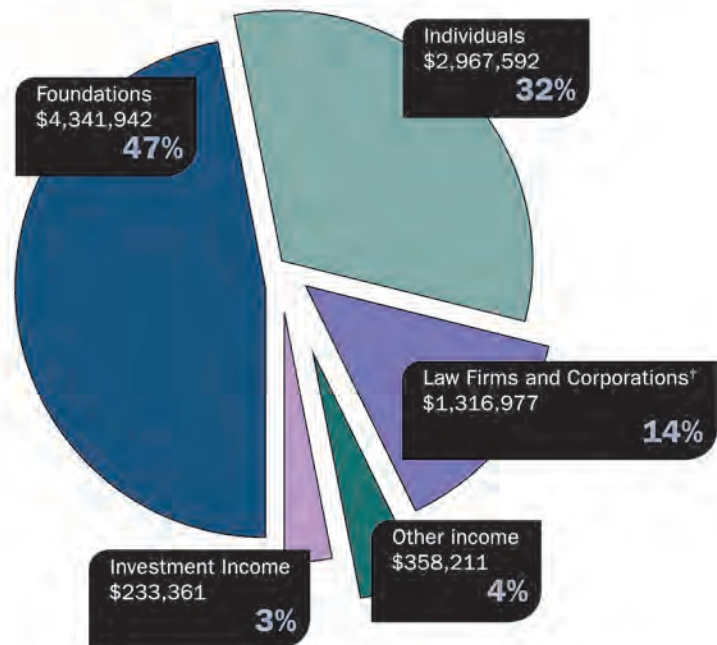
Charity Ratings



Expenses \$13,651,182



Funding \$9,218,084



*Does not include \$40 million in pro bono services



-Charity Navigator

Financial Position

Assets.....	2014	2013
Current Assets		
Cash and Equivalents	558,356	1,121,305
Investments at Fair Value	4,106,868	6,639,362
Prepays, Security Deposits, and Other Rec.	428,667	325,941
Total Current Assets	9,143,938	11,962,008
Total Pledges and Foundation Grants	1,218,627	3,178,983
Total Fixed Assets	1,627,005	520,089
Other Assets	1,653	89,922
Total Assets	11,991,223	15,751,002
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities	744,877	687,166
Deferred Revenue	8,889	0
Other Liabilities	500,015	299,286
Total Liabilities	1,253,781	986,452
Net Assets		
Unrestricted Net Assets	[1,082,459]	3,849,077
Board Designated Net Assets	2,500,000	2,500,000
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	8,319,901	7,415,473
Permanently Restricted Net Assets	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total Net Assets	10,737,442	14,764,550
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	11,991,223	15,751,002

AN INNOVATOR STEPS IN

This year we welcomed Zach Silverstein to our leadership team. With experience on Capitol Hill, with political campaigns, as a law firm partner, and as an executive at the education-tech company Amplify, Zach brings a wealth of knowledge and experience.

“I was attracted to the bipartisan, pragmatic approach,” Zach said of Human Rights First. “The organization is committed to being innovative, and that felt consistent with the narrative arc of my career.”

CRAIN'S

NEW YORK BUSINESS

Human Rights First has a 'true No. 2' at last

By Nazish Dholakia

November 11, 2014



American ideals. Universal values.

Human Rights First is an independent advocacy and action organization that challenges America to live up to its ideals. We believe American leadership is essential in the struggle for human rights so we press the U.S. government and American companies to respect human rights and the rule of law. When they fall short, we step in to demand reform, accountability, and justice. Around the world, we work where we can best harness American influence to secure core freedoms.

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