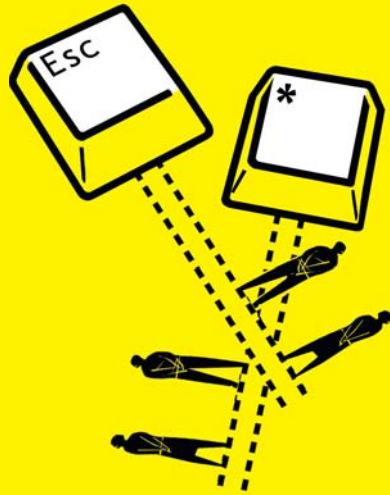


# KEYS TO FREEDOM



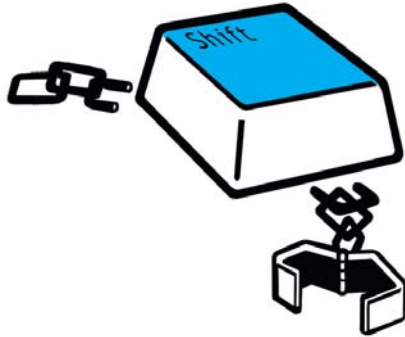
PEN Canada works on behalf of writers, at home and abroad, who have been forced into silence for writing the truth as they see it. PEN Canada opens the space for debate. We lobby governments in Canada and internationally, organize petitions, send letters, faxes and postcards for the release of persecuted writers, and conduct public awareness campaigns about freedom of expression.

We work for the release of imprisoned writers internationally, and to ensure that those responsible for the increasing number of murdered writers and journalists are brought to justice. At home, we work for freedom of expression within a national context, and to develop opportunities for writers living in exile in Canada.

We work so that stifled voices can be heard once again.

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The pen (or PEN) traditionally touted as the sword's mightiest opponent has become quaintly archaic in the 21st century. While the gentle men and women who founded PEN in the 1920s took elegant fountain pens in hand to write letters of encouragement to their imprisoned colleagues and to attempt persuasion with those responsible for their incarceration, today computers and the internet have become the weapons of choice for those of us who fight for freedom of expression. Unfortunately, the internet has also become a tool for those who would curtail that freedom. In this year's annual report, we examine some of the implications of the ways in which technology has changed our ongoing struggle.

Take the situation in China, which PEN Canada actively monitors as part of the countdown to this summer's Olympics. As you will see in our listing of our current Honorary Members (p44), one of them, Shi Tao, was imprisoned because of his writings on the internet after, shamefully, the internet communications giant Yahoo! allowed the Chinese government access to his files. On the other hand, as Marian Botsford Fraser reports in her notes from that same campaign (p36), the internet has made it possible for Dr. Yu Zhang to operate the Independent Chinese PEN Center from his base in Sweden entirely through that medium, getting news out of China by cellphone, email and website postings.

Technology has also made possible a creative and exciting initiative involving PEN centres around the world: the International PEN Poem Relay, an interactive project which saw a poem written by Shi Tao translated into almost 100 languages worldwide, all available with the click of a mouse on PEN websites. PEN Canada's contribution was a translation into Cree by William Merasty (p43).

On the home front, PEN Canada is using technology to communicate more frequently with our membership, by replacing our semi-annual printed newsletters with monthly email bulletins and improving our website ([www.pencanada.ca](http://www.pencanada.ca)). Our Facebook page has proved to be an effective way of spreading our message to a whole new demographic.

But (yes, the inevitable "but") whatever methods we use, the struggle goes on. We are grateful to have so many members, patrons and sponsors in our corner.

**PEN CANADA  
DEFENDS  
FREEDOM  
OF EXPRESSION  
BY ASSISTING  
WRITERS  
AROUND  
THE WORLD  
PERSECUTED  
OR EXILED  
FOR THE  
EXPRESSION  
OF THEIR  
THOUGHTS.**

BY NELOFER PAZIRA  
PRESIDENT

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I joined PEN Canada because the mandate and history of the organization touched a chord — to struggle for the right to freedom of expression in Canada and around the world, to advocate on behalf of writers in prison, and to “assist” writers in exile. It looked like a perfect place for me — because I believed this made a difference and because of my own family history.



As a child I accompanied my father to a peaceful rally in Afghanistan. It was a spring day in 1978, and I was still holding my father's hand as he walked up to the microphone. His clear voice echoed as he recited a poem in Dari. Less than 24 hours later, he was detained for being "an enemy of the State." The poem he had read was critical of the newly-established Soviet-backed communist regime, which my father had refused to support. In the following weeks, I sat in front of a wood-stove, helping my mother burn a third of my father's library. I watched the fire as it gobbled up in its flames books, rare hand-written manuscripts, precious stamp collections, magazines, even medical journals. Such was our state of fear that my mother buried their ashes deep under the dark soil of our garden so they would not betray my father's interest in reading. My mother walked around the house, frantically destroying anything that could help the authorities find evidence of my father's socialist and democratic views. To think and to speak your mind was a crime.

As a teenager in Kabul, I joined an illegal underground resistance movement to circulate banned books, “night letters” and anti-government literature. Written words were feared more than guns by the government. The punishment for discovery of a weapon in a household was prison; discovery of banned books resulted in execution.

I spent a good part of my Canadian university days at rallies, on Parliament Hill or in front of embassies protesting against dictatorships, occupations, and wars. Fighting for freedom of thought and expression has been an integral part of that long struggle. So joining PEN seemed natural.

As individuals, we have the choice to speak out when human rights abuses are committed; as an organization we are also responsible for each failure, when a human being is denied their basic rights. We have an obligation to act — either through publicizing a case, by writing, negotiating or by putting pressure on parties or governments.

Looking back at the year as President of PEN Canada, I can't help but acknowledge the calamity of our situation. I don't have to look far to see the enormous amount of work we have tried to do and the appalling frustration of our failures.

Last year, worldwide, 984 writers were imprisoned, forced into hiding, harassed, attacked or detained. Twenty-five writers were killed or disappeared. 47 journalists were killed in Iraq — 46 Iraqis and one Russian — most of them deliberately targeted because of their work. Eight journalists were killed in Somalia, six in Pakistan and three in Sri Lanka. In total, almost 900 journalists were arrested.

PEN Canada has 30 imprisoned Honorary Members, and while their profiles are posted on our website, little has been accomplished towards their release. Powerful governments, military dictatorships, and above all the indifference of the authorities overshadow our small-scale campaigns on behalf of those imprisoned.

Should we be depressed? Yes. Should we despair? No. Most of our Honorary Members know we are behind them. This gives them hope amid their despair. We keep that flame alight. But how brightly does it burn?



When PEN Canada originally began its work, each board member would adopt an individual prisoner and campaign on that man or woman's behalf with more and more members of the public joining them. Today, it seems to me, we need to remember those roots, in addition to the other work we do. If we are not out there writing to these prisoners, forming groups with the support of the public to fight for their release on an individual as well as a collective basis — no matter how large our membership or our budget — we haven't done our work.

We also need our supporters and our public. We are not enemies of our ministers or politicians or their parties. In a world where so many leaders speak proudly of freedom of speech, many of them do not back up their words with political action. People in government have immense power. Our supporters are those who must remind our leaders of their obligations and recall for them that serious human rights work wins votes for politicians. My father is now a citizen of this country, for which my family will always be grateful. But PEN Canada's files show there are almost a thousand others out there who still languish in prison. This is our collective failure.

Our collective challenge, then, is to concentrate our efforts in a direction that results in a more effective way of battling injustices. Choosing wisely our courses of action, and acting efficiently, could enable us to help give someone the hope of freedom. And to remember that freedom of expression is not just a fundamental human right, it is an individual's dignity.



## Article 19

### Universal Declaration of Human Rights

**EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF OPINION AND EXPRESSION; THIS RIGHT INCLUDES THE FREEDOM TO HOLD OPINIONS WITHOUT INTERFERENCE AND TO SEEK, RECEIVE AND IMPART INFORMATION AND IDEAS THROUGH ANY MEDIA AND REGARDLESS OF FRONTIERS.**

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

This year PEN Canada celebrates its 25th anniversary as the English-speaking Canadian centre of International PEN. A Canadian centre was founded in Montreal in 1926, five years after the founding of PEN in Europe in 1921, and in 1983 became two centres: PEN Québec (le Centre québécois) remained in Montreal and the Canadian Centre was moved to Toronto and later renamed PEN Canada. This is a moment to reflect upon our achievements as a centre as well as on our growth as an essential voice in Canada and in the world on the issue of freedom of expression.



By the end of this month, you will be able to see on our website a record of our work in Canada; we have assembled an archive of all the Canadian cases and issues in which we have been engaged, and certainly for many of our members, this is how they see and participate in PEN. The other areas of engagement include those members who have participated in our Minders program, which we are currently redeveloping and the Rapid Action Network appeals on individual cases, also being revised. In recent years, PEN's work with writers in exile has become central to how we engage with writers, and in addition, we have developed a rich literary program of readings and most recently, the TAXI drama project.

In this report I would like to focus especially on our role in International PEN. In the last year, PEN Canada's engagement in the international arena has become ever more important in the face of the global rise in intolerance, with the attendant escalation in the need to strengthen the right to freedom of expression.

PEN Canada has always been one of the most active and progressive centres in International PEN: co-hosting with PEN Québec a Congress in 1989; representing International PEN at meetings in Geneva of the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) between 1994 and 1999; being actively involved in the redefining and re-structuring of International PEN between 1996 and 2001; participating in missions to Sri Lanka, Mexico, Cuba, and Peru; leading a seminal campaign on freedom of expression and impunity. PEN Canada was one of the centres that instigated the writers in exile work of International PEN (in 1999) and chaired the Writers in Exile Committee of International PEN for the past eight years.

But PEN Canada's role in the world seemed to come into sharper relief this year, starting at the PEN Congress in Dakar last July when both PEN Canada's nominees for International PEN positions were elected by a strong majority of votes by the assembled delegates. Margaret Atwood was elected International Vice President (an honorary, lifetime appointment) and past-president Haroon Siddiqui was elected to the Board (the second member of PEN Canada to serve in this capacity).

PEN Canada became convinced of the necessity to be seen and heard once again in international fora after the threat this year to the long-standing mandate of the UN Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression — a position strongly supported by the government of Canada since it was created in 1993.

In March, an amendment regarding religious defamation was voted into the mandate of the rapporteur. PEN and other free expression NGOs believe the amendment leaves the mandate open to misleading interpretations by seeking to protect religions from defamation rather than the beliefs of individual religious adherents.

In countries such as Morocco, Egypt, Belarus, Afghanistan and Iran, writers are persecuted, jailed, and sometimes sentenced to death because their countries have religious defamation laws.

At this year's biennial Writers in Prison Committee (WiPC) conference in Glasgow, PEN Canada proposed that International PEN begin again the process of writing annual statements presented by a PEN delegate in Geneva. Consequently, a Working Group on International Governmental

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DEFAMATION LAWS.**

Organisations (IGOs) was set up with representatives from Canadian, Norwegian, American, Catalan, Belgian, Swiss Romande and English PEN centres to plan strategies for future actions at the UN and the European Parliament.

As this work theme developed, PEN Canada received an invitation to take part in the re-formation of the Canadian Network on International Human Rights in Ottawa. Comprised of two dozen or so non-governmental organizations and with the participation of Foreign Affairs' Human Rights Division, this group was active for a decade before disbanding a few years ago. Made up of groups like Amnesty and Rights and Democracy as well as PEN, the Network makes it possible to coordinate work on issues that are anticipated to come before the UN Human Rights Council.

Another international forum in which PEN Canada anticipates playing a larger role in coming years is the Inter-American human rights system through the Organisation of American States (OAS).

We are looking into possible NGO accreditation at the OAS for International PEN, just as PEN has accreditation in Category II status at the UN. The timing is excellent for greater participation by PEN, as the WIPC of International PEN launches its campaign (with PEN Canada participation) on Freedom of Expression in the Americas at the Bogotá Congress in September.

Speaking of the Americas, I had the pleasure and privilege of being invited by PEN Québec to attend the launch of the new Haitian PEN centre in May. (Previously, in 2006, I had assisted International PEN in the creation of a Jamaican PEN centre.) Now Haiti has joined the PEN family, thanks to the work done since 2004 by PEN Québec president Emile Martel and board member Georges Anglade, now the first president of PEN Haiti.

As mentors of the new centre, PEN Québec and PEN Canada were invited to attend two specific events: *Livres comme l'air*, an evening of readings dedicated to PEN Honorary Members in prison, featuring Haitian PEN writers. Also, *Livres en folie*, an all-day book fair in Port au Prince that saw 10,000 fans flock to a downtown park to buy books (accounting for 80% of Haiti's book sales for the year — at 50% publishers' discount), where 58 authors signed books under the blazing sun. In this country, where UN



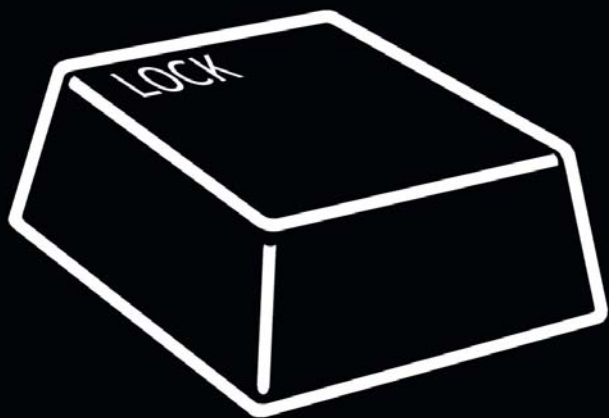
security forces and special police roam the streets to calm the populace's fear of violence and kidnappings and where blackouts and food shortages are commonplace, this book fair (now in its 14th year) is nothing short of a miracle. Someone said: it's as though Haiti is normal inside this park.

This year PEN Canada has also worked with the Independent Chinese PEN Center and American PEN on a high-profile Countdown to Freedom of Expression in China, a campaign (reported on elsewhere) that has had considerable influence on how PEN conducts campaigns.

International activism is a fundamental element in the history of PEN Canada that has seen this organization have a real impact. I believe we must remain vigilant as in the past yet adaptable to the rapid pace of change in the human rights environment, with feet planted in Canada and the world, an increasingly effective force for good.

I am grateful to Nelofer Pazira, President, and to the Board of PEN Canada for their generous donation of time and expertise to PEN's mandate. If you ever wonder how we get so much work done, it's due in large part to these committed Board members taking on everything from chairing major events and committees to realising fundraising ideas that work, unstintingly lending their vision and experience (legal, publishing, fiscal, communications, etc.) to keep the cause vital.

I also want to acknowledge the efforts of the staff this year: Caitlin Smith, PEN Canada's Administrator for the last four years left in May to begin work with the Canadian Civil Liberties Association — I know many members will miss her friendly, helpful energy. We are lucky to have Aleksandra Bida as Interim Administrator, Josh Bloch as Coordinator of the Trillium-funded TAXI project and of Outreach and Events, and intern Polina Kukar, working on the National Affairs online archive (thanks also to Bryce Kustra, from Pro Bono Law Students, who contributed earlier work to the archive). Past president Marian Botsford Fraser has provided invaluable help as Programs Associate, also writing press releases and statements on (frequent) demand! The Biggest News, however, is the recent arrival of Colleen Cowman as PEN Canada's first Development Director, who brings a high level of expertise to this important aspect of our work. I look forward to working with all of you in the coming year.



# WRITERS IN PRISON COMMITTEE REPORT

PEN's twin founding principles are the upholding of free expression and the defence of writers persecuted for expressing their ideas freely. The first principle really emerged in 1933, when the club (as it then was) for poets, playwrights, essayists, editors and novelists was twelve years old. At a congress in Dubrovnic, the burning of books by the ruling political party of one of the member countries was confronted.

The second principle, the one that most concerns the Writers in Prison Committee, was consolidated in 1937 when the writer Arthur Koestler, then a journalist, was imprisoned and condemned to die during the Spanish Civil War. A still growing PEN worked for his release and obtained it.

The year for the Writers in Prison Committee of PEN Canada (WiPC) begins at the Annual General Meeting, as it did in 1960 when the international committee was born. In a comfortable book-lined room in Toronto the outgoing chair, Alan Cumyn, after six committed years behind the wheel, handed it over to me, Phil Jenkins. I'm a writer who lives near Ottawa, and hence am within benign striking distance of many of the embassies of countries whose citizens appear on our Honorary Members list, the headquarters of many of our sister human rights organizations, and the desks of those who work within government to implement Canada's relationship with the rest of the world's enhancement or suppression of the basic rights.

Another abiding principle of the committee is the belief that there is power in words and in numbers, and the braiding of the two as weapons of persuasion. This tenet guides the Rapid Action Network (RAN), the email system of alerting over a hundred of our subscribing members to the need for words and numbers to try and free a foreign fellow writer or journalist.

The roughly weekly RANs are in some way a bellwether of the relentless persecution of those who use words to speak truth to power in countries where governments fear criticism. Looking back over the fifty-odd RANs from this year (which you can do on the PEN Canada website) one can see the arrival of the headlining protests in Burma, in Tibet and in particular in China, which became the focus of a PEN Canada inspired campaign and is described elsewhere in this Annual Report. In May 2008 a survey was sent out inquiring among members as to the efficacy of the RAN system; I want to ensure that the RAN subscribers are able to use their professional creativity to its greatest effect. Words are our trade, after all, and if anyone can persuade the powerful to show compassion, it is us.

In April 2008 I attended a conference in Glasgow, the gathering every two years of representatives from countries whose PEN Centres have a Writers in Prison Committee. The words the executive director of PEN Canada had said to me after a long meeting at External Affairs, "You're in human rights now!" echoed in my mind, and the Glasgow conference was a classroom, a reassurance and an invigorating contact with peers, putting faces to emails and personalities. Many lessons were learnt, "tricks of the trade" and I'm sure my progress as chair will benefit from them. My thanks to our colleagues in Glasgow for inviting me in and for the grand treatment I received.

I was also able to attend some meetings in Ottawa working towards the rebirth of a Canadian human rights network, which had become dusty. This is ongoing and will strengthen the Canadian human rights community and add decibels to its voice when talking to power when those rights are threatened.

**“ABOVE ALL  
LIBERTIES, GIVE ME  
THE LIBERTY TO  
KNOW, TO UTTER,  
AND TO ARGUE  
FREELY ACCORDING  
TO CONSCIENCE.”**

**JOHN MILTON**

Sadly, the year has come and gone without the return of the body of one of our murdered Honorary Members, Zahra Kazemi, the Canadian photojournalist who was killed in Tehran in 2003 after being imprisoned and tortured for, with deadly irony, taking photographs outside a prison. She was buried in Iranian soil in a hurry, contrary to the wishes of family who wanted her repatriated. To date, no one in Iran has been brought to justice for Kazemi's murder although a puppet show trial in 2004 resulted in the acquittal of an Iranian security agent.

Finally, the causes for celebration, sometimes brief, sometimes lasting, that it is right to feel when Honorary Members are released from injustice. In June 2007, one of Vietnam's leading dissident writers, Nguyen Vu Binh, was set free, after serving four years of a seven-year prison sentence for his critical writings. He was arrested in 2002 and sentenced by the Hanoi People's Court to seven years' imprisonment for having "written and exchanged information and materials that distorted the party and state policies." He was held at Ba Sao forced labour camp, in Nam Hà province, in very poor conditions and his declining health ignored. There are still, however, serious concerns for his well-being.

Ngawang Phulchung, a senior monk in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa was released in October 2007, six months before his sentence was due to expire. Phulchung was one of the leaders of the "Group of 10," a publishing collective formed after peaceful demonstrations were violently suppressed by Chinese authorities in 1987. The group's publications included a Tibetan translation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Phulchung is currently with his family, but is in poor health due to the vicious treatment meted out to him in prison.

The Iranian writer and barrister Nasser Zarafshan was released on March 17, 2008, after six years in prison. A speech he gave in 2000 included the accusation that intelligence services had murdered five Iranian intellectuals, and, after being set-up by the authorities, he was sentenced in March 2002 to five years' imprisonment and seventy cruel lashes for the possession of alcohol.

Of course in these three cases there is no gauging the extent to which PEN's efforts contributed to the release, but it undoubtedly did in some part. As the wonderful folk singer and human rights advocate Eliza Gilkyson says in song, "When the great correction comes" all the doors of all the prisons will fall open; till then, our work continues.

At the beginning of the next academic year, I'm intending to pilot an initiative in the creative writing schools of Canadian universities and colleges to introduce students, the next generation of free expressers, to PEN Canada and allow them to "adopt" an Honorary Member during their course. Also, the ongoing Minders programme, a branch of WiPC activity which involves linking a PEN Canada member with an imprisoned Honorary Member in the hope that they can establish a beneficial relationship, needs an overhaul, which it will get in the months to come.

Seventy years on from the campaign for the release of Arthur Koestler, the nature of power, and the nature of literary protest at the abuse of power, are as potent as ever. The WiPC is never short of poets, playwrights, essayists, editors and novelists undergoing persecution somewhere in the world, and that is our motivation. In the great scheme of things, PEN, like thousands of other human rights organizations, employs compassion, and provides evidence of caring, and that is an honorable path to follow. Throughout the coming year the committee's progress will be broadcast at [pencanada.ca](http://pencanada.ca), on the WiPC pages. See you there.



## **NATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT**

It has been an extraordinary year in Canada for freedom of expression. Rarely if ever in recent decades has the issue been in the headlines more frequently and the subject of such scrutiny and debate as in the past year.



For PEN Canada that is both encouraging and discouraging.

The encouragement came from the wide-ranging coalitions of individuals and organizations that spoke with one voice in opposition to the federal government's attempt through Bill C-10 to restrict the availability of film tax credits to only those films the government itself deems to be in accordance with public policy.

Equally encouraging was a similarly broad range of voices from all regions of the country and from all across the political spectrum as well, suggesting that human rights commissions are exceeding their mandate when they try to restrict freedom of expression under the guise of defending human rights.

What's discouraging is that in both cases it is government and government agencies that are proposing actions which would have the effect of restricting freedom of expression and of preventing artists, writers, journalists and even citizens from saying things or conveying ideas that some may find discomforting or even objectionable. In a democracy such as Canada, government should be in the forefront of defending freedom of expression and not an active agent trying to constrain it.

On both these issues PEN Canada took strong stands.

Appearing before the Senate Banking Committee in April, we called for the Senate to amend Bill C-10 by removing from the 500-page piece of income tax legislation the one clause that would give politicians and bureaucrats the right to retroactively deny tax credits to a Canadian-made film they deem contrary to public policy. That would send the bill back to the Commons for reconsideration. We will be pleased to appear at Commons committee hearings if the government should go against the overwhelming opposition expressed at the Senate and reintroduce the same provisions.

While much of the debate on this issue focused on government claims that tax dollars should not support gratuitous violence and sexually explicit material, PEN Canada's presentation to the Senate stressed that the issue is much broader than that. We noted:

The minister has said that guidelines will be drafted to administer this proposed rule, but guidelines are subject to change and revision at the whim of the politicians and bureaucrats who administer them. If this legislation passes, the door is wide open for a future government to deny tax credits to a wide variety of films on vague and subjective grounds.

Among those subjects that could be deemed contrary to public policy would be:

- a documentary about the Maher Arar case that might reveal new information that the government has kept secret
- a docudrama that is critical of Canadian Forces activities in Afghanistan
- a film that advocates a carbon tax to deal with climate change
- a film or television series that suggests there is a secret plan to export water from Canada.

The legislation might also affect the production of dramas, works of pure fiction — a film that imagines or depicts the breakup of the country, or even films that feature drug addiction and needle exchange programs. It is not illegal to debate or depict any of these issues but they can or might all be viewed as contrary to public policy and presumably could be denied tax credits.

If a future government uses the powers it gives itself under this proposed legislation, the result would be a significant undermining of freedom of expression in Canada.

The determining factor in rejecting eligibility for tax credits should be violation of the provisions of the Criminal Code. Further, it should be the courts, not a minister or his or her delegates, that determine when a film violates the Criminal Code.

PEN Canada also took a strong stand against recent complaints to human rights commissions in Alberta against journalist Ezra Levant and in Ontario against *Maclean's* magazine and its writer Mark Steyn.

While the advisability of Mr. Levant's decision that the *Western Standard* should publish the Danish cartoons about the prophet Mohammed can be debated, no one in a free and democratic country such as Canada can seriously argue the magazine should not have the right to publish

them. That is equally true for *Maclean's* magazine and the excerpt it published from Mark Steyn's book which led to the complaint against that publication.

Neither complaint should ever have been accepted by a human rights commission.

To ensure there is no repetition of such attempts to constrain freedom of expression through the guise of human rights legislation, PEN Canada supported calls for removal of subsection 13(1) of the Canadian Human Rights Act which states that it is discriminatory when an individual or group says or writes anything that is "likely to expose a person or persons to hatred or contempt."

Similar wording in provincial human rights statutes should likewise be removed.

There are several crucial flaws in this section. There is no need to prove that a person is exposed to hatred or contempt. There is also no sanction against frivolous complaints, yet the targets of those complaints must spend their own money defending themselves in most cases against nothing more substantial than suppositions.

Both the *Levant* and *Maclean's* cases suggest human rights commissions are exceeding their mandate in taking it upon themselves to become arbiters of what constitutes free speech.

PEN Canada believes provincial governments across the country need to make that clear both to their commissions and to Canadians.

As a final note, with this report I complete my two terms as National Affairs Chair for PEN Canada. It has been a tremendous privilege to work with such a dedicated group of members and staff on issues of such overriding national importance.

The extent to which the C-10 issue and the role of human rights commissions brought vocal responses from all across the country highlights the depth of support that exists across Canada for protection of freedom of expression. That is both an affirmation of PEN Canada's continuing defence of freedom of expression and strong evidence that such an activist stance continues to be welcomed by a large and receptive audience.



# MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Last year I was happy to report that for the first time in its history, PEN Canada had over a thousand members. Though the rate of growth has begun to level off after three years of climbing, this past year brought good harbingers, and we opened up several new avenues for increasing our membership significantly in the next few years. At the time of writing, we project to have about 400 to 450 people in the Free Expression Circle, an even higher number than last year, and a higher percentage of our members. And this year there were far more “over the transom” members joining than ever before. This suggests that the word is spreading farther, and that ever more people were inspired to visit our website or to take up membership during one of the PEN-sponsored events that were held around the country.

Among the newest areas of focus for raising PEN's profile and drawing possible members are (as odd as the grouping seems) the internet, colleges and universities, and parts of the country outside southwestern Ontario. There have been successes in all directions. This year we've made use of the internet not just to serve members but to find new ones. Thanks to board member Lynn Coady, who helped create a PEN Canada page on Facebook, with a link to the thirty-second public service announcement film made for PEN last year by Alliance Atlantis (if you haven't seen it, and have a Facebook account, please take a look). At the moment we have about 650 "friends" on Facebook and, of course, the numbers tend to grow exponentially. We hope to see returns on the site over the next years, though the effects of raising our visibility aren't always measurable; many people are influenced to support PEN after it's become a part of their general surround. The online sites do their work for free, of course (this matters — as far back as our records go, we have not had a fee increase, and yet the cost of running the programs and office has increased every year). But I would ask that members please direct their friends to our website, or to the Facebook page and the PSA. These resources can reach many potential members, including those who might not otherwise come across us.

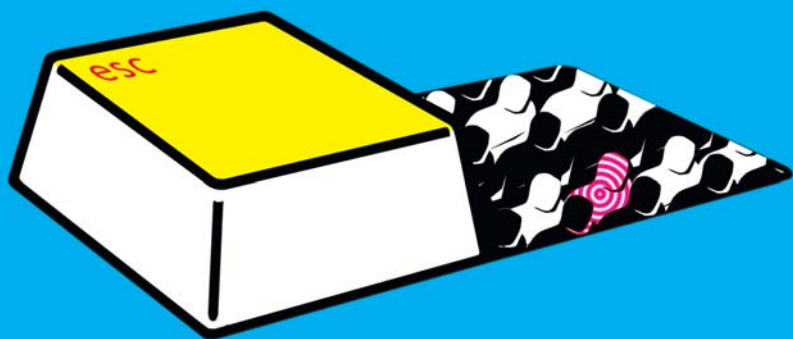
In our effort to draw more students to PEN, this year we made contact with students at the University of British Columbia, led by Matt Hayles, who set up a campus PEN club. The group held information and canvassing days each term, establishing what we hope will be an on-going presence on campus. Matt himself has become a resource, and will help advise Sakthi Kalaichandran, who is founding a new club next year at the University of Western Ontario. Any student members who want to get involved in these clubs, or who'd like to start new ones at other colleges or universities, should write to the PEN office. We'll send you guidelines and materials, and can put you in touch with local PEN members who'd like to help out in your city.

Especially of note, this year we've finally begun to increase our presence outside of southern Ontario. New board member Todd Babiak,

from Edmonton, has done great work in organizing events, such as the “Words Without Borders” tour, and helping to sustain the writer in exile position in the city. It’s no coincidence that many of the new members this year are from Alberta. Todd’s work points to the importance of events in bringing new people to PEN. The events needn’t be elaborate. The kinds of writers PEN helps defend — novelists, poets, journalists, songwriters — belong to no one region, and the cause of free speech is everyone’s, so I encourage members outside of Ontario to organize membership or fundraising events (readings, debates, on-stage discussions, performances, screenings) with writers local or passing through. There are people across the country who want to help, but we need one person in each place to organize and oversee. If you’re that person, please contact the PEN office and we’ll help you out.

Again this year we’ve written targeted appeals to potential members, and have made person-to-person appeals at events around the country. Along with Togetherfundraisers, PEN helped sponsor an evening of readings and dance in Toronto for Project Hope, to raise money for a Palestinian youth and children’s education centre. We also canvassed for members at the opening screening of the film *Emotional Arithmetic*, based on the Matt Cohen novel; *Acta Victoriana*; and at readings around the country. Thanks again to Lynn and the others who pitched PEN when I was unavailable to do so.

And thanks to everyone, in the office, on the board, and across the country, who have helped with membership over the past three years. Though my term as Chair is up, I look forward to staying involved with PEN, working in the service of imagination — that of writers and readers (and viewers and listeners) — which is to say, in the freedom to imagine others, and so to re-imagine ourselves. The consequences of stifling this freedom can literally be killing. But the freedom can be re-established — see the faces of those PEN has helped, read their words — and the returns on these successes never end.





## WRITERS IN EXILE COMMITTEE REPORT

Our Writers in Exile initiative remains one of the unique programs within PEN Canada and within the International PEN community. Capitalizing on its past successes and from the lessons learned, the Writers in Exile Network has now been renamed the Writers in Exile Program. It is now among the three main programs of PEN Canada and complements the valuable work of the Writers in Prison Committee.

This initiative continues to focus on three core activities: placements and residencies with academic, arts, and civil institutions, interaction with larger communities through activities like the TAXI project, and the participation of exiled writers at public reading events.

The cornerstone of this program is the residency and placement activity that is partnered with and supported by institutions of learning. This year the partnering institutions included Massey College, the University of Saskatchewan, McMaster University, and George Brown College. We have received excellent feedback from the partners as well as the writers in exile on the reciprocal value created through these residencies. We also acknowledge the support of RBC Foundation towards our residencies' initiatives.

In order to instill higher integrity into the selection of deserving candidates to meet the requirements of the partners, we established an independent selection committee chaired by Mary Jo Leddy, with Anna Luengo and Nurjehan Aziz as members this year.

Ameera Javeria, Gordan Icevska, Petronila Cleto, Jalal Barzangi, and Fereshteh Molavi participated in full-time and part-time placements.

In order to provide reciprocal interaction between the community and writers in exile, we developed a unique initiative, the Taxi Project, with the support of Trillium Foundation. PEN Canada's Josh Bloch manages this initiative under the supervision of our Executive Director.

The TAXI Project: Exploring Freedom of Expression Through the Arts is an initiative of PEN Canada and The Art for Real Change (ARC) Collective, engaging secondary schools and communities across Ontario in a creative exploration around themes of freedom of expression. The TAXI Project features an original play based on the lives and writings of four members of the Writers in Exile Program: Emma Beltrán, Martha Kuwee Kumsa, Goran Simic, and Sheng Xue.

Development of the play was facilitated by dramaturge Erica Kopyto, director Weyni Mengesha, and writer Emma Beltrán. Through the stories of four characters, the play explores the forces that compel people to leave their home countries, the struggle to create a new life in Canada, and celebrates the community of brave individuals who speak out against injustice. In addition to the play, the project also includes readings by members of PEN Canada's Writers in Exile Program, the screening of a new short film commissioned by PEN Canada on youth and freedom of expression (dir. Min Sook Lee), and an interactive workshop. The TAXI Project will be touring across southern Ontario in the summer and fall of 2008.

Several of our other writers in exile have participated during various phases of the TAXI Project and include Reza Baraheni, Tahir Gora, Genc Tirana, Benjamín Santamaría Ochoa, Qasim Farah, Amatoritsero Ede, Abel Gebreyesus, Alvaro Gomez, Kaziwa Saleh and Lutfor Riton. The project was supported by local artists including Rozina Kazi, Idil Mussa and Waleed Abdulhamid Kush.

Our writers in exile participated at various events throughout the year including *Our Song Marches On: Bread and Roses*, RU Studio Fundraiser, the screening of *A Mighty Heart*, An Evening with Ariel Dorfman, Eden Mills Writers Festival, Word on the Street, *We Lived To Tell*, Thorncliffe Community Centre's *Chill Out*, *Acta Victoriana*, Freedom to Read — *Writers Under Siege*, reading at the opening performance of *a nanking winter*, *Global Importune*, numerous school presentations, and our cross-country tour for freedom of expression — “Words Without Borders” in Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver.

PEN Canada's Writers in Exile Program has focused on assuring that as many exiled writers as possible participate in these events. During the current year, the writers have included, Reza Baraheni, Emma Beltrán, Petronila Cleto, Jackleen Hanna, Fereshteh Molavi, Abel Gebreyesus, Tahir Gora, Genc Tirana, Sheng Xue, Benjamín Santamaría Ochoa, Luis Matta, Benedicta Madawo, Kaziwa Saleh, Saghi Gharaman, Faruk Myrtaj, Mehri Yelfani, Fereshteh Molavi, Andrea Hila, Alvaro Gomez and Jalal Barzanji.

The Writers in Exile Committee acknowledges the hard work and dedication of PEN Canada Executive Director Isobel Harry, and our Events and Outreach Coordinator Josh Bloch. We also thank Marian Botsford Fraser and Aleksandra Bida for their commitment.

In view of the limited resources and demands of the program, we continue to review the program to assure full participation and integrity, as well as optimizing our rules of selection of members to the Writers in Exile List. We are also forming an independent selection committee to review all membership applications.

Members of the Writers in Exile Committee include Karen Connelly, Fraser Sutherland, Senthil Senthil, Todd Babiak and Munir Pervaiz, Chair.



## CROSS-CANADA OUTREACH REPORT

It's been a successful year for PEN Canada outreach. We now have PEN point-people (aka spies) in Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary and Saskatoon, prepared to show up at literary events with application brochures in hand. They're also ready to deliver short but rousing speeches on behalf of PEN and freedom of expression.

The goal of the Outreach Committee is, basically, to expand the reach and profile of PEN Canada outside of Southern Ontario, into the rest of the country. We're looking at students, journalists, readers and writers in every city and region in Canada — which is, obviously, challenging.

In Alberta, one of the most successful ways to get the word out has been through the Edmonton PEN Writer in Exile position.

Jalal Barzanji, an Iraqi Kurd, was tortured and imprisoned for his work as a poet and editor. With help from International PEN, he arrived in Canada as a refugee in 1998 with his family, speaking no English and completely cut off from his former life as a writer. Today, he is working on his prison memoir in Edmonton's downtown library and speaking as often as three times a week to schools and universities, business audiences and other writers.

Unlike other programs, the one in Edmonton is a partnership between a number of city institutions — the University of Alberta Faculty of Arts, the Edmonton Community Foundation, the Edmonton Public Library, the Writers' Guild of Alberta, the Edmonton Arts Council, the Edmonton International Literary Festival, the Canadian Literature Centre and Athabasca University — with further funding from the Canada Council for the Arts. The steering committee is broad and committed, and Jalal has remained an important and very public part of the city's writing community. It's a model that will work for other cities, and hopefully we can explore that in the coming years.

A number of other immigrant and refugee writers have emerged, emboldened by Jalal's example. Edmonton writer and editor Linda Goyette is publishing a collection of local immigrant writers, *The Story That Brought Me Here*, with proceeds going to the PEN Writer in Exile program, and a group of Alberta writers is hosting a symposium in the fall for writers who work in languages other than English.

In the spring, "Words Without Borders," PEN Canada's literary tour for freedom of expression, came through Edmonton, Calgary, and Vancouver. The events, and PEN Canada, received plenty of media coverage in each of the three cities and enthusiastic crowds.

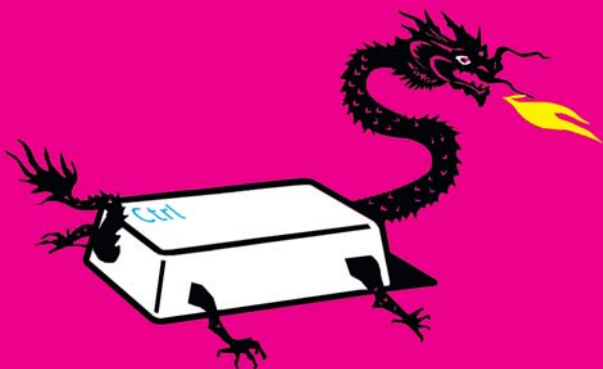
David Cheoros at Litfest in Edmonton, Anne Green at Wordfest in Calgary, and Hal Wake from the Vancouver International Writers Festival were extremely helpful. Josh Bloch, from the PEN centre in Toronto, did a brilliant job handling three events with a constantly changing line-up of readers. The final line-up included Sheng Xue, Jalal Barzanji, David Albahari, Rita Espeschit and Hadani Ditmars.

The Edmonton Writer in Exile Committee is also setting up a website that will be an active local portal for immigrant and refugee writers, issues of freedom of expression, and PEN Canada. Of course, this will be linked with other PEN-related websites in the country.

We're still looking for spies in other Canadian cities; please contact me if you're interested at [toddbabiak@shaw.ca](mailto:toddbabiak@shaw.ca).

BY MARIAN BOTSFORD FRASER  
PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

## THE CHINA CAMPAIGN: COUNTDOWN TO THE OLYMPICS



Since December 2007, PEN Canada has worked with the Independent Chinese PEN Center (ICPC) and American PEN on Countdown to the Olympics, a campaign highlighting the cases of writers imprisoned in China for expressing their opinions on human rights issues. (The number fluctuates, but hovers at around 40.) Our main contact at the ICPC, entirely by email, is the center's secretary-general, Dr. Yu Zhang.

Dr. Yu Zhang is a Chinese citizen, a research scientist with permanent residence in Sweden. After the 1989 Beijing Massacre he founded a human rights association of Chinese students and subsequently the magazines *Nordic Chinese* and *Tong Xun*. In 2002 he joined the ICPC where he is currently secretary-general (executive director). The ICPC's members are based both inside China and elsewhere around the world.

What follows are edited extracts from Zhang's many emails. Indefatigable is too small a word to describe his resilience, his attention to detail, his persistence, his compassion. What is suppressed is his own frustration and his anger at the harassment of his own family still living in mainland China. But he never stops providing first-hand news, correcting tiny errors of fact and fearlessly adding his voice to the campaign news releases that are now part of the public record of the ongoing tragedy of the suppression of human rights in China.

What the campaign reveals, thanks to the precision of Zhang, is the vast, intricate nature of the suppression of human rights — visits to mothers and wives, interference with personal cellphones and computers, mistreatment of prisoners everywhere in China, and the niggling, widespread surveillance and harassment, almost always on the charge of “inciting subversion of state power.”

**Dec. 19:** [*in answer to a question about his whereabouts for a conference call*] I have been denied entry to Mainland China since February 2007. I have written to China's leadership several times but got no reply at all. According to my sister who was contacted by the police twice, in May and in September, the State (the word used by the police) did not like my role as ICPC's secretary-general and included me in a list of less than 100 overseas Chinese not allowed to enter China Mainland. They promised I could get back the freedom to enter and exit if I would quit from ICPC.

I believe that I am still allowed to enter Hong Kong...But I am not sure if the telephone lines are safe there.

**Jan. 14:** The lawyer and family of Yang Tongyan have reported that he has been beaten occasionally at Meizhou Prison, Meizhou City, Guangdong Province. His situation has been getting worse as he has staged a hunger strike. We have tried to get his family to advise him to stop the strike but are not sure of the result. Very sad.

**Jan. 23:** *[update on several writers serving 8-10 year sentences]* Yang Zhili: Since May 2007 he started feeling sick, often falling in faint, or having dusky eyes, a tingling tongue, palpitating heart, shivering body, and even having urine incontinence...He has not got any medical care yet.

Zhang Honghai: suffering from prolapse of anus and since imprisonment also from vitiligo, getting worse due to the serious imbalance of endocrines. He has often been beaten and shut into isolation cell due to his arguments with the guards.

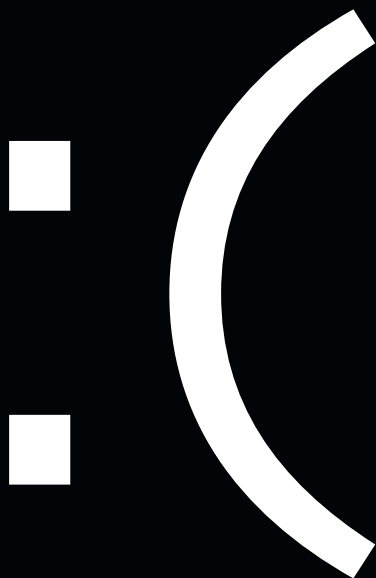
Xu Wei: being denied to get enough food, tortured, shut into isolation cell due to his persistent arguments against the conviction, and so having hunger striking several times. He has been considered to have suffered from mental problem.

Sorry for only sad news, Zhang.

**March 7:** Something has happened to Dr. Teng Biao. He has disappeared for more 25 hours. According to his wife, Dr. Teng was seen being kidnapped by several persons from his car into another car in front of his residence building about at 20:40 (Beijing time). Near midnight, his wife got a short message from his mobile saying that he had something to deal with so to be home very late. Since then he has been out of communication...[This] is a bad sign also to Hu Jia's case.

**Later on March 7:** Another bad news is that Hu Jia's case has been submitted to the prosecution. The police told his wife that Hu Jia would possibly get a sentence of 5 years in jail because he was attacking the government both in his online articles and media interviews. The prosecutor told his lawyer that the case would be presented to the court soon. This development may likely be linked to the disappearance of Teng Biao.





**SORRY FOR ONLY SAD NEWS.**

**ZHANG**

**March 8:** Dr. Teng Biao is released. It was the stupid dirty work by the police from the Beijing Public Security Bureau. It was because of his recent publications on human rights issues and he was warned not to do so any more. He was also warned not to say what has happened and so I did not ask him much. His many thanks to all of you!

**March 17:** [*for joint news release after Tibet uprising*] “This is reminding us about what happened 19 years ago in June, both in Lhasa in March and in Beijing in June,” recalled Dr. Yu Zhang, secretary-general of Independent Chinese PEN Center. “As the truth of the bloody Lhasa event in 1989 was little known beyond the region due to the governmental restrictions on press, Chinese people could prepare nothing to prevent similar bloodshed from being reproduced in Beijing and elsewhere in China a few months later. It is unforgivable to allow history to repeat itself when the whole world is watching Beijing for its promise of the press freedom and openness once more, 19 years later.”

**March 18:** [*Hu Jia tried*] According to his lawyer, the verdict will be given in a week. Dr. Teng Biao, who had applied to attend the court hearing, was taken away by the police around 8:00 and held until 14:30, after the hearing was finished. Five other lawyers were also detained and ill-treated in a police station for about 6 hours...Situation in China appears to be getting worse even in Beijing. Very sad.

**April 3:** [*Hu Jia sentenced*] The [official] Xinhua News Agency is very fast to report this verdict. It is obviously served as a warning to silence the different voices before the Olympics...It is likely to make impossible the suspension of his sentence... However, there should be more chances to push hard for the medical parole [he suffers from liver sickness] if the international pressure on this case is high.

**April 30:** [*Yu Zhang himself denied entry to Hong Kong*] They have never given any specific reason except for a formal notice of refusal. But the chief officer admitted that I did not make any bad record when I had been in Hong Kong before...So such a decision could only be based on a recommendation from another place where I had a similar trouble. China mainland is the only one. When I told him, "I understand that you must follow your decision and order, but we can still discuss a compromise for how and when to carry it out," he was excited: "As I said before, you are a person of understanding. Now you have just got the point. It is an order. So we cannot change but obey it." I took this as a hint that it must be an order from above, beyond his authority, and even the Hong Kong government's, to do anything...

Many thanks to all of you. I am back at home savefully. Attached is my modified version of press release. Please check and polish my addition, Zhang.



## PEN POEM RELAY

One of the most compelling and dramatic components of the Countdown to the Olympics has been the PEN Poem Relay, an interactive web-based initiative that took one poem, written by an imprisoned PEN member, and made of it a torch to freedom of expression.

The poem, *June*, was written by Shi Tao, the Chinese journalist, poet and PEN member who was famously jailed for “revealing state secrets abroad” because of email communications, his identity having been provided to Chinese authorities by the Hong Kong branch of Yahoo!. (Read more about this case on page 46 of this report.) Shi Tao wrote the poem “June,” a meditation on the 1989 protests and massacre, less than two months after he sent that fateful email — on June 9, 2004.

Since March 24, when its journey began in Shi Tao’s home city of Taiyuan, Shanxi, China, the poem has been travelling the world, virtually, on the web, being translated, read and listened to in almost 100 languages. PEN Canada had the poem translated into Cree by the writer and performer William Merasty.

To follow its progress, go to [www.penpoemrelay.org](http://www.penpoemrelay.org)

六月

師濤

## JUNE

BY SHI TAO

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY CHIP ROLLEY

所有的日子

My whole life

Will never get past "June"

都繞不過“六月”

June, when my heart died

六月，我的心臟死了

When my poetry died

我的詩歌死了

When my lover

我的戀人

Died in romance's pool of blood

也死在浪漫的血泊裏

June, the scorching sun burns open my skin

Revealing the true nature of my wound

June, the fish swims out of the blood-red sea

Toward another place to hibernate

六月，烈日燒開皮膚

June, the earth shifts, the rivers fall silent

露出傷口的真相

Piled up letters unable to be delivered to the dead

六月，魚兒離開血紅的海水

## OOPINA'OO PEESIM

BY SHI TAO

TRANSLATED INTO CREE BY WILLIAM MERASTY

六月，大地變形、河流無聲

Kakitho Nipimimat'soowin

成堆的信劄已無法送到死者手中

Namootha tamayaskum "Oopina'oo Peesim"

Oopina'oo Peesim, igoospeek niti Kakee'nipay pathik

Igoospeek nimasinaygeewin Kakee'nipaypathik

Igoospeek ana Kageesagee'eet

Kakee'nipay pathik ita Kakeemooskaneepathik sageetoowin/meegoo

Oopina'oo Peesim, awa Kwayes Kakeesoot peesim paskeeteepawee'oo nisageeya

Eewapatathigooyak isi tapwe Kie'eesimoosooweeyan

Oopina'oo Peesim, awa kinoosee'oo wathawee'oo' pattaga'oo oosam

misti'siegayguneek

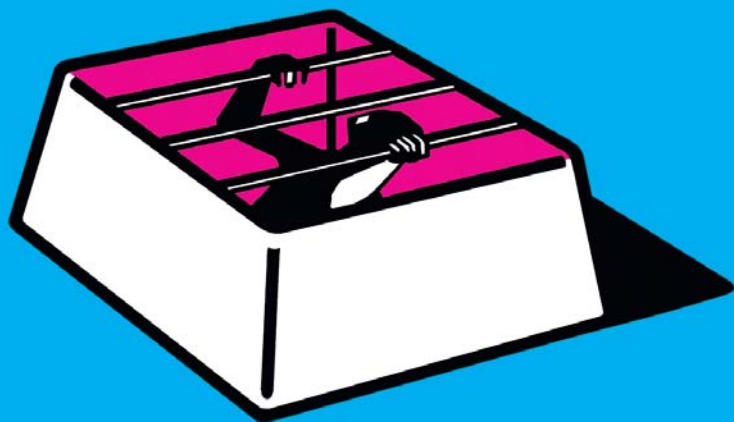
Oopimee itootet peetoos ita tantaynipat

Oopina'oo Peesim, ooma aski waskawee'pathin, oo'oosipeeya pooni'

peetaywano Kwayesmeecheet masinaygeeweena mista'steewa iga

igischaamaachik aneeyi Kakeenagataskeechik.

# HONORARY MEMBERS



## CANADA

**Zahra Kazemi**, a Canadian photojournalist of Iranian descent, was murdered in Tehran in July 2003 after being imprisoned and tortured for taking photographs outside Evin prison. Kazemi's body was buried in Shiraz, southern Iran, on July 22, 2003, contrary to the wishes of her son, Stéphane Hachemi. Calls for the body to be exhumed and repatriated to Canada have fallen on deaf ears. To date, no one in Iran has been brought to justice for Kazemi's murder. A show trial in 2004 resulted in the acquittal of an Iranian security agent. The government of Iran also publicly stated that her death was an accident, despite overwhelming evidence that the journalist was severely tortured and even sexually assaulted while in custody.

## CHINA & AUTONOMOUS REGIONS

Uighur writer **Nuremuhamet Yasin** is serving a prison term of 10 years for the publication of a single short story. "Wild Pigeon" is a first-person narrative of a young pigeon trapped and caged by humans when he ventures out to search for a new home for his flock. In the end, he commits suicide by swallowing a poisonous strawberry rather than sacrifice his freedom (the writer's own father committed suicide under similar conditions years earlier). The story is interpreted by the Chinese authorities to be a veiled criticism of their government in the northwestern Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. Yasin was arrested in the city of Kashgar on November 29, 2004; his computer, containing an estimated 1,600 poems, commentaries, stories and an

unfinished novel, was confiscated. After a closed trial on February 2, 2005 in which he was not permitted a lawyer, Yasin was sentenced to ten years in prison for "inciting Uighur separatism." His sentence was upheld on appeal. On May 19, 2005, he was transferred to No. 1 Jail in the region's capital, Urumqi, where he remains and is permitted no visitors. **Korash Huseyin**, chief editor of the *Kashgar Literature Journal*, was sentenced to three years' detention after "Wild Pigeon" was published in the November 2004 issue of the journal. All 2,000 copies of the issue in which the story was published were recalled by the Chinese authorities.

A lecturer at Beijing Language Institute (now Beijing Language and Culture University), **Hu Shigen** was detained on May 27, 1992, and held illegally for four months before being formally arrested and charged. The reason for his arrest was his founding of the Liberal Democratic Party of China (LDPC) and Free Labour Union of China, for drafting documents for the LDPC, including a "Statement on the Question of Human Rights in China," and for writing articles commemorating the victims of the Tiananmen Square massacre. Hu was charged with organising and leading a counter-revolutionary group and with counter-revolutionary propaganda. He was sentenced on December 16, 1994, at the Hohhot Intermediate People's Court, Inner Mongolia, to 20 years' imprisonment and five years' deprivation of political rights. He is held at Beijing No. 2 Prison, Chaoyang District, 100023. Hu is said to have been tortured in prison and suffering from poor health.

**Yang Tongyan (pen name Yang**

**Tianshui)** is a freelance writer, former teacher and office worker, and member of Independent Chinese PEN Centre (ICPC). He was detained on December 25, 2004 and a second time on December 23, 2005. The cause of his arrest were his Internet writings and publishing dissident articles, in addition to participating in unlawful activities against the state. Yang was ultimately charged with subversion of state power and sentenced on May 16, 2006 to twelve years in prison and four years' deprivation of political rights. He is held at the Detention Centre of the Public Security Bureau of Zhenjiang City, Jiangsu.

In 1992 **Hada** was one of the founders of the Southern Mongolian Democratic Alliance (SMDA) for the peaceful promotion of human rights and Mongolian culture. The Chinese authorities reportedly viewed the SMDA as a threat to "national unity." Hada and the SMDA published an underground journal, *The Voice of Southern Mongolia*, and he also finished a book, *The Way Out for the Southern Mongols*. In October 1989 Hada opened the Mongolian Academic Bookstore in Hohhot. The bookstore was closed down immediately after his arrest in 1995, and all its books, research papers and other properties were confiscated as criminal utilities and evidence. Hada is imprisoned in the 4th Prison of Inner Mongolia, in the city of Chi Feng (Ulaan-Hada). He is reportedly prohibited from talking to other inmates, allowed only limited contact with his family and denied proper medical care.

**Tohti Tunyaz (Muzart)** is an ethnic Uighur historian and writer from the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, China. On March 10, 1999, he was sentenced to eleven years' imprisonment and two years' deprivation of political rights. Tunyaz had reportedly been watched by security police for some time prior to his arrest and is said to have been arrested with allegedly sensitive material. Some reports claim that the content of this material was on ethnic relations published for classified circles only; others that it was material published for the general public. Tunyaz is said to have been formally charged with "inciting national disunity" and "stealing state secrets for foreign persons," charges that were amended by the High People's Court of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. He has a wife and children in Japan. One son was able to visit him in prison in 2002.

Officials from the Changsha security bureau detained journalist, poet and dissident writer **Shi Tao** near his home on November 24, 2004. This came several months after he e-mailed notes detailing the propaganda ministry's instructions to the media about coverage of the anniversary of the crackdown at Tiananmen Square. On December 14 authorities issued a formal arrest order, charging Shi with "leaking state secrets." On April 27, 2005, the Changsha Intermediate People's Court found Shi guilty and sentenced him to a 10-year prison term. The court verdict reveals that Yahoo! Holdings (Hong Kong) Ltd



provided Chinese police with detailed information that enabled them to link Shi's personal email account and the specific message containing the alleged "state secret" to the IP address of his computer. Shi Tao is a member of the Independent Chinese PEN Centre. In late December 2005 it was reported that Shi Tao was suffering from respiratory problems and skin inflammation as a result of forced labour.

**Zheng Yichun**, a Professor of English, was arrested by the security services in Yinkou, Liaoning Province, on December 3, 2004, and charged with "suspicion of inciting subversion of state power." The Prosecutor's Office cited 63 of Zheng's articles as evidence for the charges against him. They were among 300 articles that the police confiscated from his home. Zheng, a prolific Internet writer and poet, has published several books on a number of topics, including political reform, increased capitalism in China and an end to the practice of imprisoning writers. Zheng's trial on April 26, 2005, lasted less than three hours. On July 21, 2005 Zheng was convicted of "incitement to subversion of state power" for his critical writings, many of which were posted on-line on overseas websites. He was sentenced to seven years in prison on September 20 by the Yingkou Intermediate People's Court, Liaoning Province. Zhen is being held in the No. 1 Prison in Panjin City, Liaoning Province. His health has reportedly already taken a turn for the worse since his arrest.

**Li Zhi** is an Internet writer and financial official in the Dazhou municipal government, Sichuan Province. He was arrested on August 8, 2003 by Sichuan Province State Security Police after posting an essay on an overseas website that accused Sichuan officials of corruption. Police seized his computer. Li was officially charged on September 3 with "conspiracy to subvert state power" for having contact with foreign-based dissidents. The Dazhou Intermediate People's Court sentenced Li to eight years in prison on December 11. Evidence was supplied by Yahoo! which passed on his user information to authorities. Li is imprisoned in Sichuan Province and is said to be suffering from a worsening Hepatitis B condition.

## ERITREA

**Yusup Mohamed Ali, Mattewos Habteab, Dawit Habtemichael, Medhanie Haile, Emanuel Asrat, Temesken Ghebreyesus, Dawit Isaac, Fesshaye Yohannes and Said Abdelkader** were arrested in the days following September 23, 2001. They have yet to be sentenced. The detentions came in the wake of the closing down of all eight independent newspapers by the authorities on September 18, 2001 (these include the weeklies *Meqaleh*, *Setit*, *Tsigenay*, *Zemen*, *Wintana* and *Admas*). The authorities have alternately denied that a clampdown took place claiming that the journalists have merely been sent to carry out their national service, that the closures and mass arrests were necessary for the sake of national

unity, or that they were effected on account of the newspapers' failure to comply with laws covering media licenses. However, the more likely explanation is that the crackdown was an attempt to stamp out criticism of the Eritrean government's treatment of students and political dissenters as well as the war against Ethiopia.

## IRAN

Iranian intelligence services abducted journalist and film critic **Siamak Pourzand** on November 24, 2001. On March 6, 2002 Iranian judicial authorities started closed and unannounced proceedings against Pourzand. He was sentenced to eleven years in prison on April 13, 2002, on charges of "undermining state security through his links with monarchists and counterrevolutionaries." It is widely believed that the charges against him are based on "confessions" that have been exacted under duress. Pourzand was re-arrested on March 30, 2003, after being conditionally released in December 2002. The targeting of Pourzand is thought to be connected to his position as manager of the *Majmue-ye Farrhangi-ye Honari-ye Tehran*, a cultural centre for writers, artists and intellectuals, or to his articles critical of the Islamic regime. As of April 2005 Pourzand has been on conditional medical leave from prison. Every two months he is required to submit to the medical office at Evin for a medical report on his condition.

## BURMA/MYANMAR

The writer and leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD) was taken into "protective custody" following violent clashes between opposition and pro-government supporters on May 30, 2003. **Aung San Suu Kyi** sustained non-life threatening injuries during the demonstration and has been under house arrest at her home in Rangoon/Yangon since then. Most of the NLD's offices have been shut down and the government has ordered the indefinite closure of the country's universities and colleges. Aung San Suu Kyi was held under de facto house arrest for six years from July 1989 to July 1995, and again from September 2000 to May 2002. Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in October 1991.

Student activist and writer **Ko Aung Tun** was arrested in February 1998 and reportedly sentenced in March 1998 to 13 years' imprisonment for writing a book on the history of the student movement in Myanmar. According to the official reports, Ko Aung Tun was charged under the 1962 Printers and Publishers Registration Act, the Unlawful Association Act and the Emergency Provisions Act. At a March 1, 1998 press conference the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) claimed that Aung Tun was arrested for "collaborating with terrorist groups." Ko Aung Tun is detained at Insein Prison.

**Win Tin**, the prominent journalist, writer and Central Executive Committee member of the National League for Democracy (NLD) was arrested on July 4, 1989, during a nation-wide crackdown by the authorities on the opposition. Win Tin, now aged 78, was publicly accused of guiding and influencing Aung San Suu Kyi. He was also accused of being a "leftist" politician who urged the NLD to adopt a civil disobedience campaign against martial law, quoting the works of philosopher Henry David Thoreau and the example of Mahatma Gandhi. Despite the political allegations against him, he was formally charged with a criminal offence and sentenced to three years' hard labour in October 1989. In June 1992, just a few months before completion of his three-year sentence, Win Tin was sentenced to an additional 10 years' imprisonment under Section 5(j) of the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act. Win Tin's third prison sentence was imposed on March 28, 1996, bringing the total years of incarceration to 20. Since the start of 2006, he has no longer been able to receive visits from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Win Tin is entitled to a twice-monthly visit from a relative for 20 to 25 minutes.

## RUSSIA

**Anna Politkovskaya** was found shot dead in the elevator of her Moscow apartment building on October 7, 2006. A journalist who covered the war in Chechnya, Politkovskaya had been receiving threats since 1999 after she

wrote articles claiming that the Russian armed forces had committed human rights abuses in Chechnya. Despite these threats she continued to write and in 2003 published *A Dirty War: A Russian Reporter in Chechnya*, followed by other books. In 2002 Politkovskaya was one of the few outsiders allowed into the Moscow theatre in an attempt to negotiate with Chechen rebels the release of hundreds of hostages. In 2004 she fell seriously ill as she attempted to fly to Beslan to cover the hostage crisis there, leading to speculation that she had been deliberately poisoned to stop her from reporting on the crisis. A murder investigation is now under way. Vitaly Yaroshevsky, deputy editor of the newspaper *Novaya Gazeta* for which Politkovskaya worked is certain that her murder is linked to her work, a view shared by Russian human rights observers. The Moscow deputy prosecutor has also told the press of that the possible link between her death and her journalism will be investigated.

## TURKEY

**Asiye Güzel Zeybek** was arrested in February 1997 during a demonstration protesting alleged links between Mafia groups and the government. Zeybek, the editor-in-chief of *Atilim*, a radical newspaper, and was accused under Article 168 of the Penal Code of connections with the now-banned Marxist-Leninist Communist Party and specifically of running and distributing the MLCP journal *İşçinin Yolu (Worker's Path)*.

The initial trial proceedings against Zeybek were commenced in February 2001, four years after her arrest. A series of hearings were since held. At the conclusion of a lengthy trial, Zeybek was released on June 5, 2002, after spending five years and four months in prison. On October 16, 2002, Zeybek was sentenced to a heavy sentence of 12 and a half years' imprisonment for belonging to the MLCP. She currently lives in Sweden.

**Ragip Zarakolu's** staunch belief in freedom of expression, his vocal campaign against book bannings and his persistence in publishing works that violate Turkey's repressive censorship laws have resulted in a series of indictments dating back to the early 1970s. The Belge Publishing House, which Zarakolu owns, has operated under a barrage of charges brought by Turkish authorities. He is currently on trial for an article published in the journal *Ozgur Politika* on March 8, 2003. The article was entitled "Sana Ne" ("Of No Interest") and its lambasting of what Zarakolu describes as Turkey's "aggressive and derogatory language used against the Kurdish region in Iraq" has seen the publisher once again fall foul of Article 312. Convictions under Article 312 carry sentences of between six months and two years.

#### TURKMENISTAN

**Rakhim Esenov**, a respected novelist, historian and freelance correspondent for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

(RFE/RL), remains under investigation in Turkmenistan on the charge of "inciting social, national and religious hatred using the mass media" with his novel *Ventsenosny Skitalets (The Crowned Wanderer)*. If convicted, he faces up to four years' imprisonment. Esenov, now 80, was questioned by members of the Turkmen Ministry of National Security (MNB) upon his return to Turkmenistan on February 23, 2004, following medical treatment abroad. Already in poor health following a heart attack only two days prior to his arrest, Esenov suffered a stroke during interrogation and was taken to hospital. Esenov was initially accused of smuggling 800 copies of his banned novel — which had been seized by customs officials in January 2004 — into Turkmenistan from Russia. He was released on March 9, 2004, after submitting a written undertaking to remain in Turkmenistan. However, the charges against him were not dropped, and the results of an investigation are still pending.

#### UZBEKISTAN

**Muhammad Bekzhon** was deported from Ukraine in March 1999 on accusations of involvement in a series of explosions in Tashkent. Several others were arrested in connection with these events, including writer Mamadali Makhmudov. It is thought that Bekzhon's arrest is linked to his association with the exiled opposition leader Muhammad Salih (his brother) and that the charges are linked to his work on

*Erk*, the opposition party's newspaper, although it has been banned since 1994. Bekzhon was sentenced to 15 years in prison in March 1999. His sentence is set to expire in March 2014. He is held in Kagan Prison in Bukhara. There are concerns that Bekzhon has been tortured.

Journalist and opposition politician **Yusif Ruzimuradov** was deported from Ukraine in March 1999 on accusation of involvement in a series of explosions in Tashkent. Several others were arrested in connection with these events. It is thought that Ruzimuradov's arrest is linked to his association with the exiled opposition leader Muhammed Salih and that the charges are linked to his work as editor-in-chief of *Erk*, although the opposition party's publication has been banned since 1994. Some of the defendants testified to having been tortured under interrogation including beatings, electric shock and threat of rape of female family members. Ruzimuradov was sentenced to eight years in prison in March 1999 on charges of attempting to "overturn the government by force," "membership of an illegal organization" and "slander" of the Uzbek President.

**Mamadali Makhmudov** is a well-known poet in Uzbekistan. He was taken into custody in February 1999 and taken to an unknown location. He "reappeared" in May and was charged with threatening the president and constitutional order. These charges appear to be based on the evidence that he possessed

copies of the banned *Erk* newspaper, voice of the banned Erk political party, and because of his association with writer, Muhammad Salih, Erk's exiled leader. Makhmudov was sentenced to 14 years in prison. Makhmudov received a Hellman/Hammett grant in 2000, given to recognize the courage of writers around the world who have been targets of political persecution and are in financial need.

## VIETNAM

**Le Dinh Nhan**, the Acting Head of the Institute for the Propagation of the Dharma, Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV), was arrested on December 29, 1994, for publishing an open letter criticizing government policy on freedom of speech and religious expression. He was held under "temple arrest" until around mid-1995, when he was transferred to an isolated area in Quangai. Since 2003 he has been at Nguyen Thieu Monastery, Binh Fonh Province, held incommunicado with security guards reportedly permanently stationed at the gates. Le Dinh Nhan has been the author of renowned books on Buddhism and Oriental philosophy for the last thirty years. He is said to be one of the most respected religious leaders of Vietnamese Buddhists.

# HONORARY MEMBERS RELEASED



## CHINA & TIBET AUTONOMOUS REGION

**Ngawang Phulchung**, a senior monk in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa and an Honorary Member of PEN Canada, was released on October 29, 2007, six months before his sentence was due to expire. Phulchung was one of the leaders of the “Group of 10,” or Drepung printing group, a publishing collective formed after peaceful demonstrations were violently suppressed by Chinese authorities in September 1987. Their publications included a Tibetan translation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and “The Meaning of the Precious Democratic Constitution of Tibet,” a manifesto calling for a democratic system based on Buddhist tradition. Phulchung is currently with his family, but is in poor health due to the torture and inhumane treatment he suffered in prison.

## IRAN

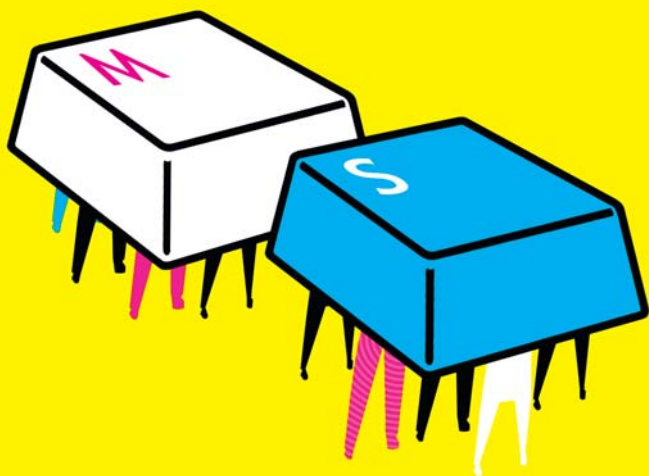
Writer, translator and barrister **Nasser Zarafshan** was released on March 17, 2007. It is believed that international pressure contributed to his release. Zarafshan was arrested in October 2000 after giving a speech in which he stated that the intelligence services had murdered five Iranian intellectuals in 1998 in Tehran. He was initially charged with publishing information about the assassinations, imprisoned in December 2000, and released after one month, pending trial. While in detention, Zarafshan’s office was reportedly searched, and weapons and alcohol were allegedly found. Zarafshan was sentenced on March 19, 2002, to five years’ imprisonment (2 years for disseminating state secrets, 3 years for the possession of firearms) and 70

lashes for the possession of alcohol. Zarafshan denied the firearms and alcohol charges and claimed these were planted in his office by the authorities.

## VIETNAM

Writer **Nguyen Vu Binh** was released from prison June 9, 2007 under amnesty following international pressure. A leading member of the Democracy Club for Vietnam, he was arrested on September 25, 2002 and sentenced by the Hanoi People’s Court to seven years’ imprisonment, to be followed by three years’ house arrest, on charges of espionage in a three-hour trial on December 31, 2003. Following the proceedings, the official Vietnam news agency reported that he had been convicted of having “written and exchanged, with various opportunist elements in the country, information and materials that distorted the party and state policies.” He was also accused of communicating with “reactionary” organisations abroad. His sentence was upheld on appeal on May 5, 2004. He was held at Ba Sao forced labour camp, in Nam Hà province, in very poor conditions and denied adequate medical care or nutrition. The 39-year old writer was targeted for the online publication of one of his critical essays, “Some Thoughts on the China-Vietnam Border Agreement.” Nguyen Vu Binh is a former journalist who worked for 10 years for Tap Chi Cong (Journal of Communism), the official publication of the Communist Party of Vietnam. He left his post in January 2001 to form the independent Liberal Democratic Party and is known for his critical writings calling for political reform.

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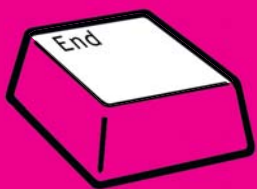
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