

CAGEPRISONERS

ANNUAL REPORT
2010-2011



About Cageprisoners

Cageprisoners is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee which operates as a human rights NGO. The organisation seeks to work for political Muslim detainees, specifically those interned as a result of the 'War on Terror' and its peripheral campaigns, by raising awareness of the illegality and the global consequences of their detention. By promoting due process the vision of the organisation is to see a return to the respect of those fundamental norms which transcend religion, societies and political theories.

Cageprisoners comprises of an advisory group which includes patrons, seasoned activists, lawyers, doctors and former detainees. From the group a board has been elected which oversees the strategy and management of the organisation and its employees. By working in such a way the working environment of the organisation can constantly be reviewed in light of its aims and objectives.



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Introduction



As-salaamu 'alaikum wa rahmat Ullahi wa barakaatuh

The last year has seen some immense change around the world. I feel fortunate that the UK government's ending of the royal prerogative that forbade me from travelling, has allowed me to witness some of those events with my own eyes. The Arab Spring has given us all hope, that change is indeed possible.

Egypt and Libya are among the countries that I travelled to over this last year. In both places, there is a sense that the time has come for justice to take a real position within society. It would seem that it is justice that people are most concerned with. Meeting with released detainees in both countries, I know that they have suffered in the cause of trying to achieve some semblance of justice, and it is now so close that they can almost touch it.

Unfortunately, for those held in the detention camps at Guantanamo Bay, change is a faraway land. Instead of Guantanamo closing, as promised by US President Barack Obama, it still continues to remain open to this day. Further, the Obama administration has chosen to resume the kangaroo courts known as the Military Commissions, the same Commissions that I was once to be tried before. Had it not been for international pressure, I may have been subjected to that process and thus be convicted of crimes I had not committed before a sham court.

This coming year, the tenth anniversary of Guantanamo Bay being open approaches us, and with it, we must bring a renewed sense of responsibility to closing the detention camps. I know that we at Cageprisoners are planning well in advance and will be working tirelessly to make sure that the remaining men are freed, however this is a fight that we must all be involved in.

In the UK, there have been some real developments, particularly in relation to those of us who were once detained in Guantanamo. After many meetings with senior members of the UK government, a settlement was paid to those of us who knew that the previous government had been complicity in our rendition, detention and torture. This has been the first real acknowledgment that we were failed as citizens and residents of the UK.

Along with the settlements, the UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, ordered there to be an inquiry into our rendition and torture. While this was welcome initially, the terms of reference laid out by the government have forced us to withdraw from the process as the seem to favour giving too much secrecy to the government.

This last year has brought with it great hope and also great disappointment. It is my sincerest wish that we work towards building on the ground that we have made, and hope that we can bring some meaningful change to those issues that we work on.

Moazzam Begg
Director
Cageprisoners

Reflecting on the last year



As-salaamu 'alaikum wa rahmat Ullahi wa barakaatuh

The assassination of Osama bin Laden by the US in Pakistan can, in all likelihood, be identified as one of the most significant incidents of 2011. A War on Terror that was begun, specifically to seek out and destroy him, has proven to reach far beyond the individual. Rather, what we have seen over the last decade, is that the War on Terror has been indiscriminate in its killing and detention of human beings.

Last year, Cageprisoners took on the task of looking into extrajudicial killings, particularly in relation to drone strikes. Initially we were concerned with the issue because we saw it as the ultimate form of removing due process from an individual. However, we are more dedicated than ever, because we have come to see the impact of these drone strikes on the affected communities. People from Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen are more angry than they have ever been due to the complete disregard the American establishment has for human life.

While the impact of these drone strikes is felt deeply in the affected countries, the sentiment of anger and alienation is finding itself also in the UK. As the attacks increase, the British security agencies have stepped up their harassment of Muslims from those countries, on the assumption that somehow the sense of anger will find itself in the UK. Such assumptions have already resulted in gross abuses of human rights, as more criminalised communities are being created.

While we have decided to take on work relating to extrajudicial killings, we have not allowed it to distract us from the very important work we have been doing on Guantanamo, secret detention and counter-

terrorism policies around the world. Currently our staff and interns are working on major projects including:

- ◆ Analysis of counter-terrorism policies in France and French complicity in renditions and torture abroad.
- ◆ How non-Muslims in the UK have been impacted by counter-terrorism legislation.
- ◆ US domestic counter-terrorism policies focussing on procedural impropriety and disproportionate sentencing within the federal justice system.
- ◆ A major revision to our previous Detention Immorality report, looking into the extent of detention without charge in the UK.

With the tenth anniversary of Guantanamo fast approaching, Cageprisoners has also initiated a major project called *Laa Tansa—Never Forget*, which we will be releasing in January 2012. Our hope, is that we will be able to leave a lasting legacy about the abuses that took place in Guantanamo Bay.

It is only through the Grace of Allah SWT that Cageprisoners still continues to function today and that we are able to continue helping those who are in great need.

Asim Qureshi
Executive Director
Cageprisoners

Vision

To see a return to the respect of those fundamental norms which transcend religion, societies and political theories. It is the vision of Cageprisoners that abuse of individuals and demonization of societies be eradicated completely and that respect for human rights is unequivocally promoted globally.

Mission

To improve the circumstances and situation of political Muslim detainees worldwide, specifically those interned as a result of the War on Terror and its side campaigns.

To use our strengths and experience to work for those political Muslim detainees with focus on:

- ◆ Due process
- ◆ Equal/non-discriminatory application of the law
- ◆ Enforcement of basic rights globally
- ◆ Fair trials using evidence of internationally required standards
- ◆ Badly drafted legislation which criminalises dissent and prosecutes dissenting members of the Muslim community – targeting the process which makes them ‘detainees’

Strengths

The work carried out by Cageprisoners requires and understanding of core values that serve the interests of justice and those affected worst by draconian anti-terror measures:

Prisoner understanding – one of the major assets of Cageprisoners, is the role which its staff and volunteers play in understanding the prisoners themselves.

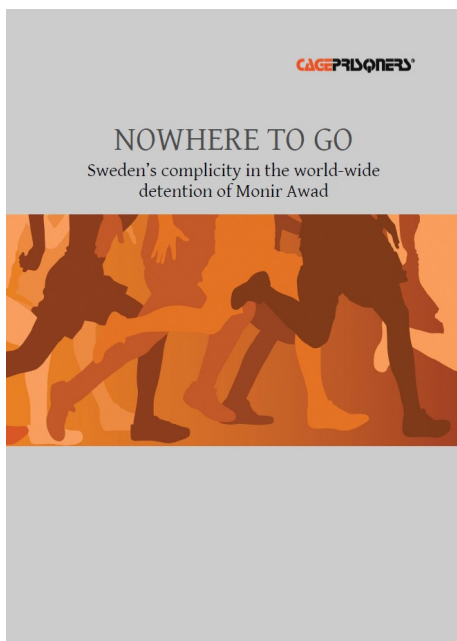
Often organisations do not understand the cultural, religious or social needs of those they try and represent; thus Cageprisoners stands as a bridge between the prisoners and possible solutions they may be able to benefit from in the legal and political world. Further, the ethos of the organisation requires that no action be taken which would be offensive to the prisoner, to always try and work within the way those detained would have us represent them.

Common understanding – With Muslim communities around the world being targeted by the global ‘War on Terror’ a response is required that brings together the Islamic world with the non-Islamic one. Cageprisoners relies on Islamic doctrines relating to due process to highlight in the Muslim world the same policies that exist elsewhere; by doing so that aim is to reach a common understanding of what is at stake in terms of human behaviour and how to promote a return to human rights.

Due process – It is not only the right to a fair trial that Cageprisoners promotes, rather the morality of the law. Thus, even though national legislation in various jurisdictions may be given a veneer of legality, in reality, it is often against the spirit of the law. Our understanding of due process goes to the very heart of the counter-terrorism policies that are implemented, whether legally or illegally.

“Cageprisoners stands as a bridge between the prisoners and possible solutions they may be able to benefit from in the legal and political world.”

Projects



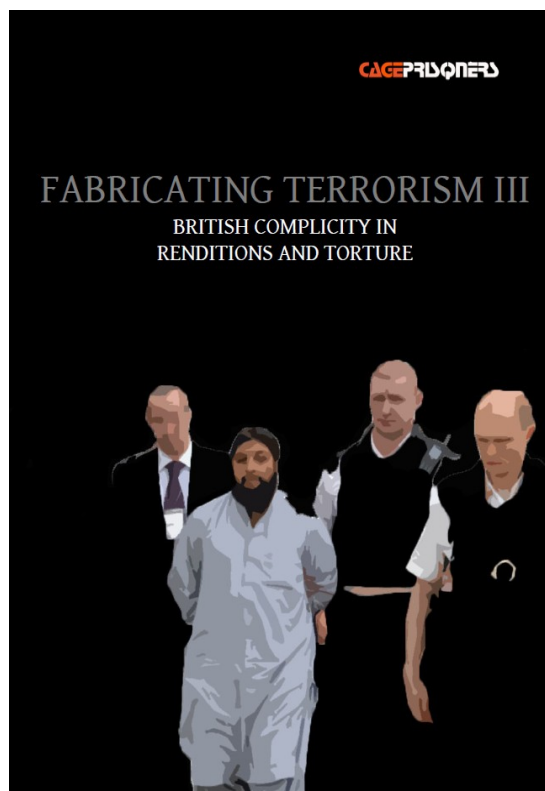
Nowhere To Go

Based on extensive interviews in Sweden with Monir Awad and former Guantanamo detainee Mehdi Ghezali, Cageprisoners chart the unfortunate manner in which Awad was detained first in the Horn of Africa and then subsequently in Pakistan with clear complicity in his detention by the Swedish authorities.

Fabricating Terrorism III

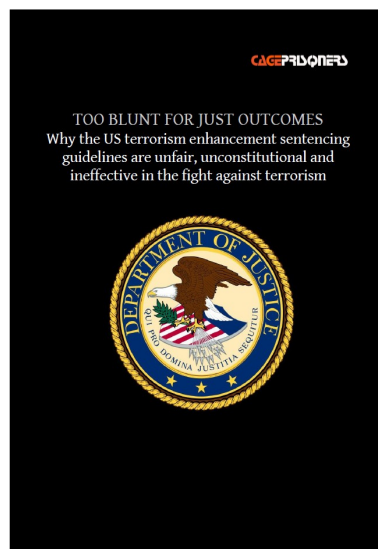
The most recent revised copy of the seminal Cageprisoners report, *Fabricating Terrorism* was released in order to help emphasise the need for a public inquiry into the way in which British security agencies and the previous government were complicit in rendition and torture. The report became particularly relevant as the Detainee Inquiry was ordered by UK Prime Minister David Cameron.

The strength of the report is that it provides the most up-to-date account of the way in which British citizens and residents were let down by the government that was supposed to protect them. Of particular note to the report was the inclusion of an interview with Umm Dawud, the first female British resident to accuse the government of being complicit in her rendition and abuse.



Too Blunt for Just Outcomes

Although there are real areas of concern in relation to due process and procedural impropriety, the focus of this report is on the sentencing guidelines that are used in cases involving Muslims. Even where the convictions against a Muslim suspect bear only a very peripheral relation to terrorism, a terrorism enhancement is being applied which dramatically increases the number of years to be served by the defendant.



Detainee Inquiry Response

Cageprisoners has been heavily involved with a coordinated effort by UK based NGOs to respond to the Detainee Inquiry ordered by the British government. Unhappy with the Terms of Reference and Protocols for the Inquiry, the NGOs have come together in order to provide a unified response to the Inquiry.

Good Muslim, Bad Muslim

When the current UK government ordered a review of the *Prevent* strategy, Muslim communities were hopeful that it would signal a change in policy by the government in the way that Muslims had been systematically criminalised. Once the government released its revised strategy, Cageprisoners were forced to respond to the policies which seemed to very much keep in line with that of the previous government.



The John Adams Project at the ACLU

Cageprisoners has also been helping staff at the American Civil Liberties Union's John Adams project to advise about human rights and cultural issues relating to their clients. Our work has been of great benefit to the lawyers and activists who have been keen to promote human rights and due process.



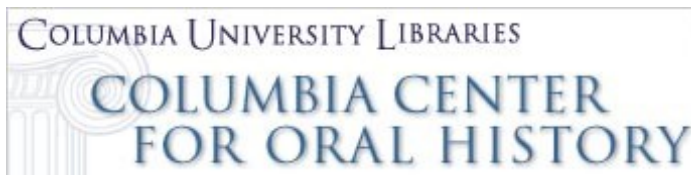
Reprieve Drones Conference in Pakistan

Asim Qureshi was invited by Reprieve to give two lectures at their conference on drones in Pakistan. The opportunity was used in order for Cageprisoners and Reprieve to make important connections in order to look further into extrajudicial killings within the War on Terror.



Media

With its unique place in the community, its wealth of good-will and contact with former prisoners, their families and lawyers Cageprisoners continues to impact the discussion surrounding human rights issues, pre-trial detention, community relations and conflict resolution through its work in the media. Over the last years Cageprisoners work and commentary has appeared on BBC, CNN, Sky, ITN and many international news programmes. Cageprisoners' staff also write regular comment pieces that appear in major broadsheets, magazines and various websites around the world.



Columbia University Oral Histories

Columbia University's Center for Oral History undertook a major project with Cageprisoners in order to interview all our staff and interns about their views on the world and the War on Terror. The result was extremely fascinating and will be available on their website from September.

Casework

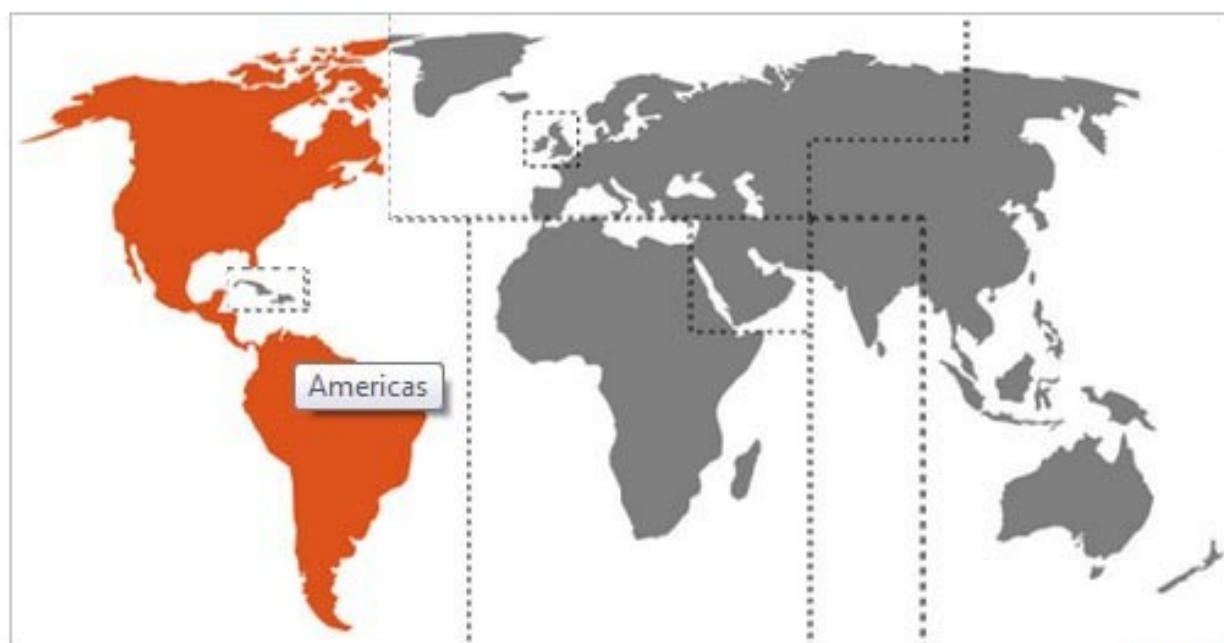
Domestic and International Casework

The employment of former Guantanamo detainee Feroz Ali Abbasi as a caseworker for Cageprisoners has provided the organisation with the opportunity to really follow up on all cases that come to the organisation. The vast majority of the cases we deal with have a connection with the UK as British Muslims recognise the need to have their concerns heard when they are abused or have their rights removed.

Cageprisoners also work heavily around the world, taking cases in almost every continent as we seek to understand the phenomenon of counter-terrorism and its impact on the lives of individuals.

It is the casework aspect of our work that has really pushed the work of the organisation forward, as we are better able to catalogue the extent of the problem we seek to change.

Cases



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Europe

Merouane Benahmed



Merouane Benahmed was sentenced to ten years of prison in France. He was presented as the leader of the so-called "Chechen

Americas

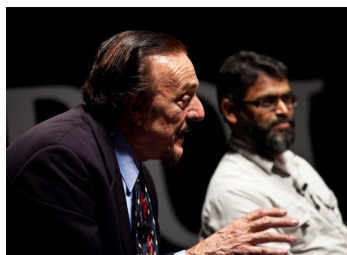
Ahmed Abdulkadir Warsame

Warsame is said to have been arrested on April 19th 2011 in international waters between Yemen and Somalia.

Moazzam Begg—outreach work

Moazzam's work since last year has seen our members taking part in a number of diverse issues affecting the Muslim community in the UK and abroad including taking part in (and winning) a major Oxford Union debate against the use of torture; addressing young adults from British Muslim, Irish, Palestinian, Israeli and Basque communities in conflict (at the Warrington Peace Centre); writing an afterword for the Bloody Sunday Annual lecture - after extensive participation in cross community discussions; identifying the new threat of profiling of the British Somali community; speaking at schools about the effects of Islamophobia and the impending threat from the far-right; holding and sponsoring major events calling on the Government for the return of British resident Shaker Aamer from Guantanamo and, meeting senior UK Government ministers to that end; being part of major discussions with leading human rights organisations about the judge-led inquiry into torture; helping to launch Gareth Peirce's vital collection of essays on human rights, *Dispatches from the Dark Side*; advising on the hugely successful Chris Morris film, *Four Lions* and the excellent documentary film highlighting Islamophobia in the UK, *The Age of Extremes* as well as Victoria Brittain's highly acclaimed play about the wives of Muslim prisoners, *Waiting*. Cageprisoners also had an in-depth meeting with the former Taliban spokesman and ambassador to Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef (who was imprisoned at Guantanamo) on his visit to the UK. These are just a few things that Moazzam has been up to in the UK.

However, our work has taken us much further afield this year and has led again us to places of conflict, upheaval and war.



Pakistan

As part of Cageprisoners' investigations into the case of Aafia Siddiqui, disappearances and extrajudicial killings Moazzam Begg returned, alongside our own Saghir Hussain and Yvonne Ridley, to the 'scene of the crime' in Islamabad from where he was kidnapped and renditioned into US custody. He spoke at several press conferences in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad about the cases of Aafia Siddiqui, Amina Massoud Janjua (whose Defence of Human Rights organisation formalised a working relationship with Cageprisoners this year), the 'disappeared' and about Pakistani citizens still held in Bagram and Guantanamo. Moazzam also met with several former prisoners, including some he'd last seen in Bagram, as well as Afghan leader Dr. Ghairat Baheer who was held there for 6 years. The drone strikes which have devastated much of the Khyber region were also addressed and continue to be investigated.



Top: Saghir Hussain, Moazzam Begg and Ismet Siddiqui - mother of Aafia Siddiqui - in Karachi

Bottom: Professor Philip Zimbardo and Moazzam Begg take questions, Dubai's BoldTalks 2011

United Arab Emirates

Former Guantanamo guard, 'Mustafa' Terry Holdbrooks, Moazzam Begg and Professor Philip Zimbardo (famous for his Stanford prison study which produced the 'Lucifer Effect') spoke at the BoldTalks event in Dubai in March. This was the first time such an event had taken place in the Gulf in which the issues surrounding detention, disappearance and torture were discussed openly by a former prisoner and guard.

Slovakia

In last year's report we spoke about the Guantanamo resettlements initiative and our work in trying to find homes for prisoners unable to return to their homes for fear of torture and arbitrary detention. Most of these resettlements occurred across Europe but many of the men were sent to places where although finally free, they were (and are) entirely isolated in places where they had no family, friends or community. Cageprisoners visited some of them in the city of Zvolen, Slovakia where both a Tunisian and Egyptian were sent after spending 8 years in Guantanamo. Neither man was able to return home to his respective family; one of the men was an amputee. Cageprisoners highlighted their ongoing plight to be reunited with their loved ones. Shortly after the momentous revolutions in the Arab world both men returned home. Rafiq al-Hami from Tunisia is home and free but, Adel al-Gazzar from Egypt was detained upon arrival and is still in prison, despite being sentenced in absentia under Mubarak's military courts. It was in prison where Adel finally got to meet his wife and children after almost a decade apart.

Cageprisoners intends to participate in a conference in Tunisia later this year to advocate on behalf of the remaining Tunisians in Guantanamo.

Iran

Through the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) Cageprisoners members Fahad Ansari, Victoria Brittain and Moazzam Begg took part in a high profile conference in Tehran this year which sought to address the nature, roots and definition of terrorism and to discuss conflict resolution. Both Moazzam and Victoria were chosen to make presentations in front of Iranian president Ahmadinejad.

South Africa

Once again, by the grace of Allah, Cageprisoners staff and volunteers entered new and exciting territory with fruitful and tangible results. In December last year our members took part in the annual Al-Ansaar Foundation 'Souk' in Durban where we received a huge reception from the people attending, as well as great interest from local media. Our stall at the event lasting 7 consecutive days generated a great deal of interest and ongoing support.

Moazzam Begg had the honour of leading the prayers and delivering the final Friday khutbah (sermon) of the year in front of over 6,000 worshippers at the Al-Quds mosque in Cape Town. The welcome was truly inspirational and historic, as was the keenness of the locals to recognise the plight of the oppressed prisoners around the world.

Poland

Senior Cageprisoners researcher, Andy Worthington, was accompanied by Moazzam Begg for a tour of Poland to promote his important film on Guantanamo, *Outside the Law*. Cageprisoners toured across the cities of Warsaw, Krakow, Łódź and others to raise the issues of rendition and secret detention, especially since it became known that a secret CIA facility had been operating in Poland where, amongst others, both Abu Zubaydah and Abdur-Rahim al-Nashiri – both 'high value detainees' in Guantanamo – had been tortured and later granted official 'victim' status by a Polish judge. Our team had lengthy discussions with the legal teams of both men as well as addressing the issues to packed-out theatres.



Kenya

As part of Cageprisoners ongoing work in the Horn of Africa, started by Asim Qureshi, Moazzam Begg was invited by the families of Kenyan rendition victims to Uganda and beyond. He toured across mosques in Nairobi addressing the cases of Al-Amin Kimathi (head of the Muslim Human Rights Commission), Omar Awadh and others who had been falsely detained and rendered to Uganda and interrogated by UK and US intelligence services. He also highlighted the fact that the last person sent to Guantanamo was Kenyan national, Abdul Malik Mohammed, in 2007.



Moazzam delivered the Friday sermon at the Nairobi Central Mosque where reportedly up to 10,000 worshippers attended.

Canada

Cageprisoners had been invited in May this year to tour across Canada by various Muslim and non-Muslim organisations across the country to address issues regarding Omar Khadr, Islamophobia and human rights. However, Moazzam Begg was prevented from boarding the flight to Toronto as he'd been placed on a US no-fly list which seemingly applied to Canada too!

British human rights activist denied entry to Canada

Article [Comments \(62\)](#)

Published On Fri May 20 2011

By
Michelle Shephard
National Security Reporter

A well-travelled British human rights activist and former Guantanamo Bay detainee said he was barred from boarding a direct flight from London to Toronto Friday



Egypt

Following the momentous events in North Africa and the Middle East this year Cageprisoners teams headed to Egypt and Libya to carry out crucial investigations on the state of the Guantanamo returnees, the high-profile case of Ibn al-Sheikh al-Libi and the involvement of the regimes in the US led rendition and torture programmes. Along with our own Yvonne Ridley, the Cageprisoners team met with several former prisoners and various Islamic groups who had suffered under Mubarak's iron grip. Cageprisoners initiated discussions important discussions with key members of the Muslim Brotherhood in relation to prisoner related issues and the return of Guantanamo prisoners.

Libya

Since the fall of the Gaddafi regime in eastern and central Libya new investigation opportunities arose in that country. Despite the ongoing war Cageprisoners' Moazzam Begg and Yvonne Ridley met with former Guantanamo and local prisoners

– including one who had been held for 22 years – in Benghazi and Derna. The investigations focused on visiting former Gaddafi-era prisons and speaking to men who had been held with Ibn al-Sheikh al-Libi just before his death in Abu Saleem prison.

Cageprisoners work in Northern Ireland and Ireland



British Irish Rights Watch

Having worked closely together with Cageprisoners as part of the Detainee Inquiry, British Irish Rights Watch invited Asim Qureshi to apply as a Board member for their organisation. After an interview process, Asim was accepted on to the Board and we look forward to a closer working relationship between the two organisations through this role.

In a landmark event, Cageprisoners along with the Federation of Student Islamic Societies put together a tour of Irish universities to speak about the continued plight of those in Guantanamo as well as his own personal experiences.

Each event was oversubscribed as the Irish communities welcomed Moazzam, keen to hear about how their own experiences were reflected in the War on Terror.

IN CONJUNCTION WITH JUSTICE AWARENESS WEEK, FOSIS IRELAND INVITES YOU TO

MOAZZAM BEGG CAGE PRISONERS DIRECTOR
EX-GUANTANAMO BAY DETAINEE

ENEMY COMBATANT
MY IMPRISONMENT AT GUANTANAMO,
BAGRAM & KANDAHAR

main organisers
CAGE PRISONERS **FOSIS**

MON, NOV 8th, 6pm
@MARTIN RYAN
INSTITUTE ANNEX
LECTURE THEATRE 201
NUIG

TUES, NOV 9th, 6pm
@ROOM C_LL_4 (392)
BOOLE 4, UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE CORK

WED, NOV 10th, 7pm
@ASTRA HALL, STUDENT
CENTRE, UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE DUBLIN

THURS, NOV 11th, 7pm
@JONATHAN SWIFT
LECTURE THEATRE, ARTS
BLOCK, TRINITY COLLEGE
DUBLIN

GUEST SPEAKER **DR. KATHLEEN CAVANAUGH**
LECTURER & LL.M. DIRECTOR IRISH CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, NUIG

GUEST SPEAKER **RICHARD BOYD BARRETT**
COUNCILLOR OF DUN LAOGHAIRE RATHDOWN, CHAIR IRISH ANTI WAR MOVEMENT

FIRST TIME IN IRISH UNIVERSITIES

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT IRELAND.COMMUNICATIONS@FOSIS.ORG.UK. FOR MEDIA ENQUIRY CONTACT IRELAND.MEDIA@FOSIS.ORG.UK

Cageprisoners Accounts

From November 2009 – October 2010

Expenses

Expenses - Events	£32,682.00
Expenses - Media	£3,502.00
Expenses - Misc	£30,562.00
Expenses - Premises	£13,255.00
Web redesign	£10,054.00
Professional Services	£4,412.00
Salary	£96,581.00

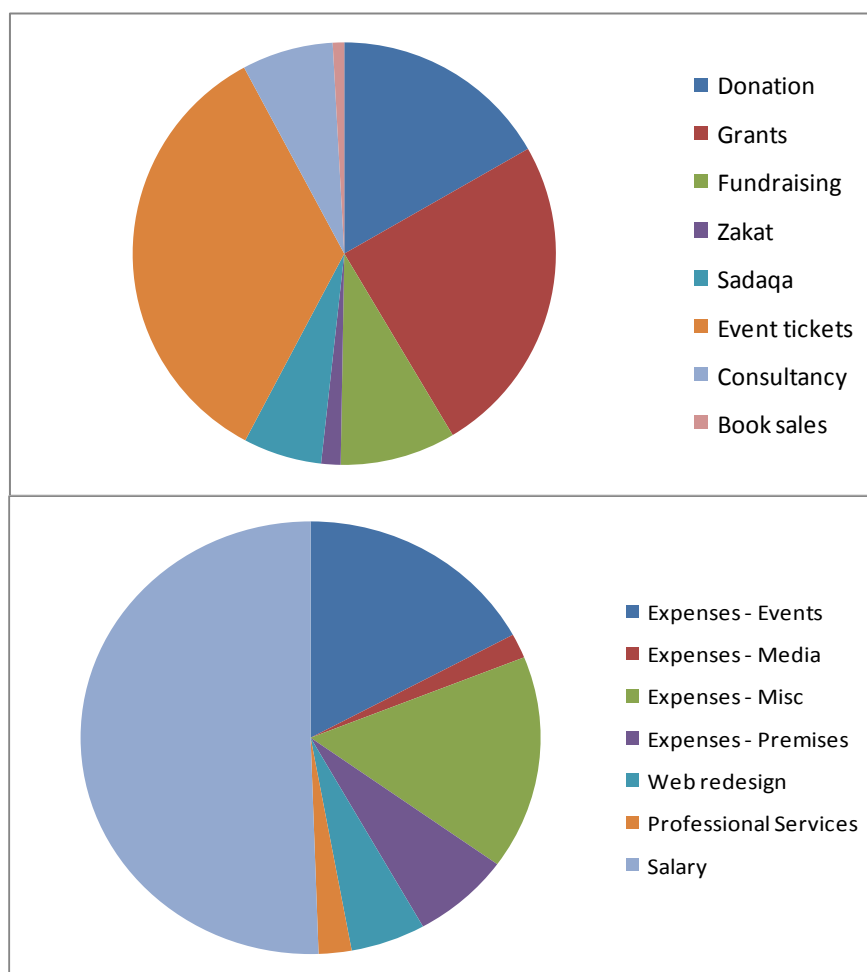
Income

Donation	£27,114.00
Grants	£40,000.00
Fundraising	£14,310.00
Zakat	£2,399.00
Sadaqa	£9,716.00
Event tickets	£55,712.00
Consultancy	£11,299.00
Book sales	£1,418.00

Total **£191,048.00**

Total **£161,968.00**

Balance **£(29,080.00)**



The figures above reflect the latest completed annual accounts for Cageprisoners which run on a yearly cycle of November–October each year.

Grants include money from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Evaluation

Staff

In order to make further progression as an organisation, Cageprisoners has taken on a new employee to manage the organisation and its projects. Jilu Miah comes with much expertise running charities and has vast experience working with organisations such as the NHS.

Unfortunately due to a lack of resources, we have been forced to release Andy Worthington who was working for us part-time as our Senior Researcher. The good news, however, is that Andy continues to work with us on various projects.

This year also saw the addition of the well respected journalist and human rights campaigner, Lauren Booth, and former Guantanamo detainee, Sami Al Hajj, have joined the organisation as patrons. We hope they will join our existing patrons, Victoria Brittain and Yvonne Ridley, as we seek to work against the detention and extrajudicial killing of those impacted by the War on Terror.

Our internship programme continues to run as we now have the capacity to take on four interns concurrently. All of those who have come and gone have proven to be invaluable to the organisation as they have brought a wealth

Landscape

In September 2011, the War on Terror will have entered its tenth year as a campaign. For eight of those years, Cageprisoners has been doing its utmost to ensure that we help to push for due process for those who are being detained beyond it.

Unfortunately, the need to expand the organisation to meet all the demands that have been placed on it has meant that this last financial year we have been forced to operate on a loss. More than ever we need the help of our supporters in or to continue the important work that we do. Insha Allah, Cageprisoners has had the opportunity to help fulfil a fardh kifayyah (obligation on the community) for the Muslims in the UK. We hope that we will be able to continue in fulfilling this obligation until we are no longer needed, bi'idhni ta'ala.

