



Ethical Action Report



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In this issue:

Human Rights: Call on the Kenyan Government to Protect its Citizens

Separation of Church and State: Oppose the Workplace Religious Freedom Act

Healthy Planet: End Oil Aid Now

Freedom of Information: Save the Internet

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Human Rights: Call on the Kenyan Government to Protect its Citizens

Show solidarity with the people of Kenya. Call on the Kenyan government to protect its citizens, many of whom have endured unrelenting suffering in the last two months. Tell leaders they must protect their people from politically-motivated and ethnic violence.

Write to:

Hon. Mwai Kibaki C.G.H. M.P.
President of Kenya
PO Box 30510-00100, Nairobi, Kenya
Fax: 001 254 2031 3600
Email: pps@statehousekenya.go.ke
Salutation: Your Excellency

BACKGROUND

An outbreak of fighting and a slew of human rights violations have followed the disputed Kenyan elections of December 2007 in which the opposition Orange Democratic Movement challenged the re-election of President Mwai Kibaki. At least 1,000 people have been killed in the post-election strife so far, including hundreds who have been shot dead by police to break up mass protests. Another 300,000 have been displaced.

President Mwai Kibaki was re-elected with 51.3 percent of the vote, compared with 48.7 percent for the opposition leader, Raila Odinga. International election monitors have declared the election to have been fraught with voting irregularities.

Ethnic violence has also erupted. People of Kikuyu have been targeted by ethnic militia and youth gangs, which has led to retaliatory attacks by the Kikuyu.

Separation of Church and State: Oppose the Workplace Religious Freedom Act

Write to your senators and ask them to oppose the Workplace Religious Freedom Act (WRFA). This act would amend Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to unduly expand required accommodations of employees' religious practices in the workplace.

BACKGROUND

Congress is again considering a bill to ostensibly protect religious expression in the workplace. However, the WRFA would actually require excessive accommodation of religious expression at the expense of employers.

WRFA is an unnecessary bill: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 already protects employee rights, and this bill would confuse an already complicated set of rules. In addition, the WRFA will have the effect of extending benefits to people with certain religious beliefs—such as permitting head covering or facial hair, or allowing extra time off of work—that others would be denied. Such favorable treatment is not permitted by the Establishment Clause or the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

The WRFA may also have the effect of denying the rights of third parties. For example, if passed into law, this legislation may pave the way for scenarios such as patients being denied access to contraceptives from a hospital employee who objects on moral or religious grounds. Already such incidents are increasing across the country, and would surely expand frequency if WRFA is passed.

Healthy Planet: End Oil Aid Now

Write to your representative and ask her or him to support the End Oil Act. Stop the subsidization of oil companies.

BACKGROUND

Every year oil companies receive billions of dollars from the U.S. government to expand their operations in countries around the world. “Oil aid” goes to Exxon, Chevron, and other companies that already reap in massive profits.

How will we ever end our addiction to oil, fight climate change, or cultivate renewable energy sources when we continue to feed the already bloated oil industry? Foreign assistance funds should be used instead to move towards a clean energy future.

Freedom of Information: Save the Internet

Write to your representative and ask him or her to co-sponsor the Internet Freedom Preservation Act of 2008. This legislation would preserve a free Internet and protect the net from blocking, censorship, and discrimination by monolithic phone and cable companies.

BACKGROUND

The Internet has been revolutionary in the way that it has connected individuals—giving people access to a wealth of information while at the same time providing an outlet for people’s voices. But the freedom of the Internet is currently under attack by companies like Comcast, Verizon, and AT&T, which want to control what you do and where you go online.

So a new bill has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives that would keep the Internet free. The Internet Freedom Preservation Act of 2008 would protect our basic right to communicate and would call for a nationwide series of public hearings about what the future of the Internet should look like.

Tens of millions of Americans use the open Internet daily, and chances are you’re represented by that number. Help protect Net neutrality today.

Contacting Elected Officials

White House

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Fax: (202) 456-2461

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President George W. Bush:
president@whitehouse.gov

Vice President Richard Cheney:
vice.president@whitehouse.gov

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Visit www.senate.gov or www.house.gov to use your representatives’ e-mail contact forms.

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