

Department of Political Science
BA (Major) 6th semester
Topic: Amnesty International

Amnesty International (commonly known as Amnesty and AI) is a non-governmental organisation focused on human rights with over 8 million members and supporters around the world. The stated objective of the organisation is 'to conduct research and generate action to prevent and end grave abuses of human rights, and to demand justice for those whose rights have been violated.' Amnesty International was founded in London in 1961, following the publication of the article 'The Forgotten Prisoners' in The Observer on 28 May 1961, by the lawyer Peter Benenson. Amnesty draws attention to human rights abuses and campaigns for compliance with international laws and standards. It works to mobilise public opinion to put pressure on governments that let abuse take place. The organisation was awarded the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize for its 'campaign against torture,' and the United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights in 1978. In the field of international human rights organisations, Amnesty has the second longest history, after the International Federation for Human Rights and broadest name recognition, and is believed by many to set standards for the movement as a whole.

Objectives:

Amnesty International primarily targets governments, but also reports on non-governmental bodies and private individuals ("non-state actors").

There are six key areas which Amnesty deals with—

1. Women's, children's, minorities' and indigenous rights
2. Ending torture
3. Abolition of the death penalty
4. Rights of refugees
5. Rights of prisoners of conscience
6. Protection of human dignity.

Mission of Amnesty International:

- To contribute to the observance of human rights throughout the world as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- To obtain the release of all prisoners of conscience, a fair trial within a reasonable time limit for political prisoners, to abolish death penalty, torture and cruel other treatment of prisoners, to end political killings and "disappearances".

- To oppose grave violations of the right of every person to the physical and mental integrity, independently of any political consideration.
- To fight against the serious violations of the rights of every person to express his/her convictions and to be free of any gender, race or nationality discriminations.
- To develop its work on the incidence of economic factors on the human rights, to give to defenders the means to act, to fight against impunity, to develop its action in favour of the protection of the refugees and strengthen the militant base of its organization.

NGOs such as Amnesty International have emerged as central players in the promotion of human rights around the world. Amnesty International is one of the most influential NGOs in the field of human rights. It promotes knowledge of the value of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and intervenes in certain cases of violations of basic civil and political rights.
