
Human Rights Watch

TYRANNY HAS A WITNESS

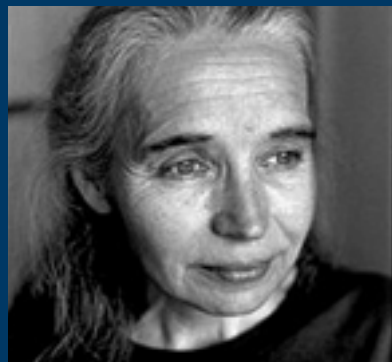
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HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

Human Rights Watch

ANNUAL
REPORT
2009
A YEAR OF
IMPACT



Dr. Alison Des Forges

Human Rights Watch Senior Adviser, Africa

On February 12, Dr. Alison Des Forges, one of our most accomplished and beloved colleagues, was killed in the crash of Flight 3407 in Buffalo, New York. In this tragic accident, the human rights movement lost one of its true heroes.

First as a Ph.D. student at Yale, then as a volunteer, and finally as a staff member at Human Rights Watch, Alison devoted decades to understanding Rwanda and documenting the serious abuses and ethnic violence that she feared would spread there. As a senior adviser since the early 1990s, she oversaw our research on Rwanda and neighboring countries in Africa's Great Lakes region. Alison was the world's leading expert on the 1994 Rwanda genocide and its aftermath and is perhaps best known for her 800-page, award-winning book *Leave None to Tell the Story*. In 1999, she won a MacArthur "genius grant" in recognition of her groundbreaking research and advocacy.

Alison appeared as an expert witness in 11 trials at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and more in Belgium, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Canada. Always evenhanded and unafraid to pursue justice on all sides of the conflict, she insisted that the Rwandan Patriotic Front—which defeated the genocidal regime—also be held accountable for its own crimes. Alison was a model of integrity and commitment for all who had the great fortune of working with and learning from her.

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Natalia Estemirova

Human Rights Watch Defender, 2007

On the morning of July 15, the world's leading researcher on Chechnya and an invaluable partner to Human Rights Watch was abducted in Grozny and found dead from gunshot wounds in neighboring Ingushetia several hours later. Natalia Estemirova is dearly missed by her friends and colleagues, and leaves behind a legacy of immeasurable importance.

As a researcher with Memorial, Russia's most prominent human rights organization, Natalia was a key source of information for other international groups and the media regarding ongoing abuses in Chechnya including torture, abduction, and extrajudicial executions. Committed to demanding accountability for all sides of the conflict, she was the first recipient of the Anna Politkovskaya prize—named for the journalist famous for her Chechnya work and brazenly killed in October 2006—and received the European Parliament's Robert Schulman medal in 2005. We honored her with the Human Rights Watch Defender Award in 2007 and completed a mission with her only days before her death.

For nearly a decade, Natalia bravely worked to expose the oppression that the people of Chechnya continue to suffer. While Russia has shown little political will to investigate crimes and the international community has not held Russia accountable, Natalia was dedicated to giving a voice to countless victims. As a result of her work, she tragically became a victim herself. We are planning a concerted response to ensure this crime does not go unpunished.

© 2007 Renaud Visage

By seeking justice for those who suffer human rights violations and accountability for those who commit them, Human Rights Watch serves as a powerful force for oppressed people around the world. In the following pages, we offer an illustrative survey of our impact across the globe.

We focus on two campaigns that demonstrate the reach of our work, from the battlefields of eastern Congo to the crime labs of Los Angeles. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, we promoted accountability for violence against civilians and made great strides in securing the prosecution of sexual violence and curbing the recruitment of child soldiers. In the United States, we worked with a group of Human Rights Watch supporters to give voice to forgotten rape victims and succeeded in putting justice within reach for thousands of women and girls.

We carried on this work despite the precipitous decline of the economy. We are enormously grateful to those of you who helped us through this difficult time, some even with enhanced gifts.

We would like to pay tribute to two of our close colleagues—both giants of the human rights movement—who lost their lives in the past year. In February, Alison Des Forges, Human Rights Watch’s senior researcher for Central Africa and the world’s leading expert on Rwanda, died in a plane crash. In July, Natalia Estemirova, a human rights activist from Chechnya whom we honored in 2007 with the Human Rights Watch Defender Award, was murdered for her efforts. We dedicate this report to Alison and Natalia, and promise to carry on their important work.



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KENNETH ROTH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



On January 22, 2009, an executive order was issued to
close secret "black sites"

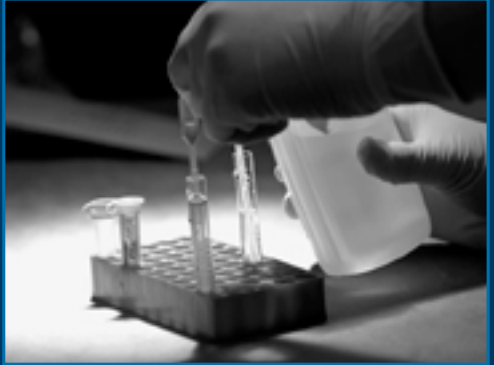
130 countries have ratified the treaty
prohibiting the use of children under 18 in armed combat



International justice positions created
to investigate cases of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes

100 countries have signed
the Convention on Cluster Munitions

Los Angeles County rape kit backlog to be eliminated
by June 30, 2011



Fujimori sentenced to 25 years
for killings



HOLDING THE US GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABLE

Our investigation into the criminal justice system of Los Angeles, California, revealed that 12,500 rape kits containing DNA and other physical evidence were sitting in storage untested.

Read more on page 10
© 2009 Patricia Williams

ABUSIVE PERUVIAN LEADER SENTENCED

After we exposed substantial evidence linking Peru's former authoritarian leader, Alberto Fujimori, to killings, kidnappings, and other abuses, Chile's Supreme Court extradited him to Peru, and in April 2009 the Peruvian Supreme Court gave him the maximum sentence.

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EXECUTIVE ORDER TO CLOSE CIA PRISONS

After years of our documenting CIA detention abuses and secret prison locations, President Obama issued an executive order on his second day in office to close all CIA "black sites" and allow the International Committee of the Red Cross access to all detainees.

© 2003 Teun Voeten
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US LIMITS MILITARY AID TO NATIONS USING CHILD SOLDIERS

Our strategic advocacy with key senators and long-term documentation of child soldier recruitment practices moved the US Congress to pass, and President Bush to sign, legislation that limits military aid to nations using child soldiers.

© 2004 Marcus Bleasdale/VII

GERMANY CREATES WAR CRIMES UNIT

Following a recommendation in our report "Universal Jurisdiction in Europe: State of the Art," the German government created a special War Crimes Unit in the Federal Criminal Police and Federal Prosecution office to investigate cases of war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity abroad.

© 2005 Benoit Doppagne/BELGA

GLOBAL TREATY TO BAN CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Our extensive studies on the civilian impact of cluster munitions, coupled with our rigorous global advocacy, helped lead to the creation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in 2008. The treaty has been signed by 100 countries and ratified by 20.

© 2005 Andrew McConnell
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2009 A YEAR OF IMPACT

We will bring evidence to light.
On the ground. In the field.
At the highest levels of government.
We will make inaction impossible.



Kimberley Process
**investigates
diamond
mine abuses**



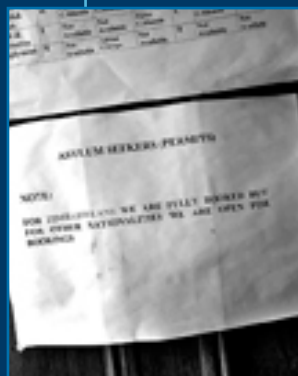
Senior military officers convicted of sexual violence
against civilians

South Africa stops deporting Zimbabweans and
pledges to issue 1.5 million permits
legalizing their stay



In an unprecedented move, Argentina, France, Germany, the UK, and the US
withheld their votes for an IMF loan
due to human rights concerns

Government mandated new investigations
into Davao Death Squads



On March 4, 2009, the International Criminal Court issued an
arrest warrant for President Omar al-Bashir

New employment contracts
require that workers be paid in full and on time



PROTECTING CIVILIANS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

TEMPORARY STATUS FOR ZIMBABWEANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

JUSTICE FOR DARFUR CRIMES

EXPOSURE OF "BLOOD DIAMONDS" IN ZIMBABWE

PROTECTION FOR MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS IN LEBANON

RAISING THE COST OF ABUSE IN SRI LANKA

PHILIPPINES INVESTIGATES EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS

After we met with President Joseph Kabila and reported on the violence committed against civilians in eastern Congo, the military announced a "zero tolerance" policy for sexual violence and other abuses.

Read more on page 6

© 2008 Marcus Bleasdale/VII

After months of putting pressure on the South African government to stop deporting Zimbabweans fleeing turmoil at home, the government announced it would issue an estimated 1.5 million special permits allowing them to remain and work in South Africa.

© 2007 Dirk-Jan Visser

After years of our field-work and documentation of abuses in Darfur, the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

© 2006 Kadir van Lohuizen/NOOR
© 2009 AFP/Getty Images

Following our report on killings and forced labor by Zimbabwe's military in the Marange diamond mine, the Kimberley Process, which regulates the diamond industry, launched its own investigation and recommended that Zimbabwe's membership be suspended if abuses don't stop.

© 2006 AP Photo

Our documentation of abuses against Asian and African migrant domestic workers in Lebanon, as well as our yearlong national media campaign and work by partner organizations, convinced the Lebanese government to introduce a mandatory standard contract that regulates daily working hours, paid sick leave, and days off per week.

© 2009 Reuters

Armed with overwhelming evidence of a humanitarian crisis and extensive human rights abuses committed by the military, we led a successful effort to press the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to take the rare step of delaying a \$2.6 billion* loan to Sri Lanka.

© 2007 Private

Just one month after we exposed the involvement of local officials in death squad killings in Davao City, President Arroyo ordered an investigation into the vigilante killings, which have claimed more than 900 lives.

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KEY:

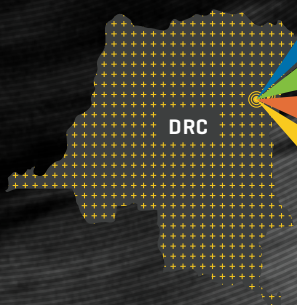
- DEFENDING CIVIL SOCIETY AND HUMAN DIGNITY
- HOLDING OPPRESSORS ACCOUNTABLE AND BRINGING THEM TO JUSTICE
- PROTECTING PEOPLE IN TIME OF CONFLICT

* All currency is in USD.

Protecting civilians in the Democratic Republic of Congo

FIGHTING RAMPANT BRUTALITY

Where many saw a hopeless situation, Human Rights Watch saw the need to bring justice to victims and greater security to all. From our expert researchers documenting abuses on the ground to our executive director meeting with Congo's president, we have been waging an ambitious, multi-pronged campaign to bring about real change in this too often neglected part of the world.

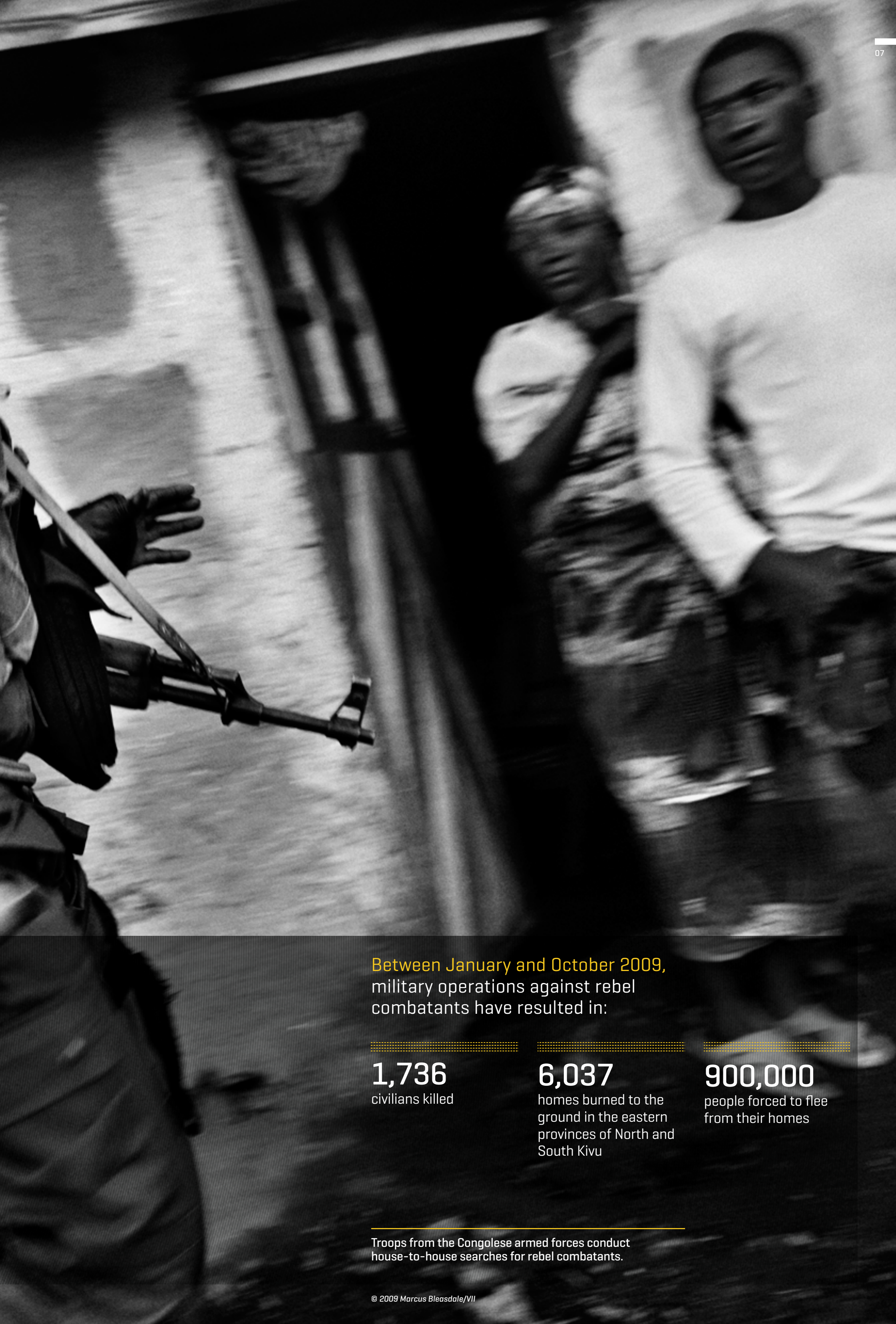


PROSECUTING RAPE

JUSTICE FOR MASS ATROCITIES

ENDING POLITICAL REPRESSION

PROTECTING CIVILIANS



Between January and October 2009, military operations against rebel combatants have resulted in:

1,736
civilians killed

6,037
homes burned to the ground in the eastern provinces of North and South Kivu

900,000
people forced to flee from their homes

Troops from the Congolese armed forces conduct house-to-house searches for rebel combatants.

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo has resulted in the deaths of 5 million people since 1998, more than any war since World War II. While many peace accords have been signed, Congo's civilians continue to face open warfare, political violence, the recruitment of child soldiers, and endemic rape. Human Rights Watch is aggressively fighting this pervasive injustice on multiple fronts. And while we've got a long way to go, we're starting to see the impact of our efforts.

PROSECUTING RAPE

Congo has one of the world's highest rates of sexual violence against women and girls. Since 1998, more than 200,000 women and girls have been raped. Three staff members, including our executive director, met with President Joseph Kabila in July 2009 to request urgent action to end impunity for rape. Two days later the Congolese government announced a policy of "zero tolerance" for human rights abuses committed by members of the army, regardless of their rank. The policy stated that officers would be held accountable for the behavior of their troops and made a special reference to the crimes of sexual violence. Since then, two senior army officers have been convicted of rape, and two others have been arrested.



16,000
cases of sexual violence
were recorded by the
UN in 2008

65%
were girls under
the age of 18

"I was just coming back from the river to fetch water.... Two soldiers came up to me and told me that if I refuse to sleep with them, they will kill me. They beat me and ripped my clothes. One of the soldiers raped me.... My parents spoke to a commander and he said that his soldiers do not rape, and that I am lying."

- 15 year-old girl, Minova, South Kivu, March 2009

35%
were adult women

In September 2009, the UN Security Council passed a resolution that creates a new position dedicated to protecting women and girls in conflict.

Since the "zero tolerance" policy was enacted, four senior military officers have been arrested or convicted on charges of rape.



JUSTICE FOR MASS ATROCITIES

Following our repeated exposure of massive atrocities committed in Ituri [northeastern Congo] since 1999, the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court decided to conduct his own investigations. The ICC arrested warlord Thomas Lubanga in 2006 on charges of recruitment of child soldiers. Two further arrests of warlords from Ituri followed. In January 2009, Lubanga's trial began in The Hague—the first-ever trial by the ICC—with the first day's proceedings broadcast across Congo. It sent a strong signal that those responsible for brutal crimes may one day face justice.



© 2004 Marcus Bleasdale/VII



© 2009 AFP/Getty Images

Lubanga's trial is currently underway—

and as a result, there is already greater awareness of the possibility of ICC prosecution among leaders of armed groups elsewhere.



President Joseph Kabila arrives at a rally in Congo's northeastern Ituri district during the election campaign in July 2006.



Newspapers in Kinshasa announce Joseph Kabila's presidential victory. November 16, 2006.



Police detain a number of opposition supporters in Kinshasa the day after Joseph Kabila was announced the winner of the runoff election. November 16, 2006.

© 2006 Marcus Bleasdale/VII

The Congolese Senate has already called in for questioning the ministers of justice, the interior, and human rights.

ENDING POLITICAL REPRESSION

While conflict in the east has been more widely publicized, violent acts of political repression in the west, including in the capital city Kinshasa, have gone unchecked and largely unnoticed. In November 2008, we released a report on the deliberate killing, injury, arbitrary arrest, and torture of hundreds of persons perceived to be opposition supporters. Our report made headlines across the country and launched an important, ongoing debate about narrowing political space. Congo's National Assembly decided to establish a commission of inquiry in a near-unanimous resolution, while the Congolese Senate called in three senior ministers to respond to our allegations.

Going forward

We will continue to expose abuse at all levels and send a signal that no one is above the law by:

Pushing for the arrest of those most responsible for ongoing abuses

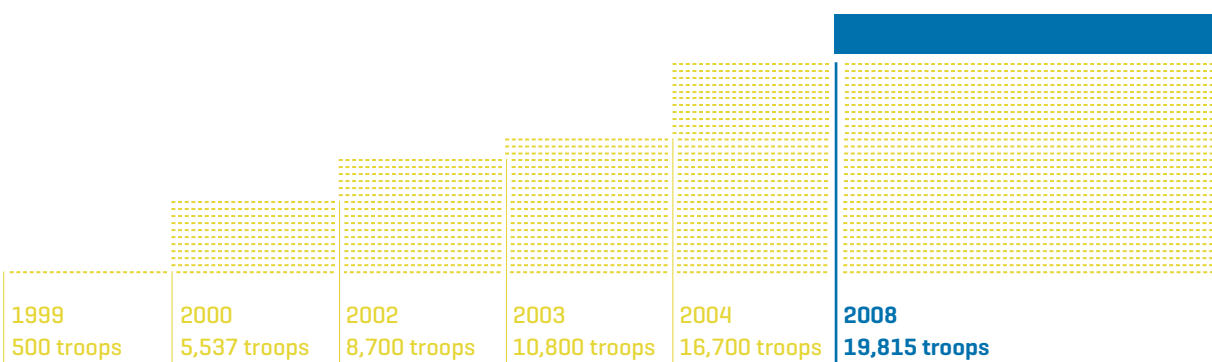
Urging enhanced protection of civilians through bolstered peacekeeping

Advocating the establishment of a mixed Congolese and international court to try those responsible for abuses

Pressing for a vetting process to prevent war criminals from serving in the military or judiciary

PROTECTING CIVILIANS

In any conflict as protracted and brutal as that in Congo, many people live under constant threat of violence. For more than ten years, we have pressed the UN Security Council to increase the number of peacekeepers in the country incrementally. Peacekeeping troops now number nearly 20,000.

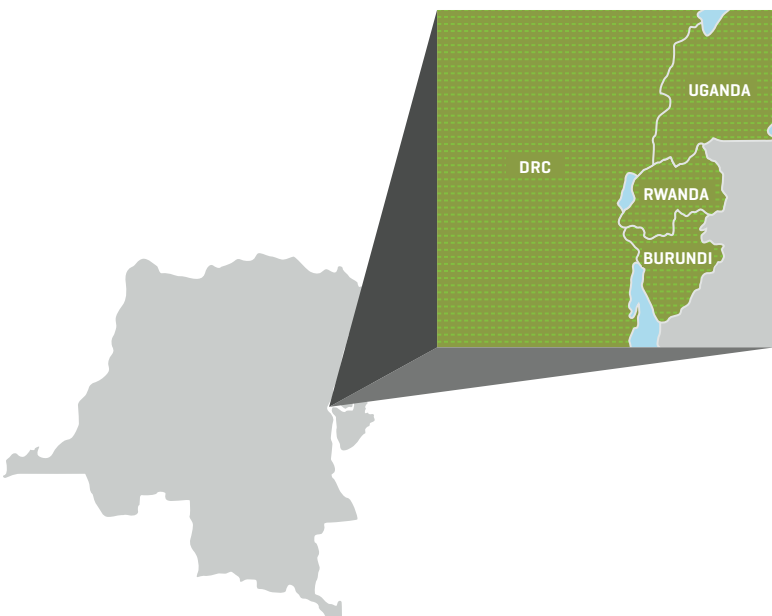


3,000
more troops
authorized in
November 2008.



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In 2009, following years of our advocacy with the Bush and Obama administrations, the United States has appointed a special envoy for Africa's Great Lakes region.



Holding the US government accountable to each individual

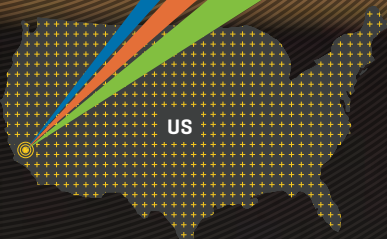
MAKING EVERY RAPE KIT COUNT

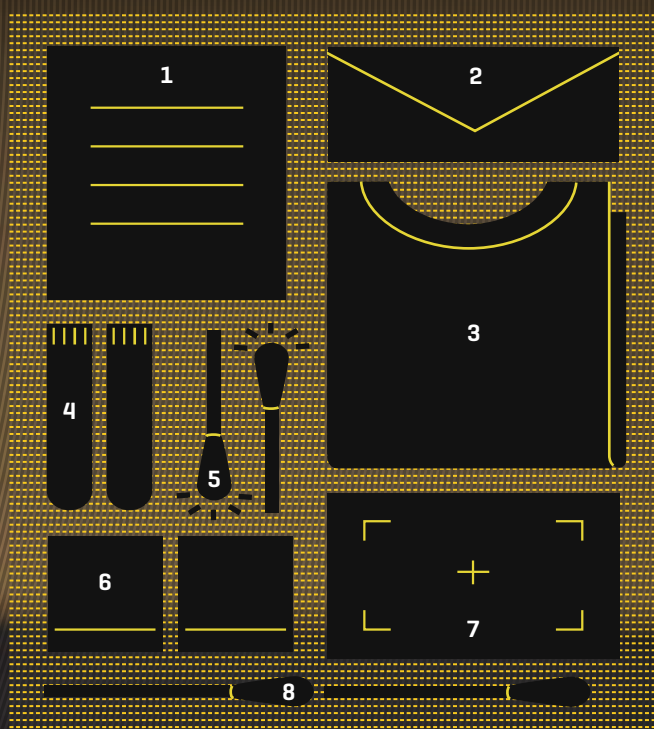
In some parts of the United States, rape kits sit on police shelves unopened and untested for years. Many may never be used at all. Human Rights Watch decided to open an investigation into this injustice that focused on Los Angeles County, which has the largest known backlog of untested rape kits in the country.

RAISING AWARENESS

STEPPING UP THE PRESSURE

SECURING A COMMITMENT TO CHANGE





A rape kit contains evidence collected from the rape victim's body during a 4 to 6 hour forensic exam.

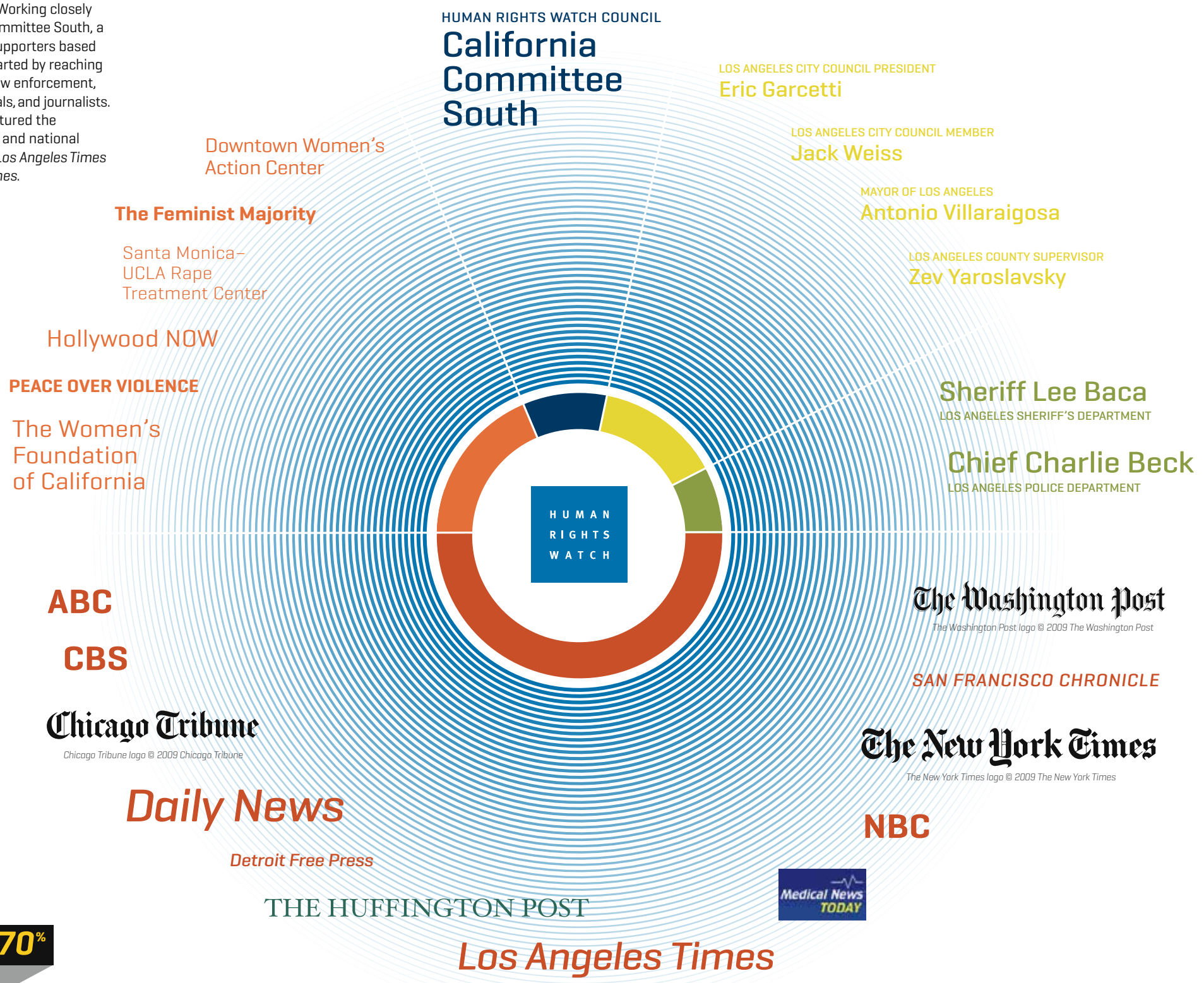
- 1 After intake and counseling, the patient is interviewed to document the details of the assault.
- 2 The victim undresses over a large piece of white paper, which catches hair, carpet fibers, or other debris that may fall from her clothing or body.
- 3 All clothing is retained for further DNA testing.
- 4 The nurse then collects fingernail scrapings, pubic hair combings, and urine and blood, placing each in separate envelopes or tubes.
- 5 The nurse scans the body with an ultraviolet light to find what may be otherwise undetectable semen or saliva that might contain the assailant's DNA. The nurse then swabs every part of the victim's body that the ultraviolet light fluoresces.
- 6 The victim is examined from head to toe to identify any physical injuries sustained during the assault, which can include scratches, bruises, bite marks, ligature marks, and burst blood vessels caused by strangulation. Every visible physical injury is photographed.
- 7 A noninvasive magnifying digital camera called a colposcope is placed near the anal, vaginal, and oral cavities to record any lacerations or other injuries.
- 8 A sexual assault nurse examines the victim on a gynecological table with stirrups.

According to a US government report, there were more than 240,000 rapes and sexual assaults in the United States in 2007, not including the great number of crimes that were not reported. Despite advances in crime-scene analysis and DNA matching, arrest rates remain unacceptably low. There is a process for collecting physical evidence from rape victims' bodies, but this evidence, stored in rape kits, is vastly underutilized by law enforcement agencies. Victims are told their rape kits will be instrumental in arresting and prosecuting their attackers—yet when Human Rights Watch investigated the low rates of arrest, we found that these treasure troves of evidence were often not even processed.

US law does not require the testing of every collected rape kit. Public and political pressure brought by Human Rights Watch led to a landmark commitment in Los Angeles to analyze all evidence collected from rape victims. We will ensure that this victory, in turn, increases pressure for similar commitments across the country.

RAISING AWARENESS

We knew that our two main challenges were to get law enforcement officials to acknowledge the problem and then to get this story out. Working closely with our California Committee South, a group of dedicated supporters based in Los Angeles, we started by reaching out directly to local law enforcement, city and county officials, and journalists. The story quickly captured the attention of the local and national media, including the *Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times*.



When New York City decided to test every rape kit in its possession during the 1990s, the rate of arrests for reported rapes dramatically rose from 30% to 70%.

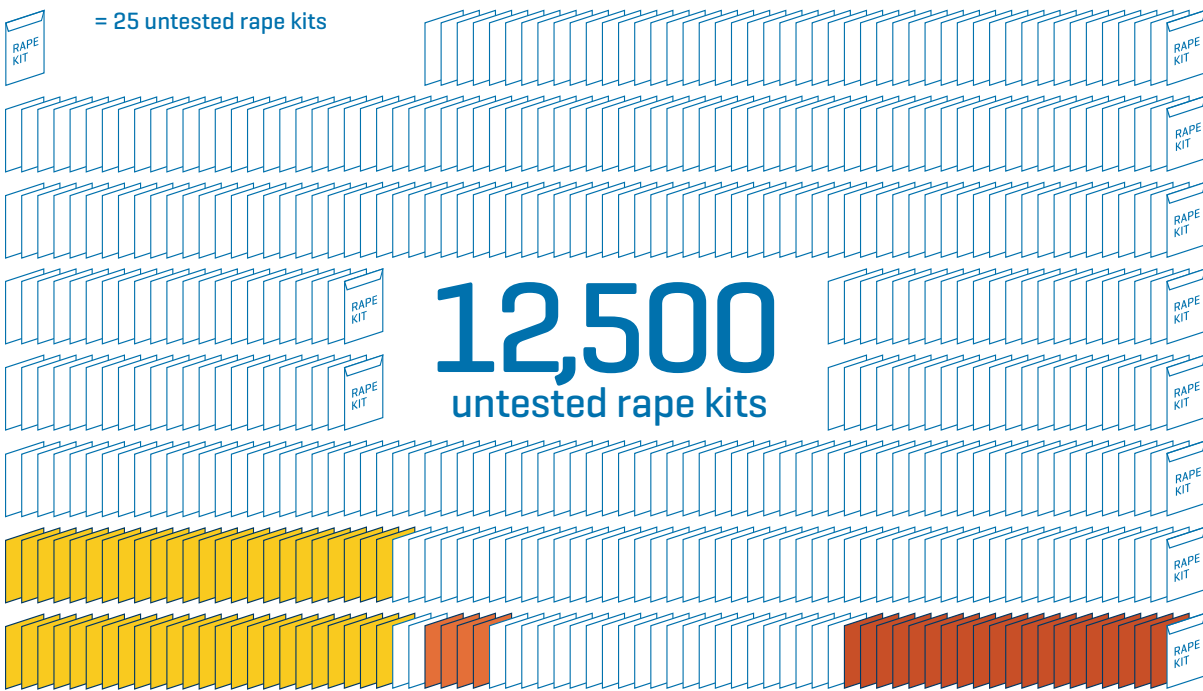
- CALIFORNIA COMMITTEE SOUTH
- NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
- CITY/COUNTY OFFICIALS
- LAW ENFORCEMENT
- MEDIA



A rape kit photographed at the Santa Monica-UCLA Rape Treatment Center.



Evidence from a rape case waits for testing at the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department crime laboratory.



1,200 were the only possible link to a suspect

100 were within six months of expiring

488 had expired through statute of limitations

\$8 million unused federal funding for testing rape kits



Untested rape kits at the Los Angeles Police Department storage facility.

STEPPING UP THE PRESSURE

The Los Angeles Sheriff and Police Departments were forced to respond to the growing attention and pressure. In late 2008, they began to count untested rape kits. After analyzing data from the sheriff's office, the Los Angeles Police Department, and 47 other police departments in Los Angeles County, we found that more than 12,500 rape kits had never been tested—despite Los Angeles having \$8 million in federal funding that could have been used for DNA testing in rape cases.

Going forward

As progress continues in Los Angeles, Human Rights Watch is expanding its efforts to address rape kit backlogs across the United States. To remedy this injustice, we have begun pressing the US government to implement federal legislation and oversight that guarantees:

All rape kits will be tested

More assailants identified by a DNA match will be arrested

More assailants with prior records will be prevented from striking again

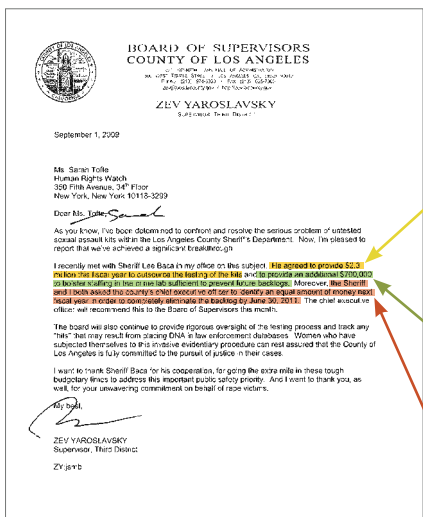
More prosecutions will proceed

"We are sobered by the untested kits in suspect-less cases. There is no excuse for us not to be testing those kits."

- Charlie Beck, Deputy Chief, Los Angeles Police Department

SECURING A COMMITMENT TO CHANGE

The ensuing public outcry for action resulted in a landmark vote by the Los Angeles City Council. Recognizing the enormity of the problem, the council pledged new funding to expedite the testing of backlogged rape kits, and the police department vowed to eliminate the backlog within two years.



\$2,300,000 to outsource testing of the county's kits

\$700,000 for county staffing to prevent future backlogs

06/30/11 deadline for eliminating the backlog

The letter above states Los Angeles County's resolve for and commitment to eliminating the rape kit backlog.

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Founded in 1998, the Human Rights Watch Council is a network of committees across 17 cities in Asia, Europe, and North America. Composed of more than 500 opinion leaders from a variety of backgrounds, the committees are an informed and engaged constituency that plays a key role in our global defense of human rights. The Council seeks to increase awareness of global and local human rights issues and enlist governments and the public to support basic freedoms for all. Council members meet regularly to learn about human rights abuses, sponsor policy discussions, and generate support for Human Rights Watch and its mission through fundraising, outreach, and advocacy.

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STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2009 [with comparative totals for 2008]

	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	TOTAL ALL FUNDS 2009	TOTAL ALL FUNDS 2008
PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE				
<i>Public Support:</i>				
Contributions and grants	\$23,268,131	\$17,265,456	\$40,533,587	\$37,181,800
Special events	6,356,509	—	6,356,509	6,580,474
Total Public Support	29,624,640	17,265,456	46,890,096	43,762,274
<i>Revenue:</i>				
Investment income/[loss], net	(656,736)	(10,066,298)	(10,723,034)	(4,556,357)
Investment income/[loss], net from limited partnerships	—	(4,764,434)	(4,764,434)	1,815,282
Publications	71,894	—	71,894	95,771
Other	68,790	—	68,790	83,538
Total Revenue	(516,052)	(14,830,732)	(15,346,784)	(2,561,766)
Net assets released from restrictions and transfers	13,268,405	(13,268,405)	—	—
Total Support and Revenue	42,376,993	(10,833,681)	31,543,312	41,200,508
EXPENSES				
<i>Program Services:</i>				
Africa	5,237,284	—	5,237,284	5,532,631
Americas	1,414,128	—	1,414,128	1,479,265
Asia	3,478,227	—	3,478,227	3,212,850
Europe and Central Asia	4,139,340	—	4,139,340	4,001,853
Middle East and North Africa	2,460,861	—	2,460,861	2,258,459
United States	1,060,999	—	1,060,999	1,195,673
Children's Rights	1,665,758	—	1,665,758	1,641,064
International Justice	1,557,822	—	1,557,822	1,385,121
Women's Rights	2,000,382	—	2,000,382	1,854,228
Other Programs	10,353,126	—	10,353,126	9,252,974
Total Program Services	33,367,927	—	33,367,927	31,814,118
<i>Supporting Services:</i>				
Management and general	2,160,437	—	2,160,437	1,984,626
Fundraising	8,512,015	—	8,512,015	8,641,358
Total Supporting Services	10,672,452	—	10,672,452	10,625,984
Total Expenses	44,040,379	—	44,040,379	42,440,102
Total Change in Net Assets	(1,663,386)	(10,833,681)	(12,497,067)	(1,239,594)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	9,661,402	109,194,134	118,855,536	120,095,130
TOTAL NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$7,998,016	\$98,360,453	\$106,358,469	\$118,855,536

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2009 [with comparative totals for 2008]

	2009 TOTAL	2008 TOTAL
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$21,014,900	\$21,042,008
Investments at fair value	48,419,943	43,455,828
Investments in limited partnerships	17,020,192	35,349,824
Contributions receivable, net	19,857,220	18,901,461
Other receivables	526,722	174,845
Prepaid expenses	293,732	766,255
Security deposits	164,707	164,995
Fixed assets, net	1,957,909	2,226,223
TOTAL ASSETS	\$109,255,325	\$122,081,439
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
<i>Liabilities:</i>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$2,039,796	\$2,186,029
Accrued pension expense	89,288	67,563
Deferred rent	745,197	949,736
Deferred revenue	22,575	22,575
Total Liabilities	2,896,856	3,225,903
<i>Net Assets:</i>		
Unrestricted	7,998,016	9,661,402
Temporarily restricted	98,360,453	109,194,134
Total Net Assets	106,358,469	118,855,536
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$109,255,325	\$122,081,439

A complete version of the Human Rights Watch financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2009, is available at: <http://www.hrw.org/about/financials>

Human Rights Watch has earned Charity Navigator's highest four-star rating.



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Human Rights Watch is one of the world's leading independent organizations dedicated to defending and protecting human rights.

By focusing international attention where human rights are violated, we give voice to the oppressed and hold oppressors accountable for their crimes. Our rigorous, objective investigations and strategic, targeted advocacy build intense pressure for change and raise the cost of human rights abuse.

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