

# Desk

etary General, **Colm Ó Cuanacháin**,  
s with Executive Director **Seán Love**.

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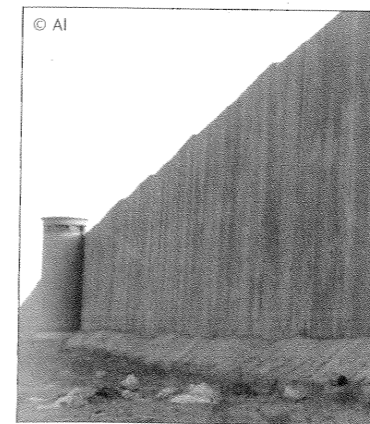
To find out how you can  
take action to help stop  
these violations, see article  
on page 11-12.

## Cement Roadstone Holdings

In February of this year  
Amnesty commenced a  
series of campaigning  
actions against corpora-  
tions that are involved in,  
or linked with illegal activi-  
ties in the Occupied  
Palestinian Territories  
(OPT). For example, a  
recently launched report  
highlights the role of  
Caterpillar as suppliers of  
the bulldozers that are  
used to demolish  
Palestinian homes.

Another example is much  
closer to home! One of  
Ireland's most profitable  
companies, Cement Road-  
stone Holdings (CRH) is  
linked with the construc-  
tion of the illegal wall/fence  
being built by the Israelis in  
Palestinian territory. CRH  
owns 25 per cent of  
Mashav, a holding company  
for Nesher Cement. So  
CRH own a quarter of  
Nesher cement.

Nesher has a virtual  
monopoly on cement pro-  
duction in Israel. The Irish  
Section has met with execu-  
tives from CRH twice recent-  
ly and they accepted that  
"in all probability" their  
cement is being used in the  
construction of the  
fence/wall. The  
International Court of  
Justice, the UN General  
Assembly, the EU, and the  
Irish Government, have all  
condemned the construc-  
tion of the fence/wall as a  
breach of international law.



The bleak Israel/Occupied Palestinian  
Territories wall/fence.

So why is nobody holding  
CRH to account? Why does  
the Irish Government, one  
with an outstanding record  
on the human rights issues  
of Israel/OPT, not intervene  
with this major Irish multina-  
tional corporation? The UN  
Human Rights Norms for  
Business explain in great  
detail the responsibilities  
that corporations face, and  
the obligation on govern-  
ments to make them  
accountable. Impressions  
are that those in authority  
lack conviction to enforce  
these obligations.

For too long corporations  
have been profiting at the  
expense of human rights,  
either through complicity or  
Pilate-like washing of the  
hands.

There is a responsibility on  
the Irish Government to  
investigate the activities of  
CRH in the OPT Palestinian  
Authority to establish if in  
fact the company is com-  
plicit in breach of the law,  
and if so, to take action.

## Citizenship Referendum

Now that we have had time  
to reflect, it is essential to  
analyse the outcomes of the  
referendum on citizenship  
from a human rights per-  
spective. As Amnesty said  
repeatedly during the trun-  
cated referendum debate,  
the lack of transparency and  
due process undermined  
democracy and human  
rights. The inability or dis-  
interest of government to  
provide effective anti-racism

and human rights education,  
to show real leadership at a  
time of demographic  
change, and to learn from  
the costly mistakes relating  
to ghettoisation and dis-  
crimination in other coun-  
tries is very disturbing.

The fact that more than four  
out of five of us voted to  
change the constitutional  
provisions relating to citi-  
zenship is the clearest signal  
yet that the government  
must urgently reinstate the  
Know Racism public educa-  
tion project, funding for  
which has been slashed in  
recent years. They must  
publish the comprehensive  
immigration policy for which  
they claimed the referendum  
decision was a key pillar, one  
conducive to the needs of  
individuals and the country,  
and they must implement  
international requirements  
such as the EU Race  
Directive and the UN  
Convention on Migrant  
Workers.

## EU Presidency

This edition of the magazine  
includes a full review of  
Amnesty's activities during  
the Irish EU Presidency.  
(Further articles on the EU  
Presidency are on pages 15-  
18).

The Irish Presidency made a  
number of significant inter-  
ventions and initiatives on  
human rights issues, and  
deserves credit. The high-  
point of the Presidency was  
the successful conclusion of  
the Intergovernmental  
Conference (IGC), and the  
agreement on the new con-  
stitution for the EU.  
Essentially the Treaty estab-  
lishing a Constitution for  
Europe includes the entire  
text of the Charter on  
Fundamental Rights and  
Freedoms, which has  
become Part II of the EU  
Constitution. In addition  
the new Constitution  
accepts that the EU will  
accede to the European

Convention on  
Rights.

The Irish Gov  
demonstrated si  
commitment to  
rights in multi-lat  
during the Preside  
particularly at th  
Commission for  
Rights. Human rig  
logues were conduc  
Iran and China, whi  
ings such as those  
African Union, a  
United States all ha  
rights on the agenda  
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Department of  
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involvement of an  
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human rights c  
ensured that we wer  
ed access to the cou  
the first time since

Their initiative on t  
ation of the EU Gu  
on Human Rights De  
marks a very welcom  
opment in the prom  
human rights.

## UNDERMINING GLOBAL SECURITY



THE EUROPEAN UNION'S ARMS EXPORTS

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Cover of the "Undermining  
Global Security: the European  
Union's arms exports" r

## Arms trade

Since October  
Amnesty has produ  
series of reports highli  
our concerns over g  
Ireland's control of  
exports. There are d  
ous loopholes, a la  
transparency and  
quate controls in the p  
system. Two recent re