

G4S: G2G!

REPORT FROM G4S AGM LONDON 2011



The Justice for Jimmy Mubenga campaign held a demonstration outside G4S' AGM on Thursday 19th May, 2011, from 1pm-2.30pm, at Ironmonger Hall, Barbican, London. We demanded that G4S be held accountable for Jimmy Mubenga's death on 12 October 2010 following 'restraint' by G4S officers while being forcibly removed from the UK.

There was a demo of about 20 people outside, including Jews for Justice for Palestinians and Cambridge Migrant Solidarity. One of us went inside to ask questions to senior management within the AGM. Here is her

report:

"Feeling a bit stunned by the whole event. A board of 18 members lined up, in a historic room full of portraits. About 20 shareholders who were invited to ask any questions close to the beginning. I held onto the microphone until it was taken away from me asking:

- Following the death of Jimmy Mubenga can the board tell us what steps have been taken to ensure that no one else will be killed by G4S?*
- Have the criticisms of the Inspector of Prisons been addressed regarding treatment of prisoners and detainees, especially children?*
- Why is G4S supplying services in illegal settlements in Israel including means to torture prisoners*
- Following union reports in Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa detailing the racist practices of G4S management and staff what has been done to address this?*

Some of these points were answered by different board members. Most replies related to training of staff or the fact that G4S was following directions from UKBA etc. I pursued a number of points and one other shareholder mentioned that any adverse publicity potentially affected economic benefits (!)

When they voted to give themselves a pay rise from £750,000 to £1M I voted against (only one) and stood up and ranted how they were benefiting from the suffering of the individuals in their care and should be ashamed. I walked out.

A horrible experience - like being in a circle of hell with no real human beings present! Paul Condon (ex-London police guy), Nick Buckles (Chief Exec - with £7M pension at 52! all whitened smiles and spray tan). Row of greedy poisonous characters. Scary world!"

Full text of prepared questions

What has Scotland Yard's homicide investigation into the killing of Jimmy Mubenga discovered?

In 2008, a report by Birnberg Peirce & Partners, Medical Justice and the National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns documented "an alarming number of injuries" sustained by asylum seekers at the hands of private security guards contracted by the Home Office during their detention and forcible deportation. An independent report by Baroness Nuala O'Loan, the former Northern Ireland police ombudsman, found in March that security contractors involved in deportations had "failed to properly manage the use of violent restraint techniques by their staff." More recently, research by the Institute of Race Relations revealed that at least 14 people have died since 1991 during forced deportations from various European countries, including the UK.

Can you assure us that no one else will be killed by G4S?

The Guardian quotes G4S as being "extremely disappointed" that the British Safety Council had withdrawn the 2009 international safety award after the sudden death of Kenyan asylum seeker Eliud Nyenze at Oakington detention centre on 14 April 2010. G4S said: "We are hopeful Oakington will be reaccredited soon." However G4S are aware that Eliud's death sparked vociferous protests from other detainees as he was denied access to a doctor and was refused medication in the hours before his death. Furthermore, the most recent report into Oakington Centre by HM Inspectorate of prisons, in 2008, concluded that detainees' relations with staff had "deteriorated considerably" since the last inspection three years earlier. It also noted that "detainees told us that they did not consider health services at the centre to be good, and they had particular concerns about emergency responses".

Given these circumstances is it not irresponsible in the extreme to even consider accepting a health and safety award until these issues are addressed and resolved?

This year, Whistleblowers have revealed how lack of training, bullying of staff, ignoring complaints of staff, over long work hour shifts have lead to a deadly situation for people. One whistleblower describes "a deliberate culture of mismanagement and cover-up" during the company's first four years of conducting overseas removals. Another of the whistleblowers, records how he repeatedly wrote to his seniors expressing concerns, including one letter in which he stated that some G4S employees were playing "Russian roulette with detainees' lives"

Can u assure us that the complaints from workers are being taken seriously and will lead to a change in the reckless manner G4S is managed and run? It is not enough to want to discipline workers as stated to the Home Office investigation – the problem is the management – what is being done to change the way G4S is run?

GSL has been repeatedly criticised by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for the lack of sufficient meaningful activities in the detention centres the company runs. In her

2008 inspection report, Anne Owers expressed, once again, "concerns over provision for children" held at Tinsley House, and considered that conditions for the much-reduced number of single women were "unacceptable".

Can u assure us that these criticisms have been responded to and how?

In addition to the services offered under the name G4S, the company also owns 70% of Israel's largest private security company, Hashmira. - sued by 350 of its employees in 2005 for breach of labour laws, and was ordered to pay compensation to a former employee for non-payment of pension moneys by the Nazareth Labour Court in 2006. In 2008, Hashmira was convicted by an Israeli Regional Labour Court of discriminating on the basis of gender and religion against a female Jewish job applicant, having told her "there is a problem to carry weapon and magazines while wearing a skirt.

Can you assure that conditions for workers have improved?

After worldwide protests against G4S supply of instruments of torture to Israel, the Danish-British security firm G4S announced its exit from some contracts in the West Bank on 11th March 2011. The company will continue to deliver security services to illegal settlements in the West Bank and to prisons in Israel. Prior to its 11th March statement, in an effort to answer concerns from the Danish media and civil society, G4S contracted Danish expert on international law Hjalte Rasmussen to write a legal opinion on G4S's activities in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Dan Church Aid (DCA) and Amnesty International Denmark expressed their discontent in the Danish press about the poor quality of Rasmussen's report, the former describing it as "shameful" as it contains so many errors. Secretary General of Amnesty International Denmark, Lars Normann Jørgensen, said that "a case as serious as this one requires more thorough observations in the areas concerned than Hjalte Rasmussen has done."

Can we have confirmation of the legality of supplying services including means to torture prisoners in illegal settlements in Israel?

G4S is the second largest private employer in the world. In 2008 they finally signed an agreement with UNI Global Union following the UNI 2007 report on labour practices at Group 4 Securicor in Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa. The report uncovered alarming racism in the companies management which South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU) had been petitioning about, including guards being referred to as "kaffirs" and "monkeys" by managers and "Whites Only" Toilets where, SATAWU found that management in Pretoria provided white guards with keys to the company toilet and black guards were forced to use the toilet in a nearby mall.

Have the racist neo-colonialist and neo-apartheid practices of G4S

References

Corporate Watch

<http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/?lid=3500>

<http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/?lid=3471>

<http://www.corporatewatch.org/?lid=3193>

<http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/?lid=3937>

<http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/?lid=3739>

<http://www.corporatewatch.org.uk/?lid=3954>

UNI Report

http://www.waronwant.org/component/docman/doc_download/25-who-protects-the-guardsthe

he-facts-behind-g4s-in-southern-africa

management been addressed and altered?

NO JUSTICE



Eliud Nyunze
Died in custody -
Oakington, Cambridge
14th April 2010



Jimmy Mubenga
Killed by G4S guards -
Heathrow, London
12th October 2010

We are encouraging other interested individuals and groups to buy a nominal share in G4S so that we can be present at next years AGM in significant numbers. Please contact Cambridge Migrant Solidarity if you wish to be involved in this action

cms@lists.riseup.net

The questions in this leaflet cover only those well documented cases of abuses by G4S. There are countless others unrecorded abuses that occur on a daily basis. G4S profits from a society and global system that profits from the criminalisation of masses of people around the world. We appeal to shareholders, workers, prisoners and all of those who come into contact with the company to unite and work towards creating ways of working together where the needs of all people come before those of the profits for a few.- DEWOU-DAMTP

NO PEACE