

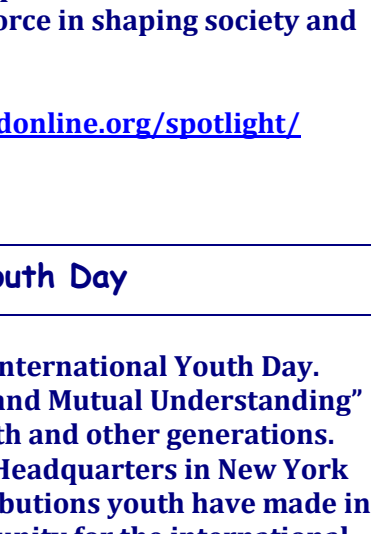
## Youth Link to Democracy: WYMD Newsletter

## Youth Spotlight: Mao Pises



Mao Pises at demonstration

Mao Pises, age 29, currently serves as President of the Federation of Cambodian Intellectuals and Students (FedCIS), an NGO that he helped found. FedCIS was created to represent the interests of intellectuals and students in Cambodia, and provides training, workshops, and networking opportunities. Additionally, it serves as a human rights advocacy group, and is concerned with issues including child labor, human trafficking, and the rights for the disabled, among others. "They are hot issues that have been happening and I think these issues are absolutely connected to students and youth," explained Pises. "They are the results of poverty and injustice in society... Students should...not think only about themselves. We have to think about the society as well, and I believe that students can help to resolve all these issues."



Students' demonstration was blocked by police

Recently Cambodia has adopted a Law on Demonstrations, which imposes restrictions on the size and location of assemblies. This has made it more difficult for all groups, including students and youth, to speak out against the government. It has also deterred some organizations and Cambodians from standing up for their rights. Pises believes that this law is moving Cambodian democracy backwards. Nevertheless, he says that Cambodian youth have the power to create positive social change within the country. As youth make up more than half of the Cambodian population, they are an instrumental force in shaping society and advancing democracy.

To read the full interview, go to: <http://www.wymdonline.org/spotlight/MaoPises.htm>.

## August 12: International Youth Day

August 12, 2010 is the official commemoration of International Youth Day. The theme for this year's celebration is "Dialogue and Mutual Understanding" which recognizes the value of dialogue among youth and other generations. Celebrations will take place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and around the world in appreciation of the contributions youth have made in enhancing peace and development. It is an opportunity for the international community and the UN system to exhibit their commitment to young people. The International Year of Youth will be launched on this day as well. This signifies an important time for youth. While the attention is on us, we must demonstrate our strength and abilities to build a better future!

Let us know what you did to celebrate this day. Please send any photos, reports, press releases, or stories from your International Youth Day Celebrations to [info@wymdonline.org](mailto:info@wymdonline.org).

The World Youth Movement for Democracy will commemorate International Youth Day by launching it's 2010 Essay Contest on August 12. Stay tuned to learn more about this year's theme and prize!

## Political Prisoner Campaign: Cuba

*The Political Prisoner Campaign, an initiative of WYMD, will focus its efforts on raising awareness and advocating for the release of political prisoners and the end of repressive laws that infringe on the basic liberties of young activists. The Campaign will run from August 6 to September 30. Please join us by hosting your own advocacy efforts, such as sending a message of solidarity to the political prisoners in Cuba, adopting a prisoner's case to advocate for, writing a letter to your government requesting that they encourage Cuba to follow human rights standards or sharing information on young political prisoners through your own networks. Follow the blog at: <http://cuba-wymd.blogspot.com/>*

## Cuba's Political Prisoners and the Struggle for Liberty

By Aramis L. Perez

of Directorio and Vice Chairman of [International Young Democrat Union](#)

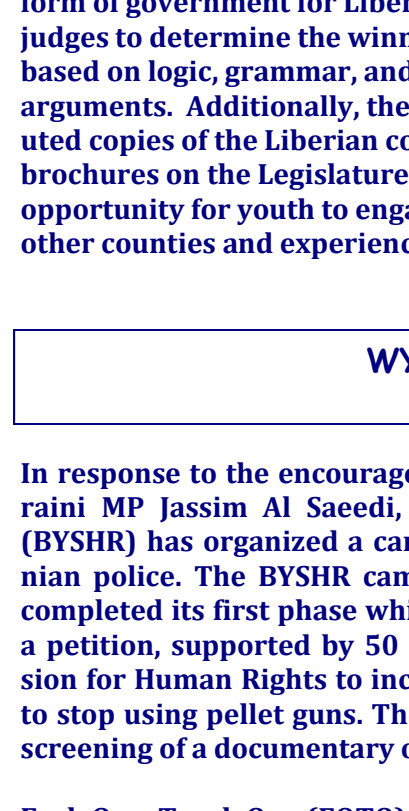
## The Cuban Resistance

There is a growing nonviolent movement for freedom in Cuba, a country under totalitarian rule since 1959. This movement spans the country, drawing from diverse sectors of the population. Despite the regime's constitution and legal system ensuring the systematic violation of the Cuban people's basic rights ([Amnesty International- Cuba Urged to Revoke Repressive Laws and Release Prisoners of Conscience](#), a pervasive repressive apparatus employing surveillance, torture, and violence against freedom activists, ([Human Rights Watch- New Castro, Same Cuba](#)) and a notorious record of political imprisonment and harsh treatment spanning half a century ([Cuban Democratic Directorate- El Presidio Político en Cuba. Las consecuencias de 47 años de la revolución cubana](#)) Cuba's civic resistance movement is having a greater impact on the Island and abroad than ever before.

Today, youth activists for democracy and academic freedom, an anti-establishment arts and culture scene in Havana, a community of bloggers and Twitter developing despite near-complete denial of Internet access ([Committee to Protect Journalists- Cuban Bloggers](#)), trade unions and farmers' cooperatives, independent journalists and libraries, underground newsletters, and human rights defenders are articulating the Cuban people's desire for a nonviolent transition to a free and democratic society under the rule of law ([Journal of Democracy- Can Cuba Change? Ferment in Civil Society](#)).

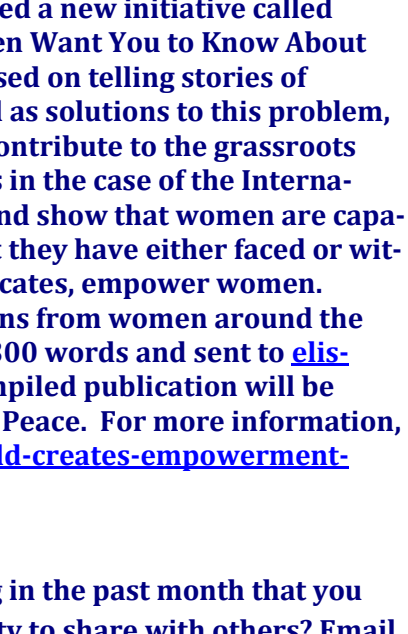
To read the full report, go to: [www.wymdonline.org/CubaReport.doc](http://www.wymdonline.org/CubaReport.doc)

## NAYMOTE and MASU Host Forum for Liberian Youth



The National Youth Movement for Transparent Elections-Partners for Democratic Development (NAYMOTE) and the Margibi Student Union recently held a youth forum in Margibi County, Liberia with the theme "Promoting Dialogue on Democracy- What are Liberian Youths Saying?" The forum hosted over 200 students from both Montserrado and Margibi counties that participated in day long activities such as debates, quizzes, drama, and soccer and kickball games.

NAYMOTE believes that youth are best fit to assess their own needs and should be included in the decision-making processes, especially regarding youth-specific needs. This forum helped develop their capacity by hosting debates on the issue of democracy as the best form of government for Liberia. It had expert judges to determine the winners of the debate based on logic, grammar, and position of their arguments. Additionally, the program distributed copies of the Liberian constitution and brochures on the Legislature in Liberia. Most significantly, this presented an opportunity for youth to engage with and share ideas among peers from other counties and experience new areas of Liberia.



## WYMD Member News

In response to the encouraged use of excessive force against rioters by Bahraini MP Jassim Al Saeedi, the Bahrain Youth Society for Human Rights (BYSHR) has organized a campaign against the use of pellet guns in Bahrain police. The BYSHR campaign, *Against the Use of Shotgun in Bahrain*, completed its first phase which was launched in five languages and included a petition, supported by 50 international organizations, to the UN Commission for Human Rights to increase the pressure on the Bahraini government to stop using pellet guns. The third phase will begin shortly, which will be a screening of a documentary on the subject.

Each One, Teach One (EOTO) World has launched a new initiative called "Creating the Empowerment Zone: What Women Want You to Know About Preventing their Violence." The project is focused on telling stories of women who have experienced violence, as well as solutions to this problem, from their point of view. These accounts will contribute to the grassroots movement advocating for policy in this area, as in the case of the International Violence Against Women Act (IVAWA), and show that women are capable of producing solutions to the problems that they have either faced or witnessed. This will also, as the project's title indicates, empower women. EOTO World is currently looking for submissions from women around the world. Submissions should be no longer than 300 words and sent to [elischia@eotoworld.com](mailto:elischia@eotoworld.com) by September 1. The compiled publication will be posted on September 21, International Day for Peace. For more information, visit: [www.eotoworld.com/2010/07/eoto-world-creates-empowerment-zone.html](http://www.eotoworld.com/2010/07/eoto-world-creates-empowerment-zone.html)

Have you or your organization done something in the past month that you would like to share? Do you have an opportunity to share with others? Email [info@wymdonline.org](mailto:info@wymdonline.org) to be included in next month's newsletter.

## In Your Words

By Ilana Ullman

*This is a new section in the WYMD Newsletter where members can submit articles on current issues that interest them. To submit an article, send to [info@wymdonline.org](mailto:info@wymdonline.org). Please limit to 250 words or less and provide sources unless an opinion piece.*

Although the poor working conditions of sweatshops are a large problem, some companies have recently taken steps in the right direction towards fairer worker treatment in their factories.

According to the [New York Times](#), Nike, Inc. announced that it would pay \$1.54 million to assist over 1,500 workers who were suddenly unemployed when factories in Honduras owned by two Nike subcontractors shut down. Under Honduran law, these employees were owed severance payments, which Nike originally claimed was the responsibility of the subcontractors. After pressure from fair-labor groups and Honduran unions, Nike agreed to contribute and provide other benefits such as health care.

An apparel factory in the Dominican Republic has adopted a progressive model of operation. Knights Apparel pays workers at its factory a "living wage," which is up to three and half times as much as wages at other factories in the country, and allows them to join unions. Due to the higher wage, the factory has a lower profit margin, but its owner believes it will be successful, reported the [New York Times](#).

Although these are positive steps, many apparel factories still underpay their employees and subject them to harsh working conditions. However, this is hopefully the beginning of a trend which other companies will follow, especially if consumers consciously buy more products that were made by fair-labor companies. Governments should also do their part by enacting and enforcing laws that protect workers' rights.

## Check it out! Opportunities for Youth Around the World

- [Synergos Fellowship](#)  
Deadline: August 31, 2010
- [DAWN Institute for Feminist Activists](#)  
Deadline: September 15, 2010
- [iWith.org Summer Photo Contest](#)  
Deadline: September 20, 2010
- [Columbia University Human Rights Advocates Program](#)  
Deadline: November 19, 2010

## Web Tools

- The International Center for Journalists offers online courses in their program "ICFJ Anywhere." Go to: [www.anywhere.icfj.org/front](http://www.anywhere.icfj.org/front)
- "[Self-Liberation: A Guide to Strategic Planning for Action to End a Dictatorship or Other Oppression](#)" a guide issued by the Albert Einstein Institute and written by Gene Sharp

## Democracy Videos

To watch a documentary on the Constitutional Referendum in Kenya, go to: <http://vimeo.com/13242621>

To watch a documentary on the Pakistani NGO Khwendo Kor, go to: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqcxPHeNRol](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqcxPHeNRol)

## Staying connected is as easy as 1-2-3!

- 1) Join our new Facebook group: [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)
- 2) Visit our new Website: [www.wymdonline.org](http://www.wymdonline.org)
- 3) Follow us on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/WYMD>

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact [Ceciliaa@ned.org](mailto:Ceciliaa@ned.org) or [Bethd@ned.org](mailto:Bethd@ned.org). We are here to support your work in any way possible, whether it is helping out with an activity or connecting you to other activists in your area or beyond!

To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#).

Questions or comments? E-mail us at [info@wymdonline.org](mailto:info@wymdonline.org)

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