The Center for Research Libraries

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Human Rights Resources Profile

Amnesty International, International Secretariat
ADAM (Amnesty Digital Asset Management)
AIDAN (Amnesty International Document Archive Network)

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Overview

Amnesty International (AI) is "a global movement of 2.8 million supporters, members and activists in more than 150 countries and territories who campaign to end grave abuses of human rights."[1] The central offices for the organization are housed in the Amnesty International, International Secretariat in London, England, while local chapters around the world work on a grassroots volunteer model. In the last year, AI's International Secretariat (IS) launched the Amnesty Digital Asset Management (ADAM) program so that volunteers can submit digital documentation collected in the field to a central database for archiving and preservation. Participation in ADAM is currently voluntary, but hopefully it will become standard practice for field workers to automatically submit all materials to ADAM as part of their daily activities.[2] ADAM is an internal resource for AI staff and volunteers, but the public also has limited browsing access to content in the database.

In addition to ADAM, the IS also maintains an in-house enterprise document management system—AIDAN—for managing official AI document output such as reports, press releases, actions, leaflets, and internal memos. The Records Management Coordinator for AI, IS further seeks to develop a standard practice for using this system to capture and organize internal communications (in particular internal memos) to support future activism and administrative needs.[3] Like ADAM, this program serves AI's internal needs, but unlike ADAM, it is not available to the public.

History and Mission

History: AI was founded in 1961 by Peter Benenson, a British lawyer. He launched a worldwide campaign called the "Appeal for Amnesty 1961" in response to the jailing of two Portuguese

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[1] See http://amnesty.org/en/who-we-are . Last accessed 11 August 2011.
[2] P.E., Audiovisual Archivist|IRP Program, Amnesty International, International Secretariat. Personal interview. 29 September, 2009.
[3] F.B., Records Management Coordinator, Amnesty International, International Secretariat. Personal interview, 10 September, 2009.

students who were arrested for toasting freedom. This appeal was reprinted in newspapers around the world and sparked the beginning of Amnesty International, as the organization is known today. In July 1961, delegates from the UK, France, Germany, Switzerland, and the U.S. met and formally established the international mission and organization of AI. The following year, AI made its first research trips to investigate oppression in Ghana, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Portugal; the Prisoner of Conscience Fund was also established. Since then, the organization has expanded to over 2.8 million members participating in activism and monitoring efforts in more than 150 countries and territories around the world. The organization's main function since its inception has been to maintain itself as "a permanent international movement in defence [sic] of freedom of opinion and religion."[4]

Mission: AI envisions a world in which all people benefit from the rights established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international statements and instruments for the defense of human rights. Its mission: "to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of these rights."[5]

Chief activities
To uphold the above mission, AI targets its investigative and awareness-building efforts at a variety of institutions and power structures that need to be held accountable for upholding human rights. These include, "governments, intergovernmental organizations, armed political groups, companies and other non-state actors."[6] AI accomplishes this through systematic research of individual cases and broader patterns of human rights abuses. It then publishes and publicizes the findings from these investigations and organizes public pressure on governments, industries, or institutions to stop abuses. AI further encourages all governments to implement human rights standards in the rule of law, develops human rights educational activities, and encourages all levels of national and international society to support and recognize human rights.[7]

Participants
See the discussion of AI's governance and structures below for information on participation in the organization.

Governance
Amnesty International is an International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO) led by an International Executive Committee (IEC) elected by an International Council made up of representatives of all branches of the organization. All levels work toward meeting AI's mandate of acting for and supporting "international solidarity, effective action for the individual victim, global coverage, the universality and indivisibility of human rights, impartiality and independence, and democracy and mutual respect."[8] AI consists of worldwide voluntary membership organized into: [9]

- **Sections:** established in a country, state, territory, or region with consent of the IEC.
- **Structures:** national or regional bodies consisting of a board and active volunteers. Structures are established by the IEC to coordinate AI activities locally.
- **International networks:** theme-based networks made up of members of at least five AI sections or structures and at least two International Secretariat program regions.
- **Affiliated groups:** groups of at least five members that pay annual dues to the International Council and will work within the mandates and statutes of AI.

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[4] See http://amnesty.org/en/who-we-are/history for a detailed timeline of AI's history. Last accessed 11 August 2011.
[5] Statute of Amnesty International: http://amnesty.org/en/who-we-are/accountability/statute-of-amnesty-international. Last accessed 11 August 2011.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] *Ibid.*
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] *Ibid.*

- **Individual members:** any person who contributes to and supports the advancement of AI's mission, core values, and policies and has been recognized and registered by an AI section structure (or affiliated group) by paying annual dues. Individuals in countries where AI does not have a presence may become members by paying a subscription directly to the International Secretariat in London.

The governing body of AI is the International Council, which consists of the members of the International Executive Committee and appointed representatives of sections, structures, and international memberships (with the number of representatives based on a predetermined ratio of membership at each level as stated in the "Statue to Amnesty International"). The council meets at least every two years and its primary functions are to:[10]
- Develop strategy
- Set vision, mission, and core values
- Determine an integrated strategic plan, including financial strategy
- Establish systems and bodies of governance
- Evaluate AI's overall performance vis-à-vis stated strategies and plans
- Hold all subunits accountable to the whole.

The International Executive Committee (IEC) consists of nine members elected to four-year terms by the International Council and serves to:[11]
- Make decisions on behalf of Amnesty International as a whole
- Establish sound financial policy and implement it across the organization
- Implement the Strategic Plan and adjust as necessary
- Ensure compliance with AI's Statute
- Collect reports from, and maintain accountability of, all sections, structures, and bodies of AI.

The IEC also may appoint a Secretary General to head the International Secretariat in London and be responsible for directing the conduct of affairs of AI and implementing the decisions of the International Council. The Secretary General in turn may appoint senior executive staff (with the approval of the IEC) and all other staff as necessary.

Funding Model
AI is funded through membership dues, fees, and subscriptions, as well as private donations.

Services/Technology Resources
ADAM—Amnesty Digital Assets Management
In October 2009, Amnesty International's International Secretariat in London released an in-house digital archiving program called ADAM--Amnesty Digital Asset Management.[12] The program, designed in conjunction with Bright Interactive,[13] allows Amnesty field workers to upload digitally created photos, videos, and audio recordings into a central repository that all Amnesty members can access from within the organization. It is a customized application of Bright Interactive's Asset Bank tool, which:

> is a digital asset management system, enabling your organisation [sic] to create a fully searchable, categorised library of digital images, videos and other documents. It is a

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[10] *Ibid.*

[11] http://amnesty.org/en/who-we-are/our-people/international-executive-committee. Last accessed 11 August 2011.

[12] The ADAM online library is available at https://adam.amnesty.org/asset-bank/. Last accessed 11 August 2011.

[13] http://www.bright-interactive.com/. Last accessed 11 August 2011.

high-performance, cost-effective server application to enable you to manage digital assets - all that is needed to access it is a web browser (from Asset Bank). [14]

The description for the product goes on to specify that the Asset Bank program that ADAM is built from is customizable, scalable, and multilingual. ADAM is an internal organization tool designed to support research and mission development across AI.

Because the program is accessible through a web browser, field workers can submit their field materials from anywhere in the world, as long as they have an Internet link (which can be a challenge in the further reaches of the world). As users upload their digital materials, they fill in required fields for metadata and context information (see Appendix A for examples of what sorts of information are input into the system). Use and access restrictions are also included in the record for each uploaded item (see Figures 1 and 2 below for agreement language and notes). At this point, uploading material into ADAM is voluntary, but according to AI's digital archivist, field worker response has been enthusiastic. The hope is that uploading material into ADAM will become standard practice for all field workers, thus streamlining archiving processes and making material readily available for AI reports and campaigns. This material could also potentially be available for scholarly and legal work by outside parties, depending on the access agreements that AI holds with the creators of the material and the individuals represented in images, videos, or audio recordings (see *Downstream Uses*, below).

As of December 2010, ADAM's in-house database holds more than 45,000 records, about 900 of which are available for public viewing at the ADAM web site.[15] Though website visitors from outside of AI cannot access the full holdings, the public holdings allow site visitors to see the types of information that ADAM users submit when they upload their digital documentation items. ADAM currently collects the following information for uploaded items (see Appendix A: Sample Records from ADAM for screen images taken from the database):

Descriptive

- Title of the video, image, or audio file
- Description of the content
- Keywords, or terms for searching and cataloging
- Campaigns that the item contributes to or was created for
- Tags
- Copyright type
- Copyright credit

Agreement Type:

- Agreement specifies the level of use that the creator of the piece and individuals represented within the piece permit within Amnesty International. Some items are publicly available and others are highly restricted (see Figure 1 below for an example of agreement language as it appears in the item record)

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[14] From http://www.assetbank.co.uk/. Last accessed 11 August 2011. See Bright Interactive's description of digital asset management systems at http://www.assetbank.co.uk/product/packages/corporate.html. Last accessed 11 August 2011.
[15] Figures based on number of records available in ADAM as of 23 December 2010. Numbers increase as additional materials are added to the database. Too see publicly available records, visit http://adam.amnesty.org/asset-bank/action/viewHome. This takes you to the homepage where you can click on the "Public" link under "Browse." Click on any of the items pictured to see the full list of data collected for items housed in ADAM. Last accessed on 11 August 2011.

Agreement Type:	Agreement applies
Agreement:	AI no restrictions For use in printed AI internal and campaigning materials For use on AI internal and campaigning web-sites For use in AI membership recruitment, fund-raising &/or advertising printed materials For use in AI membership recruitment, fund-raising &/or advertising web-sites Can be distributed to external organisations by AI For indefinite use by AI
Subject released?:	No
Agreement Notes:	Please read agreement. Read more »

Figure 1: Agreement language found in ADAM records[16]

- Subject released?: specifies whether the party appearing in the material also released the material for viewing
- Agreement Notes: Some standard language appears in this field for restricted items. Parties uploading the material can also specify additional use restrictions not covered in the standard agreements preset in ADAM. Figure 2 displays an example of Agreement notes (this window opens upon clicking the highlighted "read more>>" link that appears next to "Agreement notes" in the item record—see Figure 1 above for the placement of the "read more>>" link).

Figure 2: Agreement Notes found under "Read more>>" link within an item record.[17]

- Documents associated with the video or image submitted and stored within the AI intranet, thus outside users cannot access this information

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[16] Image courtesy of ADAM: https://adam.amnesty.org/asset-bank/action/viewAsset?id=106324&index=2&total=13&promoted=true&recent=false&page=0&pageSize=25 Last accessed 11 August 2011.

[17] Image courtesy of ADAM: https://adam.amnesty.org/asset-bank/action/viewAttributeValue?assetId=104863&attributeId=708&dataFromChildren=false Last accessed 11 August 2011.

- Shotlist/Transcript information for video and/or audio material
- Date Created
- Creation Date Accuracy indicates the level of confidence for when the item was created.
- Place Created

Technical

- Size of the digital image, video, or audio recording in terms of image density and/or memory space required for the file
- Embedded data: A link in this field takes the user to a document recording embedded metadata that video and still cameras encode in images. The type of information captured in this file does not appear to be standard; it simply captures whatever information is available within the digital file as it transfers into ADAM (See Appendix B: Embedded Data Captured by ADAM for two examples of information captured in this field).

Admin

- ID, a catalog number assigned to the item by ADAM
- Date Last Modified
- Collections
- Categories
- Photographer

AIDAN

Whereas ADAM is at least partially available to the public, AI's AIDAN system is only accessible by AI staff and volunteers. AIDAN has been developed in Alfresco, an open source enterprise content management (ECM) system.[18] The Records Management personnel at AI have adapted the program to be a document repository that can also be used to feed their Website.[19] As an ECM, AIDAN offers a formalized means of organizing and saving a variety of documentation types and content created during the normal operation of a large enterprise such as Amnesty International. In particular, the platform Alfresco offers document-, web content-, and records-management that allows for capturing, sharing, and retaining documents for collaborative work, as well as for maintaining organizational records, and the Records Management team are exploring its potential in these areas.[20] As stated on the Alfresco website, "Alfresco is the leading open source alternative for enterprise content management (ECM). It couples the innovation of open source with the stability of a true enterprise-class platform."[21] Because Alfresco draws from open source programming (using Java technology), the developers are able to keep development costs down and provide a product that costs less than its commercial competitors. Open Source also allows for flexibility and adaptability, which means that Alfresco can be easily modified to meet the needs of a given organization.[22]

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[18] See the Open Source article at Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_source) for a detailed discussion of this freely available sort of software. Last accessed 14 June 2011. See the Enterprise Content Management System article at Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enterprise_content_management) for a detailed description of how this sort of data management system functions. Last accessed 14 June 2011.
[19] F.B., Records Management Coordinator, Amnesty International, International Secretariat, London. Personal interview 10 September 2009.
[20] See http://www.alfresco.com/. Last accessed 17 June 2011.
[21] http://www.alfresco.com/about/. Last accessed 17 June 2011.
[22] *Ibid*

Challenges facing internal archiving:[23] AI uses the AIDAN program to archive all digitally produced official documentation such as reports, press releases, actions, leaflets, and internal memos dating back to 1985.[24] The Alfresco platform nicely meets the organization's needs for the approximately 11,000 documents submitted to the IS each year,[25] but by fall 2009, there was still no standard practice for archiving digitally produced case files, emails, and government contact records—all documents that the Records Management Coordinator felt should be preserved to support future human rights cases and missions. As the Records Management Coordinator observes, most members of AI see archiving as something that happens "twenty years after the fact," largely due to a concept of archives as "dusty old folders". The idea that the documents that people are producing now might be useful later is a foreign concept at AI—"It's a very now-driven institution." [ref?] As the Records Management Coordinator further notes, thinking about future uses of documentation is hard for field workers, therefore it is hard for document management to convince people to consider future uses. Senior staff offers little support for thinking about how to collect and preserve documents as they get created in the course of field work: the major focus is supporting and enabling immediate goals associated with current missions. Management is immediately concerned with communications surrounding current missions and actions in order to raise awareness and action on behalf of people suffering human rights abuses. This work is time-consuming, so archiving—valued in principle—becomes a secondary concern as workers face the time-sensitive action needed for the high-paced activism involved in critical mission work.

Downstream uses of documentation
Currently, no formal institutional means of organizing and providing access to AI documentation for downstream uses exists, but hopefully as ADAM and AIDAN become more widely adopted throughout the organization, materials will be made available and used for supporting future campaigns and institutional history. Although AI collects extensive information and evidence in the course of its regular work, the use of such documentation beyond AI's immediate aims—monitoring, building awareness and promoting public activism—is not an inherent priority. Evidence collected and disseminated by AI is occasionally used as supporting documentation in human rights cases, such as in Rwanda and Liberia,[26] but this type of activity is not listed in the stated objectives of the organization. As a consequence, the integrity and long-term authenticity of the data submitted to ADAM or AIDAN may be subject to legal or historical scrutiny.

Challenges
Funding: Funding is based on subscriptions, membership dues, and charitable donations, so revenue streams may fluctuate from one year to the next.

Changing technology:[27] As AI increasingly provides field workers with digital technology (i.e., digital cameras and video recorders), the Audiovisual Department finds that it has less access to field materials and is therefore less able to catalogue and preserve them. In the past, analog camera film was returned to AI for developing and negatives could be saved, while original VHS or other video media were also returned to the Audiovisual Department for editing and production. Now, with digital equipment, video and photos are downloaded onto laptops or desktops for

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[23] The following is a summary of a telephone interview with F.B., Records Management Coordinator, Amnesty International, International Secretariat, London. Personal interview 10 September 2009.
[24] "AIDAN User Guide," p 2. Draft provided by F.B., Records Management Coordinator, Amnesty International, International Secretariat, London.
[25] *Ibid*, p. 5
[26] See report used in Charles Taylor trial (http://www.charlestaylortrial.org/2010/04/14/an-overview-of-charles-taylor-on-the-witness-stand/ Last accessed 11 August 2011) and *Amicus Curae* submitted 10 April 2008 in Prosecution vs. Ildephonse HATEGEKIMANA (Case No. ICTR-2000-551): http://webpages.charter.net/jabdmb/adadamicusINTRODUCTION%5B1%5D.doc Last accessed 11 August 2011.
[27] The following comments are summarized from a telephone interview with F.B., Records Management Coordinator, Amnesty International, International Secretariat, London. Personal interview, 10 September 2009.

immediate editing and use by field workers engaged in a particular campaign, and that material does not consistently make it back to A/V for storage. Hopefully, as field workers increasingly take advantage of ADAM, more material will be captured and archived. Ultimately, AI aims to develop a formal requirement that all field workers must upload their digitally produced field materials for preservation.

Structural challenges The largest structural challenge to preserving the digital materials that field workers collect or the staff produce internally appears to be institutional. Both Records Management and the Audiovisual Department observe that in principle, the upper levels of the hierarchy at AI value the preservation of material, but they see future uses of documentation as a lesser priority than their current use. The Records Management Coordinator states that thinking about the future of documentation is difficult for field workers; until senior management supports a formal process for how AI collects and preserves field materials, field workers are not likely to think long-term about the value of the documentation they produce. AI senior management is focused communications: getting AI's message out, explaining current missions, and publicizing political action, all of which is immediate. Saving materials about missions and political actions can come later.

That said, with ADAM now up and running, a number of field workers are voluntarily submitting digital photos, documents, and videos to the archive. However, the head of Audiovisual Archiving notes that there are limits to the documentation submitted imposed by the time it takes for field workers to fill in context information for each submission. The Audiovisual Archivist feels that this is a major stumbling block—those who do participate in submitting material provide the minimal context information required by the submission form, while other field workers may simply avoid the task altogether because of the time required to submit such information. As the archivist observes, "cataloging for human rights really requires knowledge of contextual metadata and logging this information is the time-consuming part. If this weren't time-consuming, field workers might be more willing to participate in logging metadata."[28] However, the simple fact that ADAM is available encourages some members of AI to submit materials for preservation and future uses. A further solution to these institutional challenges is offered by Alfresco, the enterprise document management program that has been used to develop AIDAN and is implemented internally. The program has the capacity to serve as the standard platform for producing documents, which, when prepared within Alfresco, are automatically archived by the program.

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[28] P.E., Audiovisual Archivist|IRP Program, Amnesty International, International Secretariat. Personal interview. 29 September, 2009.

Appendix A:
Sample Records from ADAM

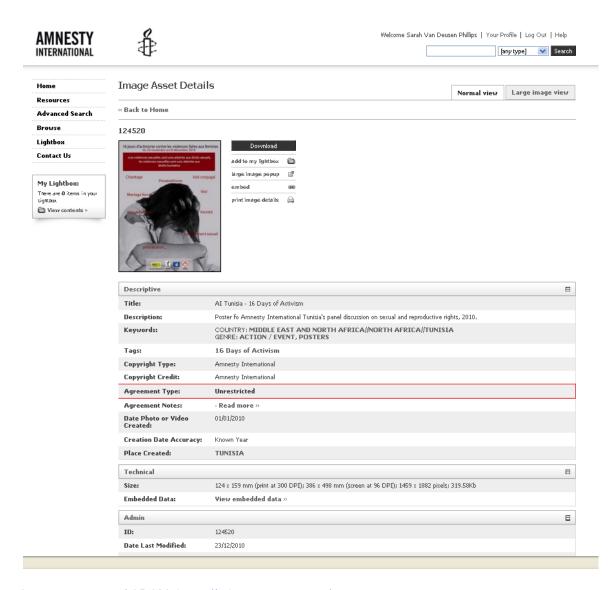**Example 1: ADAM record for an image: Mission poster for Tunisia**

Image courtesy of ADAM: https://adam.amnesty.org/asset-bank/action/viewAsset?id=124520&index=0&total=1&view=viewSearchItem Last accessed 11 August 2011.
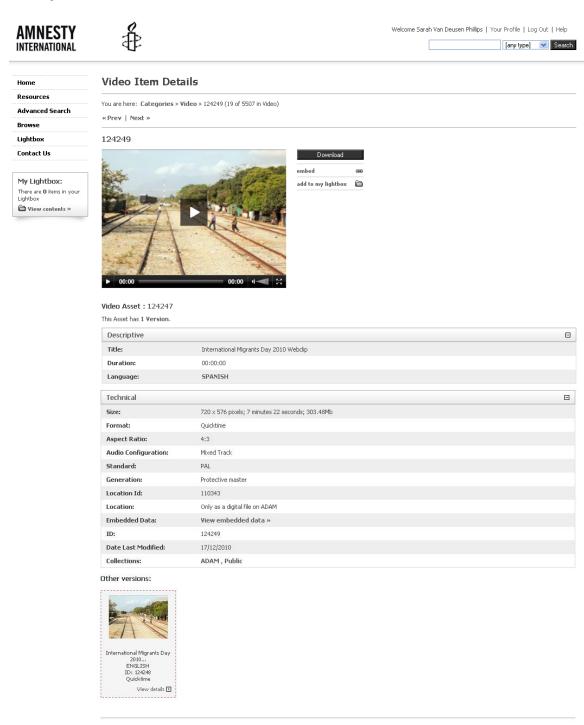
Example 2: ADAM record for a video submission

Image courtesy of ADAM: https://adam.amnesty.org/asset-bank/action/viewAsset?id=124249&index=18&total=5507&categoryId=680&categoryTypeId=1&collection=Video&sortAttributeId=0&sortDescending=false Last accessed 11 August 2011.

Appendix B:
Embedded Data Captured by ADAM

Example 1: Embedded data for a digital video created by an AI field worker. These are the data imprinted on the video by the camera when the footage was first created.

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL

Image Details

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Embedded Metadata

Composite:ImageSize:	720x576
Composite:Rotation:	0
ExifTool:ExifToolVersion:	7.99
QuickTime:AudioBitsPerSample:	16
QuickTime:AudioChannels:	2
QuickTime:AudioFormat:	wave
QuickTime:AudioSampleRate:	48000
QuickTime:Balance:	0
QuickTime:BitDepth:	24
QuickTime:CompatibleBrands:	qt
QuickTime:CompressorID:	avc1
QuickTime:CompressorName:	H.264
QuickTime:CreateDate:	2010:12:16 17:56:17
QuickTime:CurrentTime:	0 s
QuickTime:Duration:	02:17
QuickTime:GraphicsMode:	ditherCopy
QuickTime:HandlerClass:	Data Handler
QuickTime:HandlerDescription:	Apple Alias Data Handler
QuickTime:HandlerType:	Alias Data
QuickTime:HandlerVendorID:	Apple
QuickTime:ImageHeight:	576
QuickTime:ImageWidth:	720
QuickTime:MajorBrand:	Apple QuickTime (.MOV/QT)
QuickTime:MatrixStructure:	1 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 1
QuickTime:MediaCreateDate:	2010:12:16 17:56:17
QuickTime:MediaDuration:	07:22
QuickTime:MediaHeaderVersion:	0
QuickTime:MediaModifyDate:	2010:12:16 17:56:22

My Lightbox:
There are **0** items in your Lightbox
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Home
Resources
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Lightbox
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QuickTime:MediaTimeScale:	3000
QuickTime:MinorVersion:	2005.3.0
QuickTime:ModifyDate:	2010:12:16 17:56:22
QuickTime:NextTrackID:	3
QuickTime:OpColor:	32768 32768 32768
QuickTime:PosterTime:	0 s
QuickTime:PreferredRate:	1
QuickTime:PreferredVolume:	100.00%
QuickTime:PreviewDuration:	0 s
QuickTime:PreviewTime:	0 s
QuickTime:SelectionDuration:	0 s
QuickTime:SelectionTime:	0 s
QuickTime:SourceImageHeight:	576
QuickTime:SourceImageWidth:	720
QuickTime:TimeScale:	3000
QuickTime:TrackCreateDate:	2010:12:16 17:56:11
QuickTime:TrackDuration:	02:17
QuickTime:TrackID:	2
QuickTime:TrackLayer:	0
QuickTime:TrackModifyDate:	2010:12:16 17:56:22
QuickTime:TrackVersion:	0
QuickTime:TrackVolume:	0.00%
QuickTime:VendorID:	Apple
QuickTime:Version:	0
QuickTime:VideoFrameRate:	9.3
QuickTime:XResolution:	72
QuickTime:YResolution:	72

Image courtesy of ADAM: https://adam.amnesty.org/asset-bank/action/viewEmbeddedMetadata?id=124249 Last accessed 11 August 2011.

Example 2: Data imported with an image shared with ADAM from a third party

Image courtesy of ADAM: https://adam.amnesty.org/asset-bank/action/viewEmbeddedMetadata?id=104863