



Biography of Bianca Jagger

Bianca Jagger is the is Founder and Chair of the Bianca Jagger Human Rights Foundation (BJHRF), Council of Europe Goodwill Ambassador, Member of the Executive Director's Leadership Council of Amnesty International USA and Trustee of the Amazon Charitable Trust. The BJHRF is member of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court.

For approximately 30 years, Bianca Jagger has campaigned for human rights and peace, social and economic justice and environmental protection throughout the world.

For her work in these areas, Ms Jagger has been the recipient of many prestigious international awards. On 9 December 2004, she received the **Right Livelihood Award**, also known as the “alternative Nobel prize,” for *putting her celebrity at the service of the exploited and disadvantaged.* The Jury recognized “*her long-standing commitment and dedicated campaigning over a wide range of issues of human rights, social justice and environmental protection, including the abolition of the death penalty, the prevention of child abuse, and the rights of indigenous peoples to the environment that supports them and the prevention and healing of armed conflicts.*”

On 23 September 1997, Bianca Jagger was the recipient of **Amnesty International USA Media Spotlight Award for Leadership**, “*in recognition for her work on behalf of human rights around the world, exposing and focusing attention on injustice.*”

On 9 June 2004 she received the **World Achievement Award** from President Gorbachev for *“her Worldwide Commitment to Human Rights, Social and Economic Justice and Environmental Causes.”* On 28 October 2006 Ms Jagger was the recipient of the **World Citizenship Award** from The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.

Bianca Jagger’s environmental and conservation campaigns have been recognised. In 1994 she received the **United Nations Earth Day International Award** and on 12 May 1997, she was the recipient of the **Green Globe Award by the Rainforest Alliance** for *“her extraordinary conservation efforts and achievements over the past ten years.”*

Bianca Jagger has been widely acknowledged for her efforts to abolish the death penalty. On 29 June 1996, she was the recipient of **the Abolitionist of the Year Award** presented to her on behalf of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty for *“her tireless efforts and heroic dedication in achieving clemency for Guinevere Garcia.”*

On 15 November 1998, Bianca Jagger was awarded **The American Civil Liberties Union Award** for her *“passionate devotion to international human rights, opposition to capital punishment and the promotion of civil rights.”*

On 4 November 2000, she received **The National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyer (NACDL) Champion of Justice Award** for her work as *“a steadfast and eloquent advocate for the elimination of the death penalty in America”.*

She has been awarded two doctorates, honoris causa: the first by Stonehill College, Massachusetts, and the second by Simmons College, Boston.

Bianca Jagger was born Bianca Pérez-Mora Macías in Managua, Nicaragua in 1950. As an adolescent, Ms. Jagger witnessed the terrors President Anastasio (Tachito) Somoza inflicted on the civilian population. She felt powerless, since all she could do was take part in student demonstrations to protest against the National Guards killings. In Nicaragua, she witnessed what John F Kennedy defined as, *“the harshest common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war”.* In the mid-sixties,

she left her native country with a French Government scholarship to study Political Science in Paris.

In 1971, she married Mick Jagger. A year later, Ms Jagger returned to Nicaragua to look for her parents after a devastating earthquake destroyed Managua, the capital, leaving a death toll of more than 10,000 people, 20,000 injured and approximately 200,000 homeless. The earthquake, which reach 6,5 on the Richter scale, sparked huge fires. Victims who had survive the initial shock, perished trapped in the flames. "I will never forget the stench of the charred bodies, when I drove through the rubbles" said Ms Jagger. Although the country received millions of dollars of relief aid from the international community - including \$60 million from the US government - thousands were left without medical assistance, food or shelter. Instead, the funds ended up in President Anastasio Somoza's private bank accounts. It was these ruthless acts of pillage that eventually fuelled the Sandinista Revolution and motivated Ms jagger to fight repression, corruption and injustice.

1979 the year of her divorce coincided with the fall of Somoza. The Sandinistas succeeded in ousting the tyrant. Ms. Jagger joined forces with the British Red Cross to raise funds for the victims of the conflict in the UK and then she flew to Nicaragua to join the International Red Cross to help on the ground. Two years later, in 1981, Ms. Jagger travelled to Central America with a US Congressional fact-finding mission to visit La Virtud, a UN refugee camp in Honduran territory 20km from the border with El Salvador. During her visit, an armed death squad from El Salvador crossed the border, entered the camp and rounded up about 40 refugees. The refugees' thumbs were tied behind their backs; the death squad intended to take the hostages across the border to El Salvador, with the Honduran army's blessing. Ms. Jagger, the delegation and the relief workers decided to follow the death squads. The families of the hostages joined them and together they ran along a dry river bed for about half an hour, armed only with cameras. During the chase, some were taking photographs.

They all feared that the death squads were going to kill the hostages once they arrived in Salvadorian territory. Finally, they came within earshot of

the death squads and the hostages. The death squad turned around brandishing their M-16's. Fearing for their lives, Ms. Jagger and the relief workers began to shout, "You will have to kill us all," and, "We will denounce your crime to the world." There was a long pause. The death squads talked among themselves and, without explanation, left, leaving their hostages free - unharmed. This experience was a turning point in Ms. Jagger's life. She realised the importance of bearing witness when innocent people's lives are at stake, how a small act of courage can make a difference and sometimes even save lives. Upon her return to the US, Ms. Jagger testified before The Congressional Subcommittee on Inter American Affairs, to bring attention to the atrocities committed by the Salvadorian government and its paramilitary forces, with the complicity of the Honduran Government. During the eighties, Ms. Jagger began her lifelong association with several international human rights organisations, most notably with Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. She was awarded an honorary Humanities Degree by Stone Hill College, Massachusetts in 1983, for her work on behalf of human rights in Latin America. In the nineties, as part of her continuing human rights and environmental efforts, Ms. Jagger began to campaign on behalf of indigenous people in Latin America. She committed herself to help save the tropical rain forests of the Western Hemisphere. Her efforts brought her to Nicaragua, Honduras, and Brazil. In 1991 she proved instrumental in stopping a logging concession that would have endangered the Miskito Indians' habitat on the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua. A few years later Ms. Jagger supported a petition to the Brazilian Federation Courts to demarcate and protect the lands of the Guarani peoples of Brazil.

In 1994, she participated in a similar effort to protect the Yanomami people of Northern Brazil from invasions of their lands by gold miners, who were polluting the water and causing many deaths among this ancient tribe. The Yanomami are often threatened by rich and unscrupulous land-owners who covet their land. Ms Jagger attended a hearing before the subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the Committee on Foreign Affairs in May 1994. The previous year, 16 Yanomami tribesmen were murdered in cold blood because miners wanted the gold under their land. The Guarani, after seeing their territory drastically reduced and their

attempts at preserving their constitutionally guaranteed right to own land negated by courts, committed suicide in great numbers. During the hearing, the leader of the Guarani community thanked Ms Jagger for visiting the Guarani, and for preventing their expulsion from their ancestral land. In recognition for her efforts, she was presented the 1994 United Nations Earth Day International award. In 1997, she was the recipient of the Green Globe award by the Rain Forest Alliance, “for her extraordinary conservation efforts and achievements over the past ten years”. Ms Jagger has also supported the Cofán, Siona, Secoya, Kichwa and Huaorani in their battle against Texaco in Ecuador

In 1993, Ms. Jagger travelled to the former Yugoslavia to document the mass rape of Bosnian women by Serbian forces, as part of their ethnic cleansing campaign.

In July 1995, the United Nations “safe area” of Srebrenica in Bosnia was overrun by Bosnian Serb troops. Some 8,000 civilians (virtually the entire male population) were systematically massacred. Since then, Ms. Jagger has spoken on behalf of the survivors. For many years she campaigned to stop the genocide taking place in Bosnia and, later, to make the perpetrators accountable before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). She has testified on this issue before the Helsinki Commission on Human Rights, the United States Congressional Human Rights Caucus, the International Operations Subcommittee on Human Rights, and the British and European Parliaments.

From 1993 to 1996, Ms Jagger evacuated 22 children out of Bosnia to receive medical care in the United States. She personally evacuated two gravely ill children, Sabina and Mohamed. Sadly, Sabina did not survive the evacuation trip and died a couple of days after they arrived in Split, Croatia. Mohamed travel with her to the US and underwent a successful heart surgery at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York. Mohamed lived with her for a year and then for a year with his parents in New Jersey, Mohamed and his family went back to Bosnia. She wrote a decisive essay J'accuse: the Betrayal of Srebrenica, a detailed account of the massacre, which was published world-wide, it was first published by The European in the United Kingdom, by [Courier International](#) and Juriste International in

France and by Panorama in Italy, among others. In July 1998, Ms. Jagger travelled to Kosovo with a BBC Newsnight crew. Her aim was to record war crimes perpetrated against the ethnic Albanians, or 'Kosovars', who lived in the province and constituted 90% of its population. Repression was the Kosovars daily reality at the time of Ms. Jagger's visit. Serbian military and paramilitary troops had been uprooting them, leaving over 300 towns and villages destroyed. Over 2,500 ethnic Albanians were killed. Thousands had disappeared. Houses had been burned down and buildings had been gutted by fire. Crops were destroyed, livestock slaughtered. Serbs had systematically raped Kosovars women. Old people and children had been massacred. Ms. Jagger reported for Newsnight on a pattern of "apartheid" reminiscent of the darkest days of the war she had witnessed in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Serbian and Yugoslav security forces separating men from women and children throughout the province, just as they had done in Srebrenica. Most international organizations and foreign NGOs were withdrawing their staff for "security reasons". Ms. Jagger went on to decry the plight of the Kosovars through several articles and lectures; she spoke at the House of Commons in the UK and the European Parliament. She campaigned for the indictment and arrest of President Milosevic and for the arrest of General Mladic and Radovan Karadzic. Her work on behalf of the countless victims of conflicts throughout the world, and her campaign to evacuate 22 terminally ill children from Bosnia, earned her several awards, among them Amnesty International/USA Media Spotlight Award for leadership "in recognition for her work on behalf of human rights around the world, exposing and focusing attention to injustice".

In the nineties, Ms. Jagger began campaigning against the death penalty. in 1996 at the request of Amnesty International and the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty Ms. Jagger filed a clemency petition on behalf of Guinevere Garcia who had been sentenced to death in the state of Illinois, She made a personal plea to Governor Jim Edgar to commute Guinevere Garcia's death sentence. Guinevere Garcia had waived her right to further appeals after the Illinois Supreme Court upheld their verdict. Ms Jagger fought for her life, because she believed the question was not whether her wish should be granted, but whether the state of Illinois was justified in carrying out her execution. Guinevere Garcia's

decision to accept her execution was entirely consistent with a pathology born from mental disorder and from physical and sexual abuse. Guinevere Garcia's execution would have constituted an act of state sponsored killing.

Ms. Jagger's petition called for an act of executive mercy. She gave countless speeches and interviews on the case, using her voice to speak on behalf of Guinevere Garcia. She filed a clemency petition before Governor Edgar and testified before the Penitentiary Review Board. A few hours before the scheduled execution, Governor Edgar announced that he had commuted Guinevere Garcia's sentence to life imprisonment. Guinevere Garcia "thanked God" and her attorney was quoted as saying "you could tell that a weight had been lifted from her shoulders". On 29 June 1996, Bianca Jagger was made recipient of the "Abolitionist of the Year Award" by the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty for "her tireless efforts and heroic dedication in achieving clemency for Guinevere Garcia". Since then, Ms. Jagger has campaigned on behalf of many prisoners on death row and she continues to campaign against capital punishment throughout the world. In 1998, she fought in vain for the clemency of Sean Sellers and Karla Faye Tucker. Sean was the first person in forty years to be executed for a crime committed at age 16. Ms. Jagger continues to urge the US Government to shift its focus from execution to "the protection of children in order to prevent them from succumbing to a life of crime". Karla Fay Tucker's childhood had been one of abuse and forced prostitution. Karla never denied the atrocity of her crime. When Ms. Jagger met her she was 38, and had spent 14 years behind bars. After Ms Jagger visit her in death row she campaign tirelessly for her life because she believed that "Karla Fay Tucker was no longer the woman who had been sentenced to death in 1984; during her time in prison she underwent a remarkable transformation, she educated herself, became deeply religious and began ministering to others, she was fully rehabilitated". Ms Jagger went on to say "She worked assiduously on the Scare-straight programme to help adolescent drug abusers. Today she no longer posed a threat to society". All appeals failed: Governor George Bush refused to grant clemency to Karla Fay Tucker and she was executed on 3 February 1998.

In June 2000, Ms. Jagger travelled to Texas to meet with Gary Graham and plead on his behalf with Governor George W Bush. Gary Graham was 17, a minor when he was sentenced to death. He spent 19 years on Death Row for a crime he time and again denied that he committed. He was sentenced to death based on the strength of one eyewitness testimony. Evidence, subsequently uncovered, calls into question this witness identification. Six other witnesses signed affidavits stating that the killer was not Gary Graham. He could have been saved by The State Board of Pardons and Parole and yet they denied clemency. Gary Graham was executed on 22 June 2000. His final words proclaimed his innocence and the injustice of his sentence: "I am an innocent black man that is being murdered... It is lynching, what is taking place in America tonight". In November of that same year, Ms. Jagger received The National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyer (NACDL) Champion of Justice Award, naming her as a "steadfast and eloquent advocate for the elimination of the death penalty in America".

Ms. Jagger continues to this day to denounce the lack of meaningful appellate review in commutation proceedings. On 26 February 2010, she gave a keynote address, ["The Time has Come to Say No to Death,"](#) at the opening ceremony of 4th World Congress Against the Death Penalty. She is supporting the case of Linda Carty, a British grandmother on death row in Texas. Carty's case was fraught with errors and is an egregious miscarriage of justice. Her court appointed lawyer failed to provide her with an adequate defence, and the US authorities failed to inform the British consular officials of Carty's detention. Ms Jagger has filmed an [appeal](#) for Carty and has written [articles](#) to bring her case to the public's attention.

Ms Jagger continues to denounce defendants' poor access to executive clemency and the State's lack of recognition for the defendant's capacity for change, rehabilitation and remorse. Her articles, lectures and press conferences on the subject continue to challenge a penal system that is unfair, arbitrary and capricious, and jurisprudence fraught with racial discrimination and judicial bias.

Ms. Jagger has also been a strong advocate for Arms Control. She is

committed to supporting women's rights in the face of prejudice and domestic violence. Her work with former Manhattan Borough President Ruth Messinger was instrumental in establishing Iris House - the East Harlem facility dedicated to providing health and social services to women, which has been a critical component of New York's response to the AIDS crisis.

In May 2001, Ms. Jagger travelled to Zambia, under the auspices of Christian Aid, to document a devastating tragedy that has left more than 12 million children orphaned by the AIDS epidemic in the Sub-Sahara region. She launched Christian Aid's report on the effect of HIV/AIDS in Africa, urging industrialised nations to fulfil the Millennium Development Goal pledge they had made 30 years ago to donate 0.7% of their Gross National Product to the developing world: "Unless the Industrialized nations come to their rescue, HIV/AIDS will decimate the African Continent."

Bianca Jagger was in New York on September 11th, 2001. Three days after the terrorist attacks, she visited Ground Zero and paid public tribute to the firemen, policemen and rescue teams who had worked 24/7 to find life amid the rubble. She decried the attacks as crimes against humanity. She cautioned against revenge rather than justice and urged President Bush to act in accordance to International Law. She called for a justice found not in the killing fields of Afghanistan, but before an International Court. In March 2002, Ms. Jagger travelled to Afghanistan with a delegation of fourteen women, organised by Global Exchange to support Afghan women's projects.

That same year, in December 2002, Ms. Jagger travelled to India on a Christian Aid mission to shed some light on the HIV/AIDS situation and on the trafficking of children and child prostitution. She visited grassroots organisations in Delhi and Calcutta where she learned about their programmes to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and care for those infected. Speaking to many women and children in the red light district, she learned that for them, safe sex is simply not an option. In Delhi, she met the voluntary Health Association of India, which works with the Indian Government to develop policy on HIV/AIDS. In Calcutta she visited

Sanlaap, where she met children who had been trafficked and forced to become sex workers. At Sanlaap Ms. Jagger heard first hand of the stigma faced by people - even children - infected by HIV/AIDS. She visited a shelter called Sneha, which means "affection", set up by the organisation for children who have been rescued from trafficking. She met 48 girls, from ages 10 to 18, who had been rescued by the police. At the shelter, the girls were living together, learning skills to equip them to earn a living away from the red light districts. Children who are rescued have to undergo a mandatory HIV/AIDS test. 28 of the 48 girls were already infected with the virus. During her visit, Ms. Jagger listened to horrific stories some of the girls live through in the brothels: stories of unspeakable abuse, cruelty and betrayal. One of the girls was visibly upset, and, after much hesitation, described how men who looked sick, emaciated and who were often covered in with scabs would come to solicit their services at the brothel.

One of the girls was sobbing inconsolably when she described how the children would beg the madam not to have to sleep with these men, because they feared they would be infected with HIV/AIDS. The madam wouldn't hear their pleas. If they refused to work, they would be abused, beaten and burned with cigarettes. She was talking about herself but she didn't want to say it, because she would have had to admit that she had contracted HIV/AIDS. If any of the girls succeeded in escaping and went to the police to seek protection, they were likely to be returned to the brothel. Officers are often bribed by the madams, and if they returned to their villages their fathers would refuse to take them back. Ms. Jagger believes governments are failing to address the real 'terror' which millions of girls and women face every day.

In January 2003, Ms. Jagger travelled on a fact finding mission to Iraq with a delegation of 32 academics from 28 US Universities. She has been one of the leading voices of the movement against the war in Iraq and was a keynote speaker at the anti-war demonstration 15 February 2003 in Hyde Park. The march that day was the largest political gathering in British history; it was attended by approximately 1,500,000 people. Ms. Jagger is deeply concerned by the erosion of civil liberties and human rights in nations where anti-terror legislation allows for indefinite detentions

without trial and where judges are been excluded from the legal process. She denounced the George W. Bush's administration for developing a parallel justice system, circumventing decree by decree the oversight of Congress and the Courts; Secret Military Commissions allowed a death sentence without right to appeal. Such proceedings, she has noted, "violated the fundamental rights guaranteed under the US Constitution" and "any curtailment, suspension or elimination of these constitutional liberties weaken rather than strengthen the war on terror". Ms. Jagger is a staunch supporter of the International Criminal Court of Justice and the upholding of the rules of the Geneva Convention with regards to the treatment of prisoners.

Ms Jagger is currently supporting the Kondh tribes' campaign in Orissa, India to protect their sacred Niyamgiri mountain from the proposed bauxite mine by British based mining company, Vedanta Resources plc. In April 2010, she travelled to Orissa, India to visit the Kondh tribes. If Vedanta's bauxite mining project is allowed to go ahead it will endanger the very survival of the Kondh, a unique and already vulnerable tribe who have lived there for generations. They rely on the forest and streams to graze livestock and gather food, medicines and vital drinking water. The lush forests of Niyamgiri Mountain are a pristine ecosystem of great conservation significance. So important is the local environment to the Kondh that they consider the mountain to be a living God and claim that their spiritual, cultural and economic wellbeing are embedded deep within it.

Ms Jagger has spearheaded an appeal to the Indian government and to the Chief Minister of Orissa urging them to consider the human rights and environmental consequences of Vedanta's proposed bauxite mine. She attended Vedanta's AGM in 2009, and has been actively encouraging investors to withdraw their support from the company. In February 2010, the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Church of England demonstrated their commitment to human rights by withdrawing investment from Vedanta. Edinburgh-based investment management company Martin Currie sold its £2.3m stake in 2008 on ethical grounds. In 2007 the Norway pension fund withdrew its investment of \$15.6m, based on the findings of its ethics committee, which stated: "Allegations levelled

at Vedanta regarding environmental damage and complicity in human rights violations, including abuse and forced eviction of tribal people, are well founded."

Ms Jagger will continue to campaign in support of the Kondh's rights by urging investors to reconsider their stake in Vedanta, and giving the Kondh a voice by raising awareness in the media, through articles, speeches and interviews.

In June 2010, Ms Jagger attended the Review Conference of the International Criminal Court (ICC). She advocated that the ICC's jurisdiction should be extended to cover Crimes against Future Generations that are not already proscribed by the ICC's Rome Statute as crimes against humanity, war crimes, or crimes of genocide. The definition of a Crime against Future Generations asks that "Conduct which places the very survival of life at risk should be prohibited and prosecuted as an international crime." Crimes Against Future Generations has particular reference to the actions of multinational corporations which threaten human survival and destroy the environment.

Bianca Jagger has participated in numerous television and radio debates and lectures throughout the world about the war in Iraq, the war on terror and the ensuing erosion of civil liberties and human rights, children and women's rights, the death penalty, social and corporate responsibilities, climate change, the protection of indigenous peoples and the rainforest to name a few. She has participated on the BBC's Question Time, Newsnight, Panorama and [CNN](#). She has written articles for the op-ed pages of [the Guardian](#) (UK) the [Observer](#) (UK), The Independent (UK), The Mail on Sunday (UK), The Sunday Express (UK) The New Statesman (UK), the European (UK) The New York Times(USA), the Washington Post (USA), The Dallas Morning news (USA), the Columbus Dispatcher (USA), [the Huffington Post](#) (US), [Forbes India](#) (IN), Liberation (FR), Le Journal du Dimanche (FR), Le Juriste International (FR), Panorama (IT) and [UN](#) publications among others.

The Bar Human Rights Committee for England and Wales made her their 2001 keynote lecturer at St Paul's Cathedral, where her speech on the subject of Justice vs. Revenge was widely acclaimed by the public. On 16

December 2003, Bianca Jagger was appointed Council of Europe's Goodwill Ambassador "For the Fight against the Death Penalty".

Ms. Jagger was Chair of the World Future Council and served on the Advisory Board of the Coalition for International Justice. She was a member of the Twentieth Century Task Force to Apprehend War Criminals and a Board member of People for the American Way and the Creative