

BANBURY AREA GROUP AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



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www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/banbury

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We are ordinary people, who live in and around Banbury, who stand up for humanity and human rights. Our purpose is to protect individuals wherever justice, fairness and truth are denied.

We are operating flexibly currently with some meetings online and some in person, on the third Monday of each month except August. You are very welcome to join us. *Please contact ian_myson@hotmail.com for details.*

As a global movement of over seven million people, Amnesty International is the world's largest grassroots human rights organisation.

Current Campaigns

YILIASIJIANG REHEMAN, CHINA



The campaign to find Yiliyasijiang Reheman continues despite nothing being heard about him since he was deported in 2017 to the Xinjiang region of China. He is a Uyghur Muslim and it is believed he may have been held in an internment camp along with hundreds of thousands of Uyghurs.

Amnesty has recently published a report on China's mass internment, torture and persecution of Muslims in the region titled '[Like we were enemies in a war](#)'.

The report is based on first hand testimonies from former detainees from the camps and the region. It makes for chilling reading of the vast scale of systematic oppression, torture and internment amounting to crimes against humanity.

We will continue to campaign for China to close the camps and release all the detainees including Y. Reheman.

KASHMIR

Banbury Group has joined with a number of other local groups across the UK to participate in an activist-led campaign to seek to improve basic human rights (e.g. freedom of speech, right of assembly, freedom from torture and arbitrary arrest) in Indian-controlled Kashmir.

Activist-led campaigns are a new development for Amnesty UK; the thinking is that they can make a particular contribution on issues that are not currently strategic priorities for the organisation or where there are resource challenges.

The fact that Amnesty India has had to close down because of harassment by the Indian Government provides an opportunity for activists in the UK to ensure that campaigning about the grave human rights abuses in Kashmir continues.

Campaigning on this topic also has particular local relevance given the large number of people of Kashmiri origin who live in Banbury. The Group has already held exploratory meetings with the two Mosques in Banbury as part of becoming better connected with this community. Specific campaign plans are currently taking shape.



Campaigning

PASTORALIST COMMUNITIES, ANGOLA

Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that 'Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for... health and well-being'. This basic right is under severe threat for pastoralists in southern Angola, and Banbury Amnesty International are involved with campaigning on their behalf. 67% of the pastoralists' traditional communal grazing land has – contrary to Angolan law – been appropriated by commercial farmers and made inaccessible.

Climate change further exacerbates the food security implications of this - the region is experiencing its worst drought in 40 years and predications are that the frequency and intensity of droughts in southern Africa will increase.

We will continue to campaign for these communities, probably including letter-writing activities targeting the authorities in Angola, and activities and actions related to the climate-change related aspects of this crisis.

"STOP THE RIGHTS RAID" WEEK OF ACTION



Banbury's MP Victoria Prentis has agreed meet us to discuss our concerns about the erosion of human rights in the UK. At present there is proposed legislation in the Westminster Parliament that threatens to undermine fundamental human rights in the UK, including the **Policing Bill** and **Nationality and Borders Bill**.

To make matters worse, the Human Rights Act itself is under review. A week of action was held from 10-17 October to show how much we care for our Human Rights and to ask our representatives to defend them. The raid on our rights has to stop.

CHERWELL TO HOUSE AFGHAN FAMILIES

After the recent news that Cherwell District Council will house 10 families fleeing Afghanistan we are writing to them to ask them to do more. We understand that the offer is limited to Afghan nationals who have worked for the UK Armed Forces. What about those ordinary individuals and families fleeing from the Taliban? We believe Banbury should offer a

place of sanctuary for those who fear for their lives whether they have specifically worked for the UK Armed Forces or not. We'll be pressing for firm commitments and clear timescales from the Council and liaising with the relevant agency – Connection Support – responsible for resettling the refugees, to ascertain how we can best provide practical assistance.

Forthcoming events

HUMAN RIGHTS IN KASHMIR

Monday 15 November, 7.30pm

Online talk on human rights in Kashmir by Cherry Bird, AIUK Country Coordinator for India and Nepal

WRITE FOR RIGHTS

Sat 20 November, St Mary's Church, Banbury

Join us to send messages of encouragement and solidarity to individuals around the world suffering grave threats to their human rights

We are also planning a Christmas Social (date to be confirmed) which is a great opportunity to find out more about the group in an informal setting.

For this and any other queries, contact ian_myson@hotmail.com

"INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE."

Martin Luther King, African-American civil rights activist