Truro and District Amnesty International Group

Minutes of meeting held on 13th Dec 2023

1. Present: Chris Ramsey, Georgie Wong, Wailim Wong, Hetty Tye, Lucy Zawadski, Margaret George, plus Izzy Adams and Molly Kaufman online.
2. Apologies: Carole Liesse.
3. Xmas stalls: the 2 stalls on 25 Nov and 2 Dec were successful. More cards were sold than last year, and more cards signed for WfR. We were blessed with dry weather, and no wind. It was agreed to hold the second stall as early in Dec as possible next year. A full report of the cards sold and signed and money taken has been circulated and is added to the end of these Minutes.
4. Regional Human Rights Campaigns:

North Africa: Hetty would be sending out an urgent action for a lawyer in Tunisia

Mexico and Central America: we discussed the excellent documentary on BBC 2 on 6th and 14th Dec about the 43 Mexican students who disappeared. It was pointed out that Mexico makes disproportionate use of the criminal law to stop protests. AI has a campaign on ‘Protect the Protest’, for which the UK is one of the countries in focus.

IOPT and Lebanon: Chris would be sending out the latest IOPT newsletter, where the overwhelming news is about the attacks on Gaza and in the West Bank (where the settlers have been issued with weapons). Members discussed the last meeting where we had the webinar with the members of the Parents Circle; it was agreed that this event was very worthwhile. For a future meeting, Chris will investigate some of the pro-Palestine Jewish groups he is aware of to see if there is any possibility of a speaker.

Former Soviet Union: nothing recent. (two urgent actions arrived immediately after the meeting and were circulated.)

Death Penalty: Wailim had not received anything still. One of the WfR cases is Rocky Myers who is on death row in Alabama.

Feminism: Izzy had not received anything from the network recently.

1. Open forum: 1.There is good news from Poland, where Donald Tusk has become PM, which means a move away from the very right wing regime and hopes that Poland will roll back repressive legislation eg on abortion rights. 2. Narges Mohammedi the HR defending lawyer, imprisoned in Iran, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. It was collected by her teenage children. 3.also in Iran Mahsa Amini was awarded the 2023 Sakharov Prize for freedom of thought. Her father and sister were not allowed to travel to collect it. It was collected on her behalf by the family’s lawyer Saleh Nikbakht *(who subsequently on 16th Dec was sentenced to a year in prison for ‘propaganda against the Iranian regime’).*

Izzy and Molly spoke of good news from Iceland, where there is now a ban on conversion therapy (unlike in GB). In Zimbabwe 2 women have been acquitted who had been accused of lying about their abduction. In Japan, there is now approval of a trial of emergency contraception being available without a prescription. It was felt that we should look out for good news to report, as we deal with so much that is bad.

1. Minutes of meeting held on 11th October, matters arising: No matters arising.
2. Correspondence and Monthly Updates for groups: Margaret had distributed the monthly groups action email. We have also had the Regional News circulated, which is good to read as it gives us ideas from other groups.
3. Treasurer’s Report: Karen reported that we have £362.96 in the account.
4. Forward planning:
5. Potential AI group promotion event Spring 2024. There was discussion about holding an informal social/food/music event to promote the group in Falmouth next Spring. Chris is in discussion about locating it at the Cornish Bank.
6. Probably in March, 2024 Beverley Foulkes-Jones will talk to the group about HR issues in Morocco
7. Chris is in contact with Rufus from the Cornish Bank in Falmouth about a possible stall on 28th Dec, together with the Falmouth and Penryn Refugee group *(NB this has subsequently been postponed to a future date.)*
8. AOB: Margaret spoke about one of our members who has recently been bereaved in tragic circumstances. A card was signed by all those present.
9. Next meeting: **Wednesday 10th January, 7.00pm at the Moresk Centre and online.**

Xmas cards and Write for Rights stalls 2023

We had 21 sets of cards left from 2022 and we bought another 50 packs at a cost of £222.75. We get them from Amnesty with a 10% discount on the price, so for each pack sold we get £0.495. We have sold 61 packs and have 10 packs left which can be sold next year. (We actually sold 48 packs on the stalls and I sold 13 packs to friends).

We held stalls on 25th November and 2nd December.

48 postcards were written to the Write for Rights cases, and a few people took away the booklets with the cases, so they may take action at home. The 48 cards were posted bundled together at a cost of £22. Chris got another 6 signed at an event he went to in Redruth, so the total sent that we know about is 54.

**Cash** taken on the 2 stalls, in payment for cards and donations, plus money for the 13 packs I sold totalled: £274.83. From this £22 went for postage costs, so the **cash total is £252.83**

The **card reader** took £**144.11** in total over the 2 weeks.

So the total money taken was **£396.94.** (£301.95 of this represents 61 packs @ £4.95 plus £94.99 in donations)

From this, we need to take the cost of the cards we bought this year (£222.75).

Thus the total profit to our group funds is £**174.19.** And we have 10 packs left to sell next year.

Notes:

·        The advantage to Amnesty of holding the stall goes beyond the actual money made for Amnesty.

·        It raises the public profile of the organisation.

·        We make useful contacts.

·        We get cards written for the Write for Rights cases.

·        If all the cards sold are sent to people each one contains a message about the work of Amnesty.

·        Last year our second stall was held on 10th Dec, whereas this year it was on the 2nd. We sold more cards this year on 2nd Dec (30 compared with 13 on the 10th last year) so it looks as if a stall early in December is better than a bit later.