



## Minutes of [Amnesty International Reading Group](#) Meeting

Thursday 12th September 2024

Chair: Anne McFarlane

This meeting was held via Zoom.

### Welcome and introductions

11 people joined the meeting tonight: Anne, Helen, Iona, Vicky, Sue, Mus, Ian, Liz, Michael, Blanca

- Apologies - Ruth, Hilary

### The Troubles Bill: Gráinne Teggart, Deputy Director at Amnesty Northern Ireland speaking

- Gráinne gave us a thorough overview of the key issues that the Troubles Bill has created. She said that the Bill raises issues for how people deal with the past, how victims are being failed and how the legacy body will operate.
- The Bill was not given people their rights in domestic law, not being allowed to bring cases as people are in the rest of the UK.
- Previous Inquest processes have allowed loved ones to have their names cleared and found details about the collusion of the armed forces in atrocities.
- She said it set a dangerous international precedent as people were being let off with murder, that people were not being held accountable and lessons could not be learned.
- This had caused international outcry including...
- Amnesty has been in court, supporting families who have challenged the bill. In February 2024, they had a judgement that was largely successful but still more to do.
- Amnesty had been hopeful that the legislation would be completely repealed as the Labour Manifesto had said it would. However, the current government appears to be doing this in a graduated way which is concerning.
- Amnesty wants to know there will be future negotiations to ensure the Legacy Body is fully compliant with human rights standards.

For a detailed account of Amnesty's position on this issues, please check the website - <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/ni-troubles>

The group thanked Gráinne for her detailed presentation and asked what we could do. Gráinne suggested a letter to our local MP, Matt Rodda, as he is now Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Right Honourable Mr Hilary Benn MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

- Helen will draft a letter from the group and check the details with Gráinne.

### Updates on:

- there will be an action on 26th Sept for UAE - details to follow
- Sue promoted Chance2Dance4Charity which was taking place the following night!
- Helen shared that the CEN network's MP advocacy group were writing letters regarding the export licences to Israel, Helen and Hilary will write. Iona, Sue and Blanca also volunteered to.
- recent events
  - Pride - a huge success! 138 signatures for the Ukraine equal marriage petition, 151 for the trans discourse petition. £115.67 in donations. 4 new people for the group's newsletter.

A Whataspp poll will be set up to organise a group to arrange details for upcoming events.

### Future Events:

Event	Dates	Venue
<b>Freshers' Fair</b>	Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Reading Uni
<b>Group meeting</b> – World Day Against the Death Penalty	Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup> October – 8pm	<a href="#">Zoom</a>
<b>Reading International Festival</b> An Evening without Chow Hang-tung & Jimmy Lai- Human Rights in Hong Kong	Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup> October – 7.30pm	<a href="#">Reading Quaker Meeting House</a> free event – donations welcome
<b>Group meeting</b> – speaker from Amnesty's LGBT+ network	Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> November – 8pm	<a href="#">Zoom</a>
<b>Chantry House Music Concert</b>	Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> December – 7.30pm	Chantry House, Henley-on-Thames <a href="#">Book tickets</a>
<b>Group meeting</b> – Write for Rights campaign	Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> December – 8pm	Reading Biscuit Factory

### AoB & monthly meeting schedule

**Next meeting: Thursday 10th October 2024**

**World Day Against the Death Penalty**