



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

Thursday 10th October 2024

Chair: Anne McFarlane

This meeting was held via Zoom.

Welcome and introductions

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

New tonight - Milly

- Apologies - Hilary

World Day Against the Death Penalty

Helen and Liz presented Amnesty's Anti-death Penalty Project's campaign to "Adopt a US state", to write to their governor to join the many voices campaigning to an end to the DP. We spent some time considering our reasons for abolishing the death penalty - we quickly gathered a large number - see presentation.

Our group has chosen to adopt Ohio, as this was the state with the most planned execution dates at the moment. Liz has written a model letter to Governor DeWine, which members are encouraged to use.

There is significant evidence of corruption, with 10/11 exonerations showing issues within the prosecution process.

There is currently a pause on executions which seems like a good point to move on to a full abolition.

Liz will continue to bring key issues for this campaign to future meetings.

Blanca indicated she would like to work on Georgia, as she worked on the Troy Davies case in detail. Helen will also work on South Carolina.

- [Presentation at October group meeting](#)
- [Letter 1 to Governor of Ohio](#)
- [Anti-Death Penalty Project page regarding "Adopt a Prisoner"](#)
- [Death Penalty Information Centre \(USA\)](#) - really useful website that has lots of data about each state.
- [video](#) regarding where the death penalty currently stands in **Ohio**
- [Article about the trauma experienced by prison wardens on death row - The Guardian](#)

Group Audit

- Helen presented Amnesty's group audit, seeking views on ways AIUK could better support groups. Report was submitted the following day.

Review of recent events

- **Chance2Dance4charity**

- Huge thanks to everyone who came or made a donation to the 6th chance2dance4charity event on Friday 13th September. The Peppard Memorial Hall was filled with happy people who danced the night away. It wasn't exactly raining men this time, but the sisters seemed happy to be doing it for themselves 😊
- We raised just over £100 each for our two chosen charities: Amnesty International & Sport in Mind, who help people with mental health issues through physical activity.

- **Freshers Fair**

- It was great to spend the day at Reading Uni again, promoting the work of the local Amnesty group. Even better, we discovered that the Uni now has its own group again, so we hope to work with them over the next year.

Group actions

- **Cuba urgent action**

CUBA: TEACHER IN NEED OF MEDICAL CARE

Pedro Albert Sánchez, a 68-year-old teacher and human rights defender, has been arbitrarily detained in Cuba since 22 November 2023.

Please refer to this version of the action

Secretary report

- **The Troubles Bill letter** - as agreed at the last meeting, a letter has been sent 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, regarding the Troubles Bill. The letter was sent from Helen, Anne, Liz and Michael, as those people are Matt Rodda's constituents.
- A Planning group had met and discussed details for
 - Human Rights in Hong Kong event
 - Chantry House
 - Party
 - Helen, Liz and Sue met to review invite list
 - Helen has enquired about room availability for RISC for Saturdays in March 2025

Future Events:

Event	Dates	Venue
Reading International Festival An Evening without Chow Hang-tung & Jimmy Lai- Human Rights in Hong Kong	Thursday 24 th October – 7.30pm	Reading Quaker Meeting House free event – donations welcome
Group meeting – speaker from Amnesty’s LGBT+ network	Thursday 14 th November – 8pm	Zoom - see new link on Facebook
Chantry House Music Concert	Saturday 7 th December – 7.30pm	Chantry House, Henley-on-Thames Book tickets
Group meeting – Write for Rights campaign	Thursday 12 th December – 7.30pm	Reading Biscuit Factory
Group meeting - planning for the year, including decide on focus	Thursday 9th January 2025	TBC

AoB & monthly meeting schedule

Next meeting: Thursday 14th November at 8pm

AIUK’s Rainbow Network meeting

Please note a different link for this meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/78575786686?pwd=aTrTOV6m3ZdqPkueXrA3xllNz059eh.1>