

Amnesty International UK
National Conference & AGM 2008



AGM DECISIONS

RESOLUTIONS CARRIED BY THE 2008 AGM

A3 REAFFIRM POSITION

Conference notes that the contradictory outcome of the 2007 UK AGM made it impossible for the UK sector representatives present at the International Council Meeting in Mexico in August 2007 to do other than to abstain on the policy decision on abortion. Conference now supports the decision (quoted below) made at that meeting by the International Council, arrived at after careful thought and consultation.

It enables AI to recognise and take account of the difficulties women and girls face with unwanted pregnancy, whether because they have been sexually assaulted, or because of a severe risk to their life or health.

Conference also notes the care that has been taken by AI UK, both in consulting members, in drafting policy documents, and reaffirms that we will continue the long established practice of asking individual members to work and campaign only on issues where they are convinced it is right to do so.

The policy outcome will give a boost to Amnesty's campaign, 'Stop Violence Against Women', which aims to end violence against women and girls in the family, and in conflict situations, so that they are afforded their basic human rights. Conference welcomes the strengthening of this work, and decides that this long overdue aspect of our work will have a prominent place in our priorities"

PROPOSER: Vicky Seddon, Individual Member
SECONDER: Sioned – Mair Richards, Individual Member

THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED

B1 BURMA

That Amnesty International calls for the UK government to ban British investment in sectors that earn revenue for the Myanmar regime, specifically investment originating in British overseas territories, and to ban foreign countries investing in these sectors via the UK.

Amnesty is outraged that in spite of EU sanctions the UK remains the second biggest foreign investor in Myanmar. Amnesty calls on the UK government to fulfil its human rights obligations by demanding that all companies operating in or via UK dependent territories disclose which countries they operate in and list how much money they invest in those countries.

PROPOSER: Battersea and Tooting Local Group

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED

B2 WEST PAPUA

Bearing in mind the repressive treatment to which the people of Papua Province are subjected by the state actors of Indonesia.

Noting that AI supports the values enshrined in the UN declaration of Human Rights, in particular that, “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression” and the freedom to impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers” (Article 19) and that “Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association” (Article 20)

Noting that these freedoms are routinely denied to the people of Papua Province in their peaceful expression of their political views, or their concerns about human rights abuses.

Noting that access of journalists and human rights worker to Papua Province is severely restricted by the Indonesian authorities, and that human rights workers and journalists are routinely harassed and subjected to death threats.

This AGM calls upon the AIUK Board to raise the issue of Papua Province with the International Secretariat to explore increasing the campaigning resources available for work on this state, and to request that the International Secretariat takes a more vigorous campaigning approach towards the Indonesian government, as part of the movements continuing work on Indonesia.

PROPOSER: Mark Robbins, Individual Member

SECONDER: Reading University Group

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

B3 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN JOURNALISTS

This AGM notes with solidarity and great sadness the large numbers of journalists believed killed or disappeared since the dissolution of the former Soviet Union. This AGM also notes Russia has one of the highest death rates among journalists of any country in the world, with 289 recorded deaths since 1993.

This AGM calls on Amnesty International UK to call on the International Secretariat to work with the International Federation of Journalists in calling for an end to violence against journalists, and for the bringing to justice of those responsible.

PROPOSER: National Union of Journalists

THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED

B5 RIGHTS OF SEX WORKERS IN EUROPE

This AGM notes that: the Council of Europe Resolution 1579 asks member states to recognise the basic principle of difference between coerced and non-coerced sex-workers.

This AGM also notes that: the 2005 Declaration of the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe states that all individuals within Europe, including sex workers, are entitled to human rights.

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The AGM decides to call for a comprehensive study to be undertaken at the international level.

PROPOSER: Newcastle City Local Group

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED

C1 REVIEW OF VOTING PROCEDURES AT AIUK ANNUAL CONFERENCES

Proxy voting was introduced at the 2007 AIUK Annual Conference as a result of changes to the constitution. In the light of a nonsensical result in the votes on two opposing motions both being passed at the 2007 AGM;

this AGM instructs the Board of AIUK to carry out an in-depth review of voting procedures at Annual Conferences in the interests of transparency, democracy and the protection of the organisation,

this AGM further instructs the Board to report back the findings of the review to the membership on a timescale such that any changes needed to the constitution may be debated at the 2009 AGM.

The review should cover all aspects of voting but should include an assessment of whether the new procedures for proxy voting and the existing procedures for card voting leave the organisation vulnerable to voting manipulation by outside pressure groups and suggest necessary changes.

PROPOSER: Dave Plumb

SECONDER: Maurice Ward, Individual Member

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

C2 LOCATION OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING/NATIONAL CONFERENCE

This AGM notes

- The previous decisions of the Annual General Meeting/National Conference regarding its location
- The results of the extensive research and analysis carried out during 2007 into potential venues, their capacity to accommodate growth, costs and income, which demonstrate that
 - There is no London venue that can both accommodate the Annual General Meeting/National Conference and provide on-site accommodation, essential to the residential dynamic of the event;
 - Location of the Annual General Meeting/National Conference in London would incur significantly higher costs to some delegates and to AIUK, and prevent savings being made from repeat-business discounts in other English venues.

The AGM therefore DECIDES that the Annual General Meeting/National Conference should continue to alternate between venues in England (other than London) and venues in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales and that ethical considerations be taken into account in the choice of venue.

PROPOSER: AIUK Board

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWELMINGLY

C3 ENFRANCHISING YOUTH GROUPS

This AGM

SUPPORTS the principle of enabling AIUK's Youth Groups to vote at the Annual General Meeting

and therefore

INSTRUCTS the Board to investigate how to put this principle into practice and to bring proposals for the necessary constitutional change to the 2009 AGM. Any proposals for constitutional change should take into account any review of voting arrangements.

PROPOSER: AIUK Board

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

EM1

This AGM, recognising that last year's resolution A2 calling on Amnesty International to support calls both publicly and actively for an investigation by the International Criminal Court and the United Nations of war crimes and breaches of the Nuremberg, Geneva and Hague Conventions allegedly committed by the leaders of the US and UK governments in the 2003 Iraq war was carried overwhelmingly and understanding that the IS has no plans to implement the resolution, nevertheless calls upon this conference to ask AIUK:

To ask the IS to reconsider its current country strategies in relation to the US and the UK in order to maintain Amnesty's stated position of no impunity.

PROPOSER: John Peppard
SECONDER: Lizann Peppard

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHEMINGLY

D1 AI'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

We ask this AGM to mark the 50th birthday of AI in 2011 – and remember the founder Peter Benenson (and others) and to celebrate 50 years of Amnesty International

This AGM instructs the Board to investigate how to best use this occasion to highlight in the public eye the important human rights successes of Amnesty International throughout the past 50 years and to present their findings to the 2009 AGM.

PROPOSER: Bristol Local Group

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED UNOPPOSED

D2 BIAS

This AGM expresses its concern at negative interpretations and perceptions of AI as being politically biased in its campaigns, and is concerned that this could be detrimental to AI's work.

This AGM calls upon AIUK to increase positive action to counteract negative perceptions of political bias and improve promotion of AI as being "independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion".

PROPOSER: Oxford University Group

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

D3 CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT

In today's privatised world economy the corporate sector has a greater international influence on human rights for good or ill than almost any other constituency.

The AGM instructs the Board to investigate how best to tackle this challenge, and to reinstate mechanisms for Amnesty members in the business community to engage with corporations on Amnesty's behalf, for the furtherance of human rights.

PROPOSER: Sue Walley, Individual Member
SECONDER: Dave Plumb, Individual Member

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

D4 CORPORATE FUNDRAISING

In a spirit of openness and transparency this AGM instructs the AIUK Board to publish to the membership Amnesty policy on corporate fundraising and information as to how the potential impact such fundraising on the reputation of AI will be measured. Further instructs the AIUK Board to publish information about corporate donations in excess of £5000.

This AGM suggests that AIUK calls for a policy of transparency at both international and UK level of the total amount donated by each company as well as the total amount (or percentage) of corporate donations (over £5000) to be published is on the

public website. Furthermore any agreement to restrict campaigning as a result of the donations should be disclosed.

This AGM also instructs the Board to provide information on the amount of resources spent on risk assessments related to corporate fundraising

This AGM further instructs the Board to include the safeguards provided in the wording of the AIUK 2007 AGM motion B3 in its submission to the IEC as part of the review of corporate fundraising to the 2009 ICM;

PROPOSER: Sue Walley, Individual Member
SECONDER: Dave Plumb, Individual Member

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY