



**Amnesty International UK  
National Conference and AGM 2014**

# **DECISIONS**

## Contents

A1 Sex Work - Decriminalisation .....	3
A3 Sex Work – No Position .....	3
B1 Human Rights Act .....	3
B2 Garment workers in Asian countries.....	4
B3 Guantanamo .....	4
B4 Guatemala .....	5
B5 Sri Lanka Human Rights .....	5
B6 Sri Lanka and the UN.....	6
C1 Special Resolution - Nomination Committee co-option.....	6
C2 Nominations Committee Terms of reference .....	7
C3 Governance Training Budget .....	8
C4 Governance Task Force Extension .....	9
C5 Location of AIUK Annual General Meetings .....	9
D1 Secret Policeman’s Ball .....	10
D2 Secretary General’s Global Council .....	10
D3 Linking Members with Local Groups .....	10
D4 Scottish Independence.....	11
D5 Strategic Goals Consultation.....	11
D6 Global Transition Program .....	11

### **A1 Sex Work - Decriminalisation**

Proposer: AIUK BOARD

#### **This AGM NOTES:**

The current global consultation on a draft policy proposal that, if adopted, would mean that Amnesty International calls for the decriminalisation of activities related to the buying or selling of consensual sex between adults

#### **This AGM DECIDES**

That the position of AIUK's Board, in global consultative, deliberative or decision-making meetings, shall be:

Amnesty International should adopt a policy position to support the decriminalisation of activities related to the buying or selling of consensual sex between adults.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS COMFORTABLY CARRIED.**

### **A3 Sex Work – No Position**

Proposer: AIUK BOARD

#### **This AGM NOTES:**

The current global consultation on a draft policy proposal that, if adopted, would mean that Amnesty International calls for the decriminalisation of activities related to the buying or selling of consensual sex between adults.

#### **This AGM DECIDES**

That the position of AIUK's Board, in global consultative, deliberative or decision-making meetings, shall be:

Amnesty International should not adopt a position on the buying or selling of sexual services.

**There was a card vote**

**Total votes: 1009**

**Votes for: 507**

**Votes against: 502**

**THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED.**

### **B1 Human Rights Act**

Proposer: Wirksworth & District Local Group

**The AGM instructs the board to:** oppose repeal of the Human Rights Act (1998).

In the run-up to the 2015 general election the organization will lobby in support of the present Act.

AIUK to make available campaigning information for individuals and groups to use for local lobbying of MPs and parliamentary candidates.

This activity to continue after the general election if the then government threatens to repeal the act.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

## **B2 Garment workers in Asian countries**

Proposer: Jerry Allen

Seconder: Peter James Murray

### **The AGM instructs the board to:**

Advocate to the IS for a coordinated campaign to improve the labour rights of garment workers in Bangladesh, Cambodia and other Asian countries.

- 2,000 workers died when Rana plaza collapsed because employees were required to go to work in a building that had been judged unsafe.
- More than 100 workers died in the Tazreen factory fire when garment workers were required to continue working after the fire had been detected.
- Several major UK retailers have still not agreed to the 'Bangladesh Fire and Safety accord'.
- Garment workers striking in Cambodia for a living wage have been shot dead, intimidated, beaten, arrested and judicially persecuted.
- The textile and apparel sectors rely overwhelmingly on women workers, whose fundamental rights, particularly the right to form and join trade unions, to collectively bargain, and to strike, are routinely abused

There are several NGOs and Trade Union organisations working on these issues, both in the UK and worldwide. Such a campaign therefore offers an exceptional opportunity for collaborative work in partnerships.

Such a campaign would be particularly suitable for public activism and engagement, with retailers in all our high streets and communities.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

## **B3 Guantanamo**

Proposer: Canterbury Local Group

### **The AGM instructs the board to:**

Increase AIUK's focus on Guantanamo.

In spite of the strenuous efforts made by Amnesty and all other human rights organisations the camp remains open – it is an abomination and a stain on the face of the civilized world.

Twelve years on 155 detainees still remain in Guantanamo, outside the American judicial system and without the protection of the Geneva convention. A change of approach is needed, Amnesty must be prepared to bring the truth to light and expose the British and American people to the appalling abuses of human rights that have been carried out in our names by our governments.

After 9/11 the Americans had the sympathy of the whole world, but the existence of Guantanamo has caused incalculable damage to the United States. Rendition and ill-treatment at black sites run by the CIA all over the world, plus, the secret prison at Bagram Air Base (declared “worse than Guantanamo” by the International Red Cross) compound the human rights abuses at Guantanamo.

Not one detainee has been charged with anything or offered a fair trial. Enough is enough.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

#### **B4 Guatemala**

Proposer: Tom Sparks

Seconded: Eilidh Douglas

#### **The AGM decides that:**

1. a. This AGM further decides that Amnesty UK will conduct a campaign to end impunity for human rights abuses in Guatemala. The campaign should address, but is not limited to impunity for:
  - Attacks against trade unionists;
  - The rights of indigenous peoples in Guatemala, including their social, economic and cultural rights;
  - The rights of indigenous peoples over land and natural resources;
  - Gender-based violence;
  - Attacks on human rights defenders; and
  - Human rights abuses committed during the internal armed conflict.
- b. The campaign should also stress the importance that Ríos Montt and other high officials accused of committing large-scale and widespread human rights abuses amounting to genocide during the internal armed conflict are brought to trial. Such a trial must be fair and impartial, and must be conducted in line with international standards.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

#### **B5 Sri Lanka Human Rights**

Proposer: Kingston Local Group

#### **This AGM calls on Amnesty International UK Section to urge the UK Government to:**

- Continue to hold the Sri Lankan Government to account for human rights abuses past, present and on-going within the whole of the state.
- Follow up the commitments it made following the 2013 CHOGM to expect the Sri Lankan government to “*make progress on human rights, accountability, reconciliation and political settlement*”.
- Continue the call, made by David Cameron at the CHOGM in November 2013, for a “*credible and transparent independent investigation into violations of humanitarian and human rights law, a meaningful political settlement with the North, including demilitarisation, and proper implementation of Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission LLRC recommendations*”

- Challenge the culture of impunity and ensure that by using the term ‘reconciliation’ it does not allow any impunity for human rights abuses committed by either side during the conflict or since.
- Continue to bring attention to the humanitarian crisis in the conflict-affected North and East of Sri Lanka where there are up to 90,000 war widows, many unresolved disappearances.
- Continue to make it clear to that rape, sexual violence and harassment by military personnel or government agents, whether during the war or afterwards, is unacceptable and must stop.
- Take immediate advantage of the recent decision, taken at the 25th session of the UNHRC on the 26 March 2014 in Geneva [for the Office of the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights to “undertake a comprehensive investigation into alleged serious violations and abuses of human rights and related crimes by both parties in Sri Lanka during the period covered by the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission...”], to push, through all international channels available, for the Sri Lankan Government to cooperate with the Office of the High Commissioner in the prompt implementation of that resolution.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

#### **B6 Sri Lanka and the UN**

Proposer: Kingston Local Group

This AGM calls on AIUK to make representations to the International Secretariat to: Make representations to the UN Secretary General to follow up his *Internal Review Panel on United Nations Action in Sri Lanka* (14/12/2012) with a full report on what changes, if any, have been implemented within the UN structure to prevent any similar failure to protect civilians in future conflicts, and if no significant reforms have been implemented to produce a timetable detailing what reforms are to be made.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

#### **C1 Special Resolution - Nomination Committee co-option**

Proposer: AIUK BOARD

##### **This AGM decides:**

That in Article 21.5 of the Articles of Association of the Company the phrase “may co-opt one additional Nominations Committee member” be replaced by “may co-opt two additional Nominations Committee members”.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED (ABOVE 75% OF THE VOTE).**

## **C2 Nominations Committee Terms of reference**

Proposer: AIUK BOARD

This AGM adopts the following terms of reference for the AIUK Nominations Committee, in addition to those specified in Article 21 of the Constitution.

These terms of reference may be updated from time to time by decision of the AIUK AGM.

### 1. Membership of the NC

- Co-opted members of the NC shall be non-voting members but otherwise will have the same rights and responsibilities as elected members.
- The following skills and experience are considered to be important to the NC and AIUK members standing for election to the NC should be able to demonstrate to its electorate some or all of the following:
  - (i) Substantial, relevant experience of finance, human resources, or strategy development.
  - (ii) Experience in headhunting and shortlisting.
  - (iii) Relevant connections to other parts of the UK voluntary sector which will enable them to identify candidates for posts within AIUK.
  - (iv) Experience in applying diversity and equality principles to recruitment processes.
- AIUK members standing for election to the NC must provide a written manifesto, which may be up to 500 words long.
- This manifesto must make explicit reference to the above criteria.
- This manifesto must be made available at a time to be determined by the election officer to enable it to be circulated to all those attending the AGM.

### 2. Function and operations of the NC

- The NC is a purely advisory body.
- In carrying out its work, the NC should abide by best-practice standards in relation to the fairness and transparency of its processes (including advertising, searching for, recommending and recruiting post-holders) in all of its work.
- The NC has three primary functions – to assist in the recruitment of board members, to assist in the recruitment of members of the board’s subcommittees, and to assist in the recruitment of AGM/ National Conference office-holders.
- The Nominations Committee shall acknowledge applications from candidates and ensure that candidates are informed of the outcome of their applications
- The Nominations Committee shall take all appropriate steps to publicize its work to Amnesty International groups and members including the use of the Amnesty International UK Section website and making presentations at regional meetings.

#### 2.1 Assistance with recruitment to the board

- The NC shall review with the Board the basic skills required for Board membership, and identify any specific skills shortages within the current AIUK Board membership.

- In conducting this search, the NC shall ensure that diversity and equalities issues are addressed.
- In cases where the Board decides to coopt one or more members, the NC shall be closely involved in the cooption process.
- The NC shall monitor and update as required the information contained in the Board Nomination Pack, and shall be consulted on all other materials relevant to encouraging people to put themselves forward in AIUK elections or to filling coopted positions.

#### 2.2 Assistance with recruitment to the board's subcommittees

- The NC will review with the subcommittee chairs, the basic skills required for subcommittee membership, and identify any specific skills shortages within the current subcommittees.
- Subcommittee chairs shall facilitate the attendance of NC members as observers at subcommittee meetings when this is beneficial in assisting NC members to understand the skills required by subcommittee members.
- The NC will actively seek candidates to stand for the subcommittees, to match the skills and criteria required ensuring diversity and equalities issues are addressed as far as is practical.
- The NC will advise the board and subcommittee chairs on how best to supplement their terms of reference with lists of expertise and skills required by their members.

#### 2.3 Assistance with recruitment of AGM/National Conference office-holders

- The NC will actively seek people to Chair Working Parties for the National Conference/AGM

#### 2.4 Organization and budget

- The NC will use a combination of face-to-face meetings and other means of communication (including video-conferencing and email) to carry out its work.
- Office support will be provided to this committee.
- Subject to the constraints of the overall Section budget, the NC will agree with the Board each year a budget adequate for its operations. This will normally be sufficient to cover two face-to-face meetings per year and appropriate attendance at board subcommittees in addition to AGM attendance by all members.
- The NC will review the processes by which it achieves its objectives and make improvements as required, and as technology becomes available.

#### 3. Reporting by the NC

- The NC's annual written report shall also include a description of its work, including impediments to its work and proposals for remedying them.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

### **C3 Governance Training Budget**

Proposer: AIUK BOARD

#### **This AGM decides:**

- That the Board has an annual budget of £35,000 in 2014 to spend on training throughout the year for members engaged in governance (members of the Board and its subcommittees)



- That this baseline budget of £35,000 increases in line with inflation from 2015 onwards
- That anything exceeding this budget will be reported separately in our annual report
- That this budget will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure it provides for all future requirement, such as those that arise as a result of significant changes in the regulatory or economic environment
- That the Board will, in every case, first seek to secure such training pro bono through experts within the movement before drawing on this budget

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

#### **C4 Governance Task Force Extension**

Proposer: AIUK BOARD

##### **The AGM:**

*Reaffirms* the importance of good governance and the need to review AIUK's governance and communications, in accordance with Decisions E4 and E5 of the 2013 AGM;

*Notes* the work done to date by the Governance Task Force

##### **This AGM DECIDES:**

- That the term of the current Governance Task Force be extended for a further year, to July 2015
- That the Governance Task Force shall provide regular recommendations to the Board and, in particular, to the January 2015 Board meeting, for incorporation into the business of that year's Annual General Meeting.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

#### **C5 Location of AIUK Annual General Meetings**

Proposer: AIUK BOARD

##### **This AGM decides:**

That the location of AGMs can be fixed for up to a three year period in order to reduce costs to AIUK and that location be determined by the Board with a cost benefit analysis in mind. The AGM will take place either in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales in rotation at least once every four years.

That this decision supersedes Decision C2 of the 2008 AGM.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

### **D1 Secret Policeman's Ball**

Proposer: Canterbury Local Group

#### **The AGM instructs the board to:**

- Ensure the management response to the SPB evaluation is implemented.
- Involve grass roots campaigners, youth, student, local etc. in the development of thinking on the future of SPB.
- Ensure that these findings are made available by the AGM 2015.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

### **D2 Secretary General's Global Council**

Proposer: York and Bury St Edmund Local Groups

#### **The AGM instructs the board to ask the International Board:**

Draw up supportive proposals to strengthen the working of the Secretary General's Global Council (SGGC)

- a) to ensure that the members of the SGGC are recruited in line with, and demonstrate continuing commitment to, AI's mission and values and
- b) for a suitable system of transparent accountability for the SGGC and
- c) to submit both sets of proposals to the International Board for their consideration with the request that the International Board introduce SGGC enhanced recruitment guidelines and an accountability process for the SGGC within 6 months of submission.
- d) to remove the description of the members of the SGGC as "high net worth individuals", which is inappropriate for a grassroots human rights organisation, and replace it with "individuals of repute and influence with fundraising capacity."

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

### **D3 Linking Members with Local Groups**

Proposer: Penzance Local Group

#### **This AGM regrets:**

That there is no automatic link between national membership of AIUK and local/student Amnesty groups and that many members are not aware of the large amount of activism undertaken in their localities.

While some national members may have no wish to engage with a local or student group, there are many who will be interested in taking part in raising awareness, undertaking actions and fundraising within their local communities. We should make it easy for national members to engage with local and student groups and therefore, this meeting instructs the Board to:

1. Automatically provide members with the details of their local and student groups.

2. Confirm the goal of encouraging members to join local and student groups and instructs the board to develop effective mechanisms to do this that ensure that Amnesty and local/student groups are compliant with the data protection act.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

#### **D4 Scottish Independence**

Proposer: Malcolm Dingwall-Smith

Secunder: Gillian Melville

“The AGM instructs the Board:

To evaluate the impact of the Scottish referendum result on both the UK section as a whole and the Scotland regional office and bring proposals for any changes required to the 2015 AGM and to ensure that in the interim period (October 2014 to April 2015) sufficient resources are dedicated to the Scotland Regional Office to maximize our human rights impact in any future model of Scottish governance.”

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

#### **D5 Strategic Goals Consultation**

Proposer: AIUK BOARD

**This AGM DECIDES:**

- That the Board will develop and implement a plan to consult with AIUK’s membership on the composition of the Strategic Goals;
- That the Board will report the results of the international and UK consultations at appropriate times including to the 2015 AGM;
- That the Board shall table a resolution at the 2015 AGM proposing the position to be adopted by AIUK’s delegation to the next International Council Meeting.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**

#### **D6 Global Transition Program**

Proposer: Caroline Butler

Secunder: Mark Froud

**The AGM instructs the board to:**

1. Seek from the International Board regular updates on the implementation of the moving closer to the ground process, including:
  - The ongoing progress of newer Sections and entities, such as India and Brazil;
  - Updates on Section that are being co-located with the new Regional Hubs in the Global South, such as Dakar, Johannesburg and Nairobi;

- Updates on the new forms of presence such as Nigeria, Egypt and Indonesia;
- The financial health of the funding Sections;

2. Request that the updates clearly indicate where progress differs from the original schedules and budgets, and include feedback and analysis from staff in the global offices.

3. Provide these updates to AIUK networks including AMSC, IISC Country Coordinators and Regional Reps.

**THE RESOLUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY CARRIED.**