

GROUPS NEWS



THE NEWSLETTER FOR AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK
LOCAL, STUDENT AND YOUTH GROUPS

SPRING 2014



SHINING A LIGHT ON SYRIA'S STRUGGLE

About 100 students took action for Syria on 1 March, to mark the third anniversary of the uprising and the need for governments to do more to bring an end to the suffering of the Syrian people.

Taking part in the Action for Change training weekend, at Amnesty's HQ, they took to the streets of Shoreditch, East London to collect 1,000 petition signatures, then created a #withsyria banner and held a candle-lit vigil to demonstrate their solidarity with ordinary citizens struggling to survive each day.

These student activists were gearing up for nationwide campus vigils leading up to the 15 March anniversary. This was part

of a worldwide campaign asking activists, including Amnesty groups, to hold a vigil with lights in March to support Syrian people. Over 130,000 people have been killed in the conflict and one million are living as refugees.

Other activities over the weekend included a reading of *Even If We Lose Our Lives*, telling the stories of Afghan women fighting for peace, and a session on the new Stop Torture campaign. Perico Rodriguez, who in the late 1970s was imprisoned and tortured in Jorge Videla's Argentina, gave a powerful speech. When Perico's wife contacted Amnesty, campaigners bombarded the prison with letters and cards.

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Your Father who is in heaven, who maketh his sun to rise upon the good, and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust.

– Matthew 5:45

Our street has turned into a small lake. I cycled into work today through yet another downpour, soaked to the skin. In life I often seem to find myself numbered amongst the wets. St Matthew says the rain currently raineth on the just and on the unjust, but as a leading human rights organisation, should we not be pressing for it to concentrate specifically on the unjust?

I scan today's headlines. My good friend the UKIP light aircraft passenger Nigel Farage says he now finds himself in an 'unrecognisable' country, parts of which have been had been 'taken over' by **foreigners**. **OUCH!** 'Britain is an alien place that many people would not want to leave to their children and grandchildren.' Mr Farage recently caught a commuter train and had to wait for **several stops** before he heard English being spoken. **Blimey!!!**

But my wife and I had an **even more shocking experience recently**. We travelled for many hours on a train where **nobody** but us was speaking English. (Mind you we were in Poland at the time.)

Here in the HRAC we are girding our loins for the long train journey up to Edinburgh and Amnesty's AGM in April. But has the line been washed away? Will the train be full of ALIENS?

Even more important, gentle readers, is this to be the **last ever AIUK AGM?** Is the UK going to fragment? How many of us may live henceforth in a Britain without the Great, waving a Union Jack without St Andrew's cross? After 200 years as a United Kingdom will Sassenachs have to live in a Disunited Kingdom? Will our new structure be **AIDK?** **AIK? AIB? AIE&W&NI?** My mind is bogging. Will our Scottish Amnesty brothers and sisters have AIS.com emails and march under an **AIS** banner (with Swedes, Swiss, Spanish, Slovenians, Senegalese, South Africans and newly emerging Amnesty structures of Singaporeans, Seychellois, Solomon Islanders, Serbs, Sammarinese, Saudis, Syrians, Surinamers, Somalis, Sudanese and South Sudanese? Such a renaming means every leaflet, poster, sign, book, membership card, cloth bag, tattoo, undergarment, collecting tin, calendar and T-shirt will need reprinting.

I am drafting an emergency composite resolution on this burning issue for the delegates to peruse on the train to Heriot-Watt.

Dan Jones



Student Conference photo action

STUDENT ACTION: CALLING SRI LANKA TO ACCOUNT

On 2 November the 2013 Student Conference, held at the Human Rights Action Centre, was attended by 250 students. The focus was Women's Rights in Afghanistan, with an emotional talk from Afghan human rights defender Manizha Naderi about their struggle, and the Sri Lanka campaign, with action workshops.

Participants, dressed as Grim Reapers, then descended on Parliament Square to protest against Sri Lanka's hosting of the Commonwealth Heads of Governments meeting (CHOGM) and called on the UK to raise questions about Sri Lanka's appalling human rights record.

A mock beach with the figures of David Cameron, William Hague and Sri Lankan president Mahinda Rajapaksa sipping cocktails was set up to symbolise the diplomatic glamour of the CHOGM meeting and the brutal end to the Sri Lankan conflict. The closing chapter of the Sri Lankan conflict took place on the beaches where an estimated 40,000 civilians were killed.

The photo stunt received widespread media coverage (see photographers below), including *Channel 4 News*. CHOGM turned into a PR disaster, and PM David Cameron called for an international inquiry into allegations of war crimes if no credible domestic investigations are carried out by March 2014: this is what we had been asking him to do.

■ See Regional Conferences Round-up on page 9



Media coverage

DON'T RAIN ON OUR PARADE

Henley College group risked a torrential downpour standing up for gay rights when they protested in front of the Town Hall in January.

It followed comments written by councillor David Silvester (UKIP) in which he blamed the recent storms and floods on the legalisation of gay marriage. In his letter, published in the *Henley Standard*, he said Prime Minister David Cameron had acted 'arrogantly against the Gospel' changing marriage laws, and had warned him it would end in 'disaster'.

Henley Mayor Stefan Gawrysiak, who happened to emerge during the group's protest, expressed his support, congratulated Amnesty on its work and suggested they listen to the BBC Shipping Forecast...

The councillor has since been suspended from UKIP after he defied a party request not to give further interviews promoting his views.



Henley College

If you're sending in photos...

■ See page 11

AFGHAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Your lobbying reminds UK politicians of the importance of women's rights in Afghanistan

On 6 November, more than 60 activists and 20 MPs attended an Amnesty event at Speaker's House to highlight the work of women's rights defenders in Afghanistan.

The reception focused on the role of activism both here in the UK, and of human rights defenders in Afghanistan and the dangers they face every day.

John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons, opened the event, praising Amnesty's work and expressing his support. He also stressed how important it is for MPs to hear from campaigning groups such as Amnesty.

There were inspirational talks from author Natasha Walter, founder of Women for Refugee Women, and Afghan human rights defender Samira Hamidi who reminded us of the dangers Afghan women face for speaking out, saying: 'It is really important that you continue the work you're doing, for two reasons. Firstly because it gives us strength

to know we aren't alone, secondly because it sends a message to our government that people all over the world are watching, and they support Afghan women.' In the last six months seven high profile women have been murdered.

Posters and a slideshow displayed the work done by Amnesty groups, including collecting petition signatures, creative 'purple fingerprint' actions and lobbying MPs to support our campaign. Thanks to the efforts of Amnesty groups, more than 60 MPs signed our parliamentary pledge to support Afghan women's rights, a further 23 had their photo taken with a statement of support and several raised parliamentary questions on the issue.

We will be asking groups to keep applying pressure on MPs to improve support and protection for human rights defenders, tackle violence against women and ensure women's rights are guaranteed in any peace process.



John Bercow MP



Burgate School with Desmond Swayne MP



Samira Hamidi



Ardingly College



Wolverhampton group with Paul Uppal MP



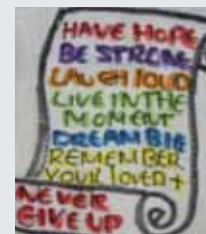
Lytham St Anne's group with Mark Menzies MP



Beckenham group with Jim Dowd MP

SEWING SOLIDARITY

Thanks to Amnesty groups and youth activists around the country, and MPs and ministers, for making beautiful patches with solidarity messages (below) in support of our women's rights in Afghanistan campaign. The patches are being sewn together to make quilts for the Afghan Women Skills Development Centre, one of the cases featured in Write for Rights 2013, and Women for Afghan Women. They will be displayed in their shelters to show staff and residents that we support their work.



WRITE FOR RIGHTS

Amnesty groups and activists mobilised the public to get involved in our largest ever Write for Rights campaign

More than 2.3 million actions were taken globally in the 2013 Write for Rights greetings card Campaign, beating last year's record of 1.9 million.

Helping to launch the campaign, which featured 13 cases, were student activists from universities across the country at the annual **Student Conference** in November.

For the third year running, the **Sutton Coldfield** group held a Poems, Puns, 'n' Pints night. The open mic comedy event also included a raffle and encouraged people to sign petitions and letters.

On 4 January, the **Blackburn and Darwen** group held their annual Write for Rights stall in Blackburn market. The Blackburn People's Choir joined them. Over 270 cards were signed, 80 signatures were collected and over £50 was raised.

On 7 December, the **Brighton and Hove** group were joined by the Mayor of Brighton and Hove, Councillor Denise Cobb, Kate Allen and Caroline Lucas MP for their annual Write for Rights event. Over 300 cards and

letters were signed while enjoying cake, tea and the Brighton peace choir. A picture of the mayor decorating a dove for COFADEH even made it into the *Brighton Independent*.

The Mayor of Llandudno supported **Colwyn Bay** group's event. The public signed cards at the group's stall in Llandudno's Victoria Centre, and were entertained by carol singers from local choirs.

The **Corby** group's stall was once again opened by long standing member of Amnesty Andy Sawford MP, who mentioned the campaign in his weekly bulletin.

On 10 December, 145 messages of hope were written at **Lewes** group's stall at the House of Friendship. The stall was busy with children, teenagers and adults writing messages to support the prisoners of conscience in Ethiopia and the Russian Federation, families of the 'disappeared' in Honduras and villages facing forced eviction in the Palestinian Occupied Territories.

Mayor Ruth O'Keefe made three cards. The **Mid Gloucester** group held a 'heart-

warming' evening of mince pies and mulled wine in a local café, and over 200 cards were signed. They also took their campaign to the Stroud Christmas Tree Festival on 6 December. Group member Norah Kennedy made their beautiful tree from willow.

Local MP Margaret Ritchie and Councillor Colin McGrath joined the **Mid Down** group, contributing to 150 cards signed. Downpatrick's own folk choir, Voices of Lecale, sang Christmas carols. It also generated local press coverage in the *Down News*.

The **Minehead** group held their first ever 'letter writing tea party' and sent 41 cards and letters. The group was also pleased to welcome the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to their street stall on 7 December. They collected over 100 signatures for four cases. As in previous years, they also displayed their Amnesty tree at the annual Christmas Tree Festival in Minehead Methodist Church.

The **North Down** group held a card signing event where the Mayor Andrew



Student Conference



Corby



Brighton and Hove



Frome



Colwyn Bay



Belfast



Blackburn and Darwen



Lewes

Muir, an Amnesty supporter, lit a candle and was presented with a framed poster of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The poster was designed by group member Peter Floyd.

The **Saffron Walden** group events saw 635 cards sent and over £100 donated. Letter writing sessions were held at the County High, Friends and Newport Free Grammar schools and at the library, the Parish Church and Friends (Quakers) Meeting House.

The Benedictine nuns of **Stanbrook Abbey** in Yorkshire showed their solidarity with victims of human rights abuses. An afternoon writing messages produced over 30 cards and letters.

The **Frome** group held two events in the town to mark the campaign and sent in 100 cards. The **Belfast** group held a letter writing session, with hot drinks and mince pies to hand. Two signing sessions of cards for three prisoners of conscience meant 212 cards were signed by the **Salisbury** group.

The **Woking** group encouraged their local

community to write over 240 letters and cards from their stalls.

PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT

We also had a fantastic response from MPs and MSPs, many of whom spoke out in support of the campaign. Gil Peterson, MSP of Milngavie said, ‘Amnesty International does a great job shining a light on some of the worst violations of rights across the world, and the Write for Rights Campaign is a simple way in which people can play their part in helping them to do so.’

A Parliamentary event in December got MPs involved in the campaign, writing letters and making patches with solidarity messages to be made into a patchwork quilt for the Afghan Women Skills Development Centre. Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg also tweeted about the campaign, included Write for Rights in his statement on Human Rights Day and mentioned one of our cases, The Committee of Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared in Honduras (COFADEH), in

a tribute to Nelson Mandela in the House of Commons. COFADEH were so pleased they hosted his whole speech on their website and translated it into Spanish.

GOOD NEWS

Since the campaign, we’ve seen the release of two prisoners of conscience: the Cambodian housing rights activist Yorm Bopha and the Russian peaceful protestor Vladimir Akimenkov. In March Tunisian Jabeur Mejri was released following a presidential pardon although he still faces an accusation of embezzlement, which he denies and Amnesty fears has been issued to harass him. Belarusian Ihar Tsikhanyuk, an LGBTI activist beaten by police because of his sexuality, received thousands of letters, and said: ‘When I’m left with no hope to fight, I’ll get a letter and the light of hope appears again.’



Mid Gloucester



North Down



Woking



Mid Down



Saffron Walden



Minehead



Stanbrook Abbey



Westminster Hall, Parliament

© Marie-Anne Ventoura

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

INDIVIDUALS AT RISK

In October, the **Buxton** group had a stall to mark the 14th anniversary of the arrest of five students in Vientiane, Laos, for the 'crime' of unfurling a banner calling for freedom and democracy. They asked passers-by, including their local MP and councillors, to have their photos taken 'behind bars' in solidarity with prisoners of conscience. The photo, printed as full size posters, was sent to government ministers in Laos. The group also responded to a call from the local Greenpeace group needing help on a stall collecting messages of hope to send to their 30 activists in jail in Murmansk. A petition was sent to the Russian embassy.

The **Salisbury** group held their annual service at the Cathedral where there is a prisoner of conscience window and a large

Amnesty candle. About 80 people attended and 45 signatures were collected for the Reggie Clemons appeal. In November, the group were heartened to receive a letter from death row prisoner Reggie in response to signed cards sent to him. He wrote: 'I have shared your cards and letters of support with my mother, father and family. To turn their despair and fear into hope and smiles of reminders that we are not alone.'

SCHOOL SOLIDARITY

In October, schools across **Lewes** took part in an innovative workshop to cultivate collective human rights campaigning by students – and created flowers of support for Cambodian prisoner of conscience Yorm Bopha. Students from **Chailey School**, **Prior School** and **Ringmer Community College** attended the event organised by Lewes

group. Former prisoner of conscience Perico Rodriguez gave a moving account of how he had been arrested, jailed and tortured, and MP Norman Baker stressed the importance of Amnesty's work. Students then came up with their own ideas of how they might help raise awareness of human rights.

ASYLUM AND ZIMBABWE

In February, BBC Radio WM invited the **Birmingham** group to talk about the success of Amnesty's recent Syrian refugee campaign. The group continued their work on asylum issues at the group's AGM. **Harrogate** and **Knareborough** sent a message of support to human rights defenders in Zimbabwe.



Buxton



Maidenhead



Lewes



Buxton



Wells

FILM

In March, a screening of award-winning film *No*, starring Gael Garcia Bernal, was held by the **Frome** group. The film tells the true story of a Chilean adman whose slick political campaign helps persuade voters to embrace democracy – and put an end to Pinochet’s rule. And the **Ely City** group hosted a screening of *Stuart: A Life Backwards* to raise funds and highlight the human rights issues associated with homelessness. It portrays the unlikely friendship between homeless Stuart and writer and charity worker Alex, and of Stuart’s entire life told backwards.

ART FOR AMNESTY

Members of the **Wells** group attended a talk by journalist Ian Cobain at the Wells Festival of Literature in October. Ian, who won an

Amnesty Media Award in 2009, spoke about the ‘British use of torture from 1945 to extraordinary rendition.’

Meanwhile, the **Wolverhampton** group staged a story-telling event. Thanks go to professional story-tellers Jonathan Collings and Cath Edwards who performed their show *George and Mildred*, with all proceeds to Amnesty. The **Malvern Hills** group raised over £2,000 at their annual Art for Amnesty event.

On 18 October, a packed audience watched a special performance of *The Burma Play*, organised by the **Lyme Regis** group. The event, staged at the Marine Theatre, raised over £1,300 shared between the Burma Campaign and Amnesty. Kate Allen and Anna Roberts, Director of the Burma Campaign UK, took part in a post-theatre discussion.

GETTING ABOUT

Human Rights Week, an event designed to raise awareness of human rights and the **University of Sheffield** group’s profile, took place in November. The group organised daily events including a Write for Rights signing session and a pub quiz as well as discussions and workshops. It raised nearly £500 for Amnesty. The **Mayfair and Soho** group raised £180 with their ‘Guided Walks about Human Rights’ held in London in partnership with Footprints of London. In December, the **Hackney and Islington** group offered a present wrapping service at a local bookshop, raising over £100.

NO STOPPING THEM

For the fifth year running, comedians took to the stage for sell-out *A Joke Too Far: Stand Up For Burma*, organised by the



Salisbury



Ipswich



Malvern Hills



Lyme Regis



Wolverhampton



Harrogate and Knaresborough



Sheffield University



Croydon



Islington and Hackney

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Islington and Hackney group in November. The line-up included Richard Herring and Alexis Dubus, and included a successful raffle and photo action for a Burmese prisoner of conscience.

The **Glasgow University** group's Secret Policeman's Ball returned in February hosted by the wonderful Billy Kirkwood.

Meanwhile hundreds of students are involved in our fundraising competition Raise-Off 2014, with several groups already passing the £500 mark. Student groups can still register at www.amnesty.org.uk/raiseoff

MUSIC NIGHTS

In September, the **Minehead** group organised an enjoyable supper concert which raised £380. The concert, which received excellent press coverage in advance, featured folk singer and guitarist Saffron Summerfield and local musician Eileen Anne Moore.

To celebrate their 40th anniversary in style the **Ipswich** group organised the Trianon Strings and Singers concert. It included everything from madrigals and Handel to modern film music and a fantastic Beatles medley. On 22 November

Mayfair and Soho organised a soul night for Amnesty.

Carol signing proved popular in December with the **Kingston and District** group, **Islington and Hackney** group and **Croydon** group harnessing the Christmas spirit to raise lots of money for Amnesty.

On 8 February, the **South Devon** group organised a Regency Ball at the magnificent Georgian Sharpham House. Guests, in Regency dress, enjoyed music and period dancing with the Renaissance Historical Dance Society, a Georgian inspired feast and raffle with prizes donated by local businesses and supporters. It was a great success, raising over £700.

IN MEMORY

In October, Kate Allen, Director of Amnesty UK, visited the **Isle of Wight** group for a meeting. It was a special moment when 11 members (six of whom were founder members some fifty years ago) presented her with a cheque for £433,358 – a legacy from Winifred Hague, a long-standing group member. Kate went on to give a talk about the recent growth of Amnesty in India and Brazil.

OBITUARIES

Kathleen Winkley

The **Minehead** group announced the sad death of one of their founder members, Kathleen Winkley, on 24 October. Kathleen dedicated a lot of time and energy to campaigning for Amnesty as the correspondence secretary and group contact. For six years, she coordinated the group's Equatorial Guinea action file for a large group of prisoners, until the last of them were released. Quietly purposeful, she could also be relied upon to help with stalls and fundraising. Group members will miss her hugely. A donation taken at her funeral raised £235 for Amnesty.

Trevor Conway

On 9 November, the **Canterbury** group said farewell to a much loved and respected colleague Trevor Conway. Trevor, 81, died following a stroke, leaving wife Vida and family. He became the joint coordinator for Burma after a visit to the country, and had been head of the Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School for eighteen years. His loss is considerable.



Mayfair and Soho



Isle of Wight



Kathleen Winkley



Glasgow University



South Devon



Trevor Conway

CONFERENCES ROUND-UP

Over the last few months a wide range of speakers and activists have been inspiring delegates at Amnesty regional conferences across the UK

NORTH EAST AND YORKSHIRE

The North East and Yorkshire Regional Conference took place in York on 16 November. Amnesty UK director Kate Allen gave a review of the 2013 International Council Meeting (ICM), which was held in August in Berlin. Performances of a play and a song followed – both had human rights themes and served as a reminder of the importance of creative campaigning. After lunch Tresor, an activist from the Democratic Republic of Congo, delivered a powerful presentation on the UK's return of asylum seekers to his war-torn country. Delegates later broke into groups to meet two human rights defenders currently studying at York University, Carlos from El Salvador and Sahr from Liberia. Both spoke movingly about their work, reminding us why we do what we do.

NORTH WEST

On 16 November the North West Regional Conference in Manchester was attended by 80 delegates. The focus of the morning was the new Stop Torture campaign, with speakers from Survivors Speak Out, a network supported by Freedom from

Torture. There was an ICM presentation by Kerry Moscogiuri, Amnesty UK's director of supporter campaigning and communications. The day finished with talks by Trevor Trueman on the persecuted Oromo people who have fled Ethiopia and Amnesty UK Europe coordinator Alex Jagger on the plight of the Roma. An Afghan member of the Manchester group also spoke passionately about women's rights in her country.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Around 30 delegates attended the Northern Ireland Regional Conference in Belfast on 25 January. Amnesty UK board member Tom Hedley spoke about the ICM and Kartik Raj, a campaigner in Amnesty's EU team, discussed the recent report *Northern Ireland: Time to deal with the past*, which he co-authored. Jeni Dixon, country coordinator for Syria, brought delegates up to speed with the latest situation in the country.

SOUTH MIDLANDS

The South Midlands Regional Conference on 18 January was attended by 80 delegates. It featured an ICM report from

Kate Allen, a presentation on Amnesty UK's new structure by Kerry Moscogiuri, and an explanation of the role of country coordinators by Algeria country coordinator Hugh Sandeman. After a Syria photo action, Paul Hainsworth, country coordinator for Indonesia, spoke about human rights abuses in the South East Asian country. The conference ended with a talk by Helen Wildbore of the British Institute of Human Rights.

SOUTH EAST

Around 80 people attended the South East Regional Conference in Dorking on 22 February. The event started with a reading of a play, *September 1968*, about Japanese death row prisoner Hakamada Iwao. Former ANC MP Andrew Feinstein discussed his new book, *The Shadow World: Inside the global arms trade*, and journalist Patrick Strudwick spoke about the human rights abuse of 'corrective rape'. Amnesty UK board member Hannah Perry gave a presentation on the ICM, and then – together with fellow board member Ruth Breddal, and Kate Allen – took part in a Q&A.



EVENTS

18 APRIL

HAYWARDS HEATH

Lions Club Swimathon

9am, Dolphin Leisure Centre Pool, Haywards Heath

The Haywards Heath group's team of sponsored swimmers for a 30-minute swim.

Contact Irene Balls 01444 412804, irene.balls@btinternet.com or Roger Stevens 01444 412804

27 APRIL

HAYWARDS HEATH

Stall

1.30pm-4.30pm, Muster Green
Visit the Haywards Heath group's stall at the town's Spring Festival.

Contact Irene Balls 01444 412804, irene.balls@btinternet.com

15 MAY

CANTERBURY

Demonstration

Commemoration of Conscientious Objectors' Day.

Contact Huw Kyffin 01227 462210 or Jean Barber 01227 831956, jbarber@uk2.net

16-18 MAY

ORKNEY

Human rights weekend

Orkney group hosts a weekend of events with Kate Allen, Amnesty UK director.

Contact Nadia Heath, 01856 751498, nadiaheath@onetel.com

25 MAY

JERSEY

Sponsored bike ride

Maritime Museum

Join Amnesty Jersey's Freedom Cycle Ride. Win a free bike for most sponsorship raised.

Contact 01534 859566, amnestyride@yahoo.com



8 MARCH-5 APRIL

BOURNEMOUTH AND CHRISTCHURCH

Art for Amnesty

Exhibition of human rights artwork organised by Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch groups. At five venues: Red House Museum, Christchurch Priory, Bournemouth Library, St Peter's Church and Metropolis Gallery. Please check venue for opening times. The exhibition at the Metropolis Gallery in Westbourne is 7-12 April.

Visit www.amnestyat50.co.uk/art

25 APRIL

PERSHORE

Talk

7.30pm, Courtyard Room 8, High Street, Pershore

Refugee event organised by the Pershore group with speakers, films and discussions.

Contact Brain Johnson-Thomas bjt_net@hotmail.com

10 MAY

ST ALBANS

Street collection

9am-5pm, The Quadrant, St Albans
Volunteers needed to collect for an hour.

If you can help contact Peter Smith on 012727 855931, peterfsmith40@hotmail.com

17 JUNE

ST ALBANS

Theatre

8pm, Abbey Theatre, St Albans

A special preview of George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man* by The Company of Ten Theatre Company in aid of Amnesty. Tickets £10.

Send cheques (payable to 'St Albans Amnesty International Group') and an SAE to Penny Williams, 2 Althorp Rd, St Albans, AL1 3PW.

21 JUNE

BLACKHEATH AND GREENWICH

Book sale

9am-5pm, Church of the Ascension, Dartmouth Row, London, SE10

Now in its 40th year (raising over £270,000!), the Blackheath and Greenwich group's annual book sale features thousands of new and used titles. Opened this year by Amnesty UK director Kate Allen.

Contact aibg.enquiries@googlemail.com

24-27 JULY

MALMESBURY

WOMAD music festival

Charlton Park, Malmesbury, Wiltshire

The Reading group is looking for volunteers for their annual stall at the WOMAD festival. Volunteers will have to buy their own tickets, info at www.womad.co.uk, 0118 960 6060. Contact Sue Bingham, s.bingham748@btinternet.com



FUNDRAISING

HUMAN RIGHTS RECIPE BOOK

The Ely City group has published a new recipe book to raise funds for Amnesty. *A Taste of Freedom* contains 44 recipes from countries

in every continent including Iraq, Russia, Sicily and Finland, with contributions from chefs Claudia Roden and Guy Harrington. It is illustrated with pen and ink drawings by local artist and Amnesty member Barbara-Jean Grafton. The book costs £6 or £7.50 with p&p.

To order: info@amnestyely.org.uk, www.graftonart.biz/products/amnesty



FACE-TO-FACE FUNDRAISING

We launched our in-house street programme in 2011 and have now grown to five teams. This allows us to keep the public up to date with all our work. Even though their 'office' is on the street, fundraisers meet campaigners, staff members and sometimes released prisoners of conscience, and receive regular Amnesty briefings and training on how to talk to newly signed-up supporters. In-house Street Team leader Louisa says: 'The best thing about being part of Amnesty is that we see the changes... there's nothing better than recruiting new supporters then coming into the office to see the work we've achieved in Sierra Leone or the Arms Trade Treaty being signed.'

If you would like to join our team contact us at gill.marshall@amnesty.org.uk



RESOURCES

Order for free:
call The Fulfilment Store on
01788 545553 and quote
the product code

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN AFGHANISTAN



Afghanistan: Don't trade away women's human rights Briefing

(A4, 12 pages)

This briefing looks at women's situation in Afghanistan today, and the risks posed by a 'peace' process that marginalises women.

Product code **WM241**

Afghanistan and women's rights Action Plan

This policy position paper provides more detailed information on Amnesty UK's recommendations to the UK government on women's rights in Afghanistan.

Product code **WM248**



Afghanistan and women's rights posters

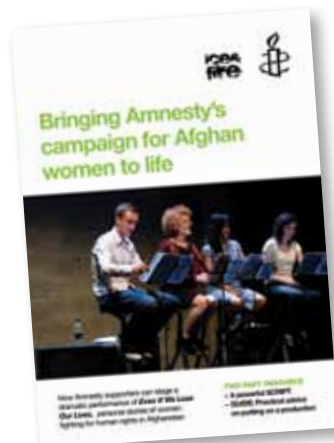
Product code **WM245**



Afghanistan and women's rights stickers

Product code **WM244**

Order for free:
call **020 7033 1675** or email
activism@amnesty.org.uk



Afghan women's rights script guide

As part of Amnesty's campaign for Afghan women, we've teamed up with the iceandfire theatre company to develop a powerful script *Even If We Lose Our Lives*. It tells the story of three brave Afghan women human rights defenders.

Amnesty groups and supporters can hold their own 'reading' events to inspire members of the local community to take action. This pack includes: the script and a practical guide on putting on a production.

STOP TORTURE

Stop Torture is our new global campaign, and will be a top priority for Amnesty UK in 2014. Throughout the year (starting April/May) we will be providing materials for activists to help gather support and take action.

REAL LIVES



A quarterly supplement to the Amnesty magazine: nine letter-writing cases, printed on A4 paper to make it easy to photocopy for group letter-writing sessions.



Syria: Squeezing the life out of Yarmouk – war crimes against besieged civilians

Amnesty's new report on war crimes and crimes against humanity carried out against Palestinian and Syrian civilians in the Damascus district of Yarmouk, which is under a brutal siege by Syrian government forces.

CONTACT US

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YOUTH AND STUDENT GROUP ENQUIRIES

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FUNDRAISING ENQUIRIES

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GROUPS NEWS

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DESIGN

Amnesty International UK

Copy deadline for next issue

15 September 2014

TELL US IF YOU HAVE CHANGED

It is vital that you let us know about any changes to your group's office holders, such as Secretary, President, Campaign Coordinators and Treasurer. This will help us to communicate with the right person in your group. When the office holders or their addresses change, please send us details of name, address, phone and email, as well as details of the outgoing person.

Local groups:

Please send details to the Activism Team.

Youth and student groups:

Please send details to the Education and Student Team.

IF YOU'RE SENDING IN PHOTOS

Photos should be high-resolution jpegs (at least 300KB) and emailed as an attachment or sent on a CD. For more tips, read the 'Women's rights in Afghanistan – let's take action!' blog post at www2.amnesty.org.uk

CAMPAIGNS

CLOSE GUANTÁNAMO BAY

The Buxton group held stalls to boost awareness about Shaker Aamer, the last UK resident held at Guantánamo Bay. They collected messages on a long yellow ribbon tied around a tree, to indicate we would welcome Shaker home to the UK. The ribbon was sent to the US embassy in London, with a letter calling for Shaker's release, and the photo action received local press coverage. Shaker has now been held without trial for 12 years.

Over 100 people attended a screening of *Outside the Law: Stories from Guantánamo Bay* organised by the Canterbury group. A panel discussion followed with the film's co-director Andy Worthington, Joy Hurcombe of the Save Shaker Aamer campaign, Rick Norman, a professor of moral philosophy, and Namir Shabibia of Reprieve. All agreed the UK government should step up the pressure on the US authorities for Shaker's release and the

closure of the camp. To keep this issue in the spotlight, this film is available for Amnesty groups to screen from www.spectacle.co.uk

Meanwhile, on 11 January, members of the Lewes, Brighton and Hove, Minehead and Horsham groups joined other activists in London to mark the 12th anniversary of Guantánamo Bay and call for its closure. Members, some dressed in detainee orange boiler suits with black hoods, staged a photo action holding letters spelling out: Bring Home Shaker Aamer. Speakers included Jeremy Corbyn MP, Sarah Ludford MEP and Louise Christian, solicitor for former Guantánamo prisoners. A statement that was passed to the Lewes group by Lewes MP and Home Office Minister Norman Baker was also read out which congratulated 'Amnesty and the many individuals across the party and of no party who keep the spotlight on this case.' The demonstration was covered by press. Some 155 people are held at the detention centre.

LAY DEATH PENALTY TO REST

In September, the Birmingham group carried a symbolic coffin through the city centre in memory of Troy Davis and other victims of the death penalty. It marked the second anniversary of Troy's execution in the USA. With his final words, Troy issued a call to continue to 'fight this fight' against the wrongs that cost him his life. Watch the video: <http://amnestybrum.wordpress.com/2013/09/17/video-funeral-for-the-death-penalty/>

To mark World Day Against the Death penalty, the Ely City group held its fourth annual lecture at Ely Cathedral. Over 100 people listened to the moving and shocking accounts of Peter Pringle and Sunny Jacobs about their unjust convictions, years on death row, forgiveness and fight for justice. After meeting at an Amnesty event, the pair married and now travel the world campaigning against the death penalty. The lecture received local media coverage.



Buxton



Ely City



Lewes, Brighton and Hove, Minehead and Horsham



Birmingham



Lewes

If you require this document in an alternative format please contact: **Tel 020 7033 1777**
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