



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
WARRINGTON GROUP
NEWS SHEET JUNE 2016

Diary Date

Thursday 16th June 2016 – 7.30 to 9.30
Group Meeting - Nora Street Community House, 15-17 Nora Street, Howley, WA1 2JG

REMINDER – SATURDAY 9TH JULY
Culcheth Community Day 12 noon to 4 pm

Due to wet conditions the event was moved from 2nd May to 9th July! This event is not only an enjoyable afternoon out but a chance to support Warrington Amnesty Group. We hope to sell plants, have children's game and petition in support of the Human Rights Act and also an appeal to the Israeli authorities to allow the farmers of the Palestinian village of Jayyous access to their land, crops and animals.

Saturday 28th May

We collected £82.45 last Saturday (28th May) in Warrington Town Centre and also 31 people signed the Amnesty petition to Save the Human Rights Act. It was very encouraging to have people appreciate how the human rights act benefits ordinary citizens.

INDIVIDUAL AT RISK-

VENEZUELA: Leopoldo López



Leader of the Venezuela opposition party was jailed for 13 years nine months for inciting violence during anti-government protest in 2014. Although he had helped organise protests against government policies there was no evidence that he had incited violence or committed any crime. He is a prisoner of conscience.

Early in 2014 Venezuela was shaken by mass street protests for and against the government. Violent clashes between the security forces and protesters resulted in 43 people dead and hundreds injured.



Please send the attached appeal letter to the Embassy in London

GOOD NEWS

AZERBAIJAN: Khadija Ismayilova



Ismayilova was released on 25th May

Ismayilova's sentence was reduced on appeal to three-and-a-half years' probation, a way of silencing those campaigning on her behalf without acknowledging her innocence. Charges against her of abuse of authority and embezzlement were withdrawn but she remains accused of tax evasion and illegal trading. Amnesty will be campaigning for all the charges against her to be dropped.

Khadija Ismayilova, an award-winning Azerbaijani investigative journalist and an outspoken government critic, was imprisoned in Dec. 2014 and given a 7½ year prison sentence for exposing corruption.

She has published numerous articles uncovering human rights violations and corruption at the highest levels in the country. The authorities punished her by running a smear campaign in the media and later brought fabricated criminal charges against her, including tax evasion, embezzlement and illegal business.

Human rights in the UK



According to the Queen's Speech the government 'will bring forward proposals for a British Bill of Rights'; if the Bill

becomes law, it will replace the Human Rights Act.

The Prime Minister stated in parliament that his government will press ahead to repeal the HRA. So while the plans have clearly been delayed - because they are unnecessary and unworkable? The plans have not been dropped! Please defend the Human Rights Act whenever you have the opportunity.

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Yet another journalist is murdered in Mexico



Francisco Pacheco Beltran was shot dead in front of his home in Taxco, Guerrero state on 25 April. He was a reporter for several regional newspapers and a radio station. His website also regularly posted articles on regional crime and violence. His work was sometimes critical of local authorities and especially the mayor. Since 1992 at least 36 journalists have been killed in the country while dozens more have died in unclear circumstances.

Congolese activists on hunger strike after court refuses to release them.



There have been calls from many countries for the release of Fred Bauma and Yves Makwambala, DRC youth group members in prison for demanding democratic change.

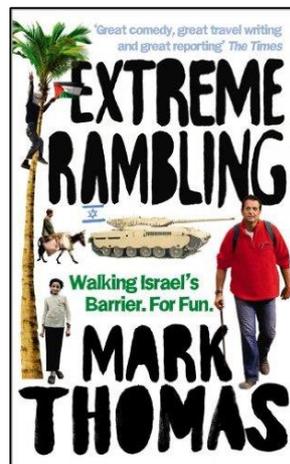
Fred (left) and Yves Makwambala have been imprisoned for more than a year without a trial. On 15th March, the 1st year anniversary of their imprisonment Fred and Yves went on hunger strike after the Supreme Court rejected their application for release from jail.

Fred and Yves, members of the youth group 'Struggle for Change' (Lucha), were arrested in a raid by security services on a meeting in Kinshasa. The government said at the time that the group was believed to be planning an attack against "state security".

Nearly 30 members of Lucha are now in prison after 18 were arrested in Goma during a peaceful protest calling for Fred and Yves release. Last month, six were sentenced to six months in prison for incitement to revolt after police found them making banners that called for political change.

Extreme rambling: Walking Israel's border, by Mark Thomas.

Look out for this interesting book about the separation barrier in Israel. Mark Thomas will also be touring a show with the same title.



The Israeli barrier is probably the most iconic divider of land since the Berlin Wall. It has been declared illegal under international law and its impact on life in the West Bank has been enormous.

Mark Thomas - as only he could - decided the only way to really get to grips with this huge divide was to use the barrier as a route map, to 'walk the wall', covering the entire distance with little more in his armoury than Kendal Mint Cake and a box of blister plasters.

In the course of his ramble he was tear-gassed, stoned, sunburned, rained on and hailed on and even lost the wall a couple of times. But thankfully he was also welcomed and looked after by Israelis and Palestinians - from farmers and soldiers to smugglers and zookeepers - and finally earned a unique insight into the real Middle East in all its entrenched and yet life-affirming glory. And all without hardly ever getting arrested!