



## THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GROUP NEWSLETTER

### Forthcoming Brighton & Hove Amnesty Group Meetings/Events

Group meetings take place on the first Thursday of each month from 8-10pm at Community Base, Queens Road, Brighton

#### 1st December

Campaign meeting and Seasonal Social  
please bring drinks or nibbles to share

#### Monthly Collection

17th December

21st January

Contact Madeline

01273 508620

[madeline@peasgood.plus.com](mailto:madeline@peasgood.plus.com)

17th December

#### Monthly Stall

Sydney Street

Contact Jill 01273 621697

11am to 1pm

#### 3rd December 2016

#### Write for Rights

10am to 4pm

Friends Meeting House

#### Silent Auction

To be launched at our November meeting

Final bidding date 3rd December  
See website for auction sheet and place your bids by email  
[brightonand-hoveai@googlemail.com](mailto:brightonand-hoveai@googlemail.com)

## Write for Rights 2016



Together Our Words Make a Difference

Join us on 3rd December  
10am to 4pm  
At the Friends Meeting House  
Ship St  
Brighton

Every year, Amnesty runs Write for Rights, a campaign over November and December where people write messages of support to people around the world who have suffered injustice.

**We run this campaign every year because we know it works.**

*"Every letter, every visit, every word has strengthened us and reinforced our determination in this long but just struggle for freedom and democracy."*

*Yves Makwambala, youth activist in DRC featured in 2015 Write for Rights*

If you can't join us on 3rd then get the cases online at <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-rights-2016>

## Write for Rights works

### Mexican torture victim freed



Yecenia Armenta endured a horrific 15 hours of torture at the hands of the Mexican police. They raped her. They asphyxiated her. Yet during this torture they got Yecenia to 'confess' against her will to being involved in the murder of her husband – which saw her sent to prison.

In June this year, after featuring in our 2015 Write for Rights campaign, Yecenia was acquitted and released from prison. A government taskforce has been established to investigate cases of sexual torture against women.

While she was imprisoned, Yecenia said the 8,000 letters of support posted to her prison cell kept her going.

*"When I receive all these letters saying that I'm not alone, it makes me feel great. And I think: 'Yes, it's true, I'm not alone. They really are supporting me'. It's exciting to think that there are people who still care about the rights of other people – and they don't even know me."*

*Yecenia Armenta, while in prison*

### Amnesty November Stall

#### CHARITY WORKER DETAINED WITHOUT CHARGE

Date Saturday 26th November ( previous date cancelled due to a deluge of rain! )

Time 11am - 1pm

Venue Outside Amnesty Bookshop, Sydney Street, Brighton

Weather Chilly but dry

Activists Andrew, Madeline and Jill

Campaign Nazanin Zaghari Ratcliffe, British Iranian Charity Worker

Nazanin was arrested at Tehran's International Airport in April. She was due to return to the UK with her daughter and has been held for 'national security' reasons. She has no access to a lawyer and may have been coerced into 'confessing'. Her British husband is in the UK and has no way of contacting her. This case has recently been in the press and has been linked with an arms trade deal between UK and Iran which is nothing to do with Nazanin.

We signed cards for the Amnesty petition and sent messages to Nazanin from 59 people.

Next Stall will be in the New Year. If you would like to help contact Jill on 01273 621697

## “Stand-off with prison profiteers at the Tower of London”:



Despite talk of progressive reform, the European Custody and Detention Summit, hosted at the Tower of London 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> November, was clearly a business meeting, gathering organisations interested in increasing their profit from privately run prisons, and asylum-seeker detention centres in the UK.

I couldn't get to the larger demonstration early in the morning of the 15<sup>th</sup> November, but I joined the evening meet. We gathered at the tunnel entrance to the Tower of London, by St Katherine's docks, with banners and placards, and were able to make a lot of people, who would have had no idea, aware of what was going on in there . . . The public, including police officers, were receptive. We were praised for taking the trouble to protest. We handed out leaflets, and talked to people; some freelance journalists and photographers, some who just wanted to know.

G4S and Serco, the main “profiteer” targets had in fact withdrawn for fear of protest demonstrations, but I felt that it was a worthwhile action, we raised awareness, and was glad I'd taken part. Marienna Pope-Wedermann, the organiser who talked to me, was very pleased that a member of Amnesty had turned up.

More information here:

<http://www.redpepper.org.uk/stand-off-with-prison-profiteers-at-the-tower-of-london/>

and here:

<http://www.custodysummit.com/>

*Gwyneth*

## Take Action

# HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYERS UNDER THREAT

**Members of Cubalex, a Havana based organisation of human rights lawyers, have been subjected to months of harassment and intimidation by the Cuban authorities for their work.**

Progressively since September, Cuban authorities have intimidated members of Cubalex (Legal information centre), a non-governmental organisation, not recognised by the authorities, which provides fee legal and human rights advice in Havana. In September the authorities searched the Centre without warrant, confiscated a number of laptops and documents and forced one woman to undress. The prosecutor in Havana has stated that Cubalex is under a tax investigation.

Since then members of staff have been summoned staff for long interviews and filmed them. The Director has been stopped and questioned a number of times and she believes her home is under surveillance. Another member of staff is in custody. Please support Cubalex by signing and sending the enclosed letter.

*Thank you. Celia*

### **BRIGHTON & HOVE AMNESTY GROUP CONTACTS**

**Chair** – Peter brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com Tel: 01273 607110

**New Member Secretary:** Sue Tel: 07790 755921 brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com

**Treasurer:** Sue 07790 755921 sue@suewilliams44.fsnet.co.uk

**Newsletter editor:** - Emma: Tel: 01273 232397

Please email any contributions for the newsletter to brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com

**Lanes collection organiser:** - Madeline—01273 508620

**Individuals at Risk** – Fred Bauma and Yves Makwambala—Sue 07790 755921  
sue@suewilliams44.fsnet.co.uk

**Amnesty Websites:** international - [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org) AI UK - [www.amnesty.org.uk](http://www.amnesty.org.uk) local group – [www.amnesty.org.uk/brighton](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/brighton)

Follow us on twitter @AmnestyBrighton

See our photos on Flickr— <http://www.flickr.com/groups/amnestybrighton/pool>

**Amnesty UK Human Rights Centre** - Tel: 0207 0331500.

