



News from the Minehead Group

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Actions you can take this month:

- ✓ **Send an email** calling on the Turkish authorities to release **Taner Kiliç**, the Chair of Amnesty International **Turkey**, who has been detained and wrongly accused of belonging to a so-called 'terrorist group'. This is further proof of how shockingly widespread and arbitrary Turkey's post-coup crackdown has become. Taner Kiliç is a longstanding human rights lawyer – someone who has worked tirelessly to defend the rights of others. He needs our support. Find the link to the email on the home page at www.amnesty.org.uk.



- ✓ **Come along** to our next fund-raising event and **bring your friends**. Our **AmnesTEA** is on Saturday **8 July** from 1500 to 1700 at Karen and Graham Mills' home, Westbrook, Furzeland Road, Porlock, TA24 8NF. Offers of cakes and other help are welcome – contact Karen on 01643 863409.
- ✓ **Join us at our July meeting** when we'll be viewing and discussing two short **films** on women's human rights and human rights in India – 27 July at 1930 in the Quaker Meeting House.
- ✓ **Make a date** to help us at the Allerford **Fete** on Sunday 20 August between 1230 and 1600. We will be inviting people to take part in actions in support of the 'I Welcome Refugees' campaign. If you can help, please let Chris Lawson know (01643 704779) or just come along and see us on the day.
- ✓ **Note in your diary** to come along to our **summer social** on Thursday 24 August at 1800 – bring and share supper at Susan's home in Carhampton. This is a chance for all our supporters to meet and socialise – it's not just for those who come to meetings!

Round up of June news

On Saturday 17 June, we spent a very rewarding morning in sunny Minehead, giving out flowers and cakes as part of the **Great Get Together**. This was just one of many events taking place across the country, marking the anniversary of the murder of MP Jo Cox in June 2016, and was part of Amnesty's **Against Hate** campaign. In her maiden speech to Parliament, Jo Cox had said that *'We are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us'* and this sentiment was much quoted on the day and in media reports. An eye-catching stall with pictures of Jo Cox had been prepared for us in his usual brilliant way by Chris Lawson and this attracted many to come and sign a card to Jo's husband, Brendan Cox. In all, we collected at least 260 signatures – too many to count accurately! Many thanks to all who helped – it was a great team effort.



Instead of a business meeting in June, we marked **Refugee Week** by showing the award-winning film 'Fire at Sea' directed by Gianfranco Rosi. We also displayed an Amnesty International photo exhibition on refugees. We were very pleased to welcome 40 people to the film show and were grateful for the donations which amounted to £120 for RAFT (Refugee Aid from Taunton). The film captured everyday life on the Italian island of Lampedusa, alongside the

Diary Dates

Monthly meetings:

We meet on the fourth Thursday of the month (except August and December) at 1930, at the Quaker Meeting House on Bancks Street, Minehead. The first part of the meeting is open to all and features a speaker, film or workshop. After a tea break, AI members are invited to stay for a short business meeting which will end by 2130.

Saturday 8 July

AmnesTEA: 1500-1700 in Porlock.

Thursday 27 July

Group meeting: two short films: women's HR and HR in India; plus Ethiopia update.

Sunday 20 August

Stall at Allerford Fete. 1230 to 1600. 'I Welcome Refugees' campaign actions.

Thursday 24 Aug

Bring and share supper at 1800 at Susan's home: Mayhill, Woodland Close, Carhampton. All supporters welcome.

Sunday 17 Sept

Fund-raising concert in Alcombe Parish Church at 1500. 'Paul Robeson – the songs and the singer' with Arwel Huw Morgan (bass) and Keith Jones (piano).

Thursday 28 Sept

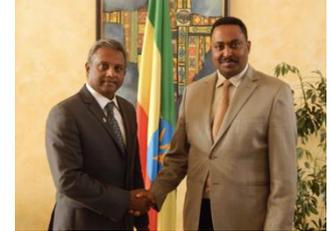
Group meeting: Business meeting. Other items tba.

realities facing the authorities as hundreds of migrants land on its shores on a weekly basis. The film was moving and thought-provoking and an appropriate way for us to mark Refugee Week, while we continue to participate in Amnesty's global campaign 'I Welcome Refugees'.

On 14 June, Susan visited the **Weston-super-Mare** AI Group to run a workshop on the refugee campaign. She was made very welcome and the session went well. The Weston Group is a small but active group like ours and we agreed to keep in touch by exchanging news of our events.

Country News

Ethiopia: Cherry, who coordinates this campaign for us, reports that the state of emergency continues. In April, AI's Secretary General Salil Shetty led a high-level mission to Ethiopia, and met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs (shown with Salil in this photo) in a candid meeting touching on regional issues, including the situation in South Sudan, as well as human rights violations in Ethiopia. At our July group meeting, Cherry will report more on the situation in Ethiopia, including her recent meeting in London with Patricia Bartley (AIUK's country coordinator for Ethiopia) and Yemi (Andy Tsege's wife).



Iran: those who receive 'urgent actions' direct from AIUK, will have read that there is currently a push to raise again the case of **Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe**, and also another British-Iranian held in prison on false charges. 77-year-old **Kamal Foroughi** has been in prison for six years on charges of 'espionage'. Both have suffered similarly terrible conditions: solitary confinement, declining health without access to medical care, the denial of visitors or legal advice. We have been asked to contact our MPs, and Susan has received a reply from ours. Here is an extract: *'I can assure you that Ministers and officials continue to make representations on all consular cases involving British nationals in Iran, including Mr Foroughi's and Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's, at all levels with the Iranian Government. On 17th February the Foreign Secretary discussed Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's case directly with the Iranian Foreign Minister, and her family have confirmed she has legal representation. However, the fact that Iran does not recognise dual nationality makes progress difficult. Most recently, the new Minister for the Middle East raised Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's case in a telephone call with the Iranian Foreign Minister on 21st June....'*

Other forthcoming events of interest

Budleigh Salterton Literary Festival: on Thursday 14 September **Dr Shirin Ebadi** will be giving a talk about her book 'Until we are Free'. Dr Ebadi is an Iranian lawyer, human rights activist and the first Muslim woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. She will discuss, through an interpreter, her personal story and the appalling backlash of surveillance, intimidation and violence that has followed her award. She will talk about life in Iran today, and how, despite nuclear deals and more reformists taking seats in recent elections, it is still a place where those who challenge authority risk being thrown into solitary confinement, where women are treated as secondary citizens and where the charge of 'insulting sanctities' by writing poetry can be punished by a public lashing. The talk will take place at St Peter's Church Budleigh at 7.15pm. Tickets are £12. To book, go to www.budlitfest.org.uk.

'Fragments: voices from the First World War' is to be performed on Saturday 10 November 2018 at 7.30pm at Minehead Methodist Church. This will be the premiere of Emily Feldberg's new composition for choir, orchestra and baritone solo. Emily will shortly be seeking expressions of interest from those who'd like to take part. Emily is a local composer and musician who composed the Amnesty Cantata for our special concert celebrating Amnesty's 50th birthday in 2011. So it would be nice to support her in this major project. Even if you don't want to sing or play an instrument, please make a note in your diary of the performance date in 2018!

How to contact the Minehead Amnesty International Local Group:

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