

SOLIHULL AMNESTY GROUP

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 17th July 2017

- **Present:** Celia, Cathy, Bernard, Pauline, Janet, Amy, Pooja, David
- **Apologies:** Heather, Naomi
- **Minutes & Actions:** Following our May meeting we wrote to parliamentary candidates for Solihull and Meriden for the three main parties asking for their views on human rights issues, in particular the licensing of arms for export to Yemen and the indefinite detention of asylum seekers in the UK. Caroline Spelman (Conservative, Meriden) and Tom McNeil (Labour, Meriden) both replied giving their views. Candidates in Solihull constituency did not reply.
- **Future Events:**
 - Amnestea Sunday 23rd July. About 50 guests are expected. Celia confirmed arrangements and asked helpers to meet at 12.30.
 - Solihull Fun in the Park Sunday 17th September. Plans to be discussed at August meeting. Cathy suggested using giant polystyrene tombstone to represent civilian deaths in Yemen, as seen at AI stall at Leamington Peace Festival. She will ask if the tombstone can be kept in the area until we reach a decision on this.

ACTION Cathy
 - Solihull F E College enrichment event, Tuesday 19th September 10-2pm. Celia and Pooja will organise a stall. Celia will request appropriate materials from AI.

ACTION Celia
- **Secretary's Items:**
 - Monthly Action:
 - a) We will take action individually on behalf of Taner Kılıç, chair of Amnesty International, Turkey. He has been detained, wrongly accused of membership of the "Fethullah Gülen Terror Organization", which the authorities blame for last year's attempted coup. Celia will circulate letter writing details. ACTION Celia
 - b) It has also been suggested that we should contact our MP's to introduce our group and encourage them to support our work. We agreed to write to them after August meeting inviting them to attend Fun in the Park on 17th September.

Human Rights Defenders campaign Skillshare: 7th October in Manchester. Celia to send full details to Pauline and Bernard.
ACTION Celia

- **Campaign reports:**

Sombath Somphone, Laos, David will deliver a new letter writing rota in the near future.

Johan Teterissa, Indonesia, Bernard gave out stamped envelopes. A new rota will be circulated by email.

We have received a list of the other groups who are campaigning on behalf of Johan from country coordinator, Chris Peel.

- **Any other business**

Talks: David reported that he had given several talks in recent months which will boost our funds.

Future meetings

October: Cathy will talk about the situation in Sudan

November: Pauline will talk about the situation in Palestine.

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In the second part of the meeting Amy spoke about her recent experiences working as a volunteer in the Social Justice Department of a Human Rights Law Firm in Cape Town. She described the enormous problems facing people living in a South African township and the immense difficulties faced by the state in managing a society with so many problems. The talk was exceptionally interesting and we were impressed by the resilience she had shown when faced with tough situations.

Date of next meeting: Monday 21st August

