



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Bromley & Orpington Group

December 2017 Newsletter



Our thanks to Rindi Baaker of Sevenoaks for sponsoring this month's Newsletter

COME TO OUR NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 12th December	Greetings Card Campaign 'Send a Message of Hope'
Tuesday 9th January	Campaign meeting
Tuesday 13th February	Speaker: Labour rights in the medical supply chain

'Send A Message of Hope'
Amnesty Greetings Card Campaign
Tuesday 12th December at 7.30 pm - Mince Pies. All Welcome.

Zimbabwe: The End of Mugabe

With extraordinary coincidence, as we welcomed **Cindy Asokan**, Amnesty Country Co-ordinator for Zimbabwe, historic events were unfolding in Harare. At the time of writing it appears that the long rule of Robert Mugabe is coming to an end with his dismissal as Zanu-PF leader and an ultimatum served to stand down as President. Amnesty has put out an urgent message from the regional Director; *"At this tense time, it is essential that the military ensure the safety and security of all people in Zimbabwe – regardless of their political allegiance - and refrain from any action that puts lives and human rights at risk. Military officials must uphold human rights, including the right to liberty, freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly"*. Cindy outlined how human rights have been routinely violated over a very long period with torture and forced detention/disappearance a feature of Zimbabwe society. The former head of the feared intelligence services had been made Minister of Justice sending an alarming message for the independence of the judiciary. We also discussed our new Prisoner Action File. **Itai Dzamara**, a journalist and pro-democracy activist, was taken on the morning of 9th March 2015 by five unknown men while at a barber shop in Harare's Glen View suburb. The men accused him of stealing cattle before handcuffing him and driving off with him in a white truck with concealed number plates. His whereabouts remain unknown. Attempts by members of his family and human rights lawyers to establish his whereabouts have been unfruitful. Itai was a known activist against the Mugabe regime and it is believed his forced disappearance was politically motivated. There is absolutely no information on his fate or whereabouts but we will seek to campaign for an investigation by the Justice Ministry.



Group Finance

Balance brought forward	£815.52
Income	£20.00
Expenditure	£124.42
Balance at 14th November	£731.10
CHANGE	- £84.42

We agreed to make a final donation for 2017 of **£278**, taking our total donations for the year to **£2,700** against a budget of £2,000 (+£72 affiliation fee). This is a terrific outcome for us and is largely due to income from the BLT charity preview of Nell Gwynne, which was not in the forecast.

Save The Date!

Amnesty Jazz

With the Nic Beston Quartet

Friday 9th February 2018

Orpington Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Road BR6 9JH

Tickets £12.00 in advance (£13.00 on the door)

Available from David Howkins on 01689 823793

Monthly Action: The Istanbul 10: 'Truth & justice have become total strangers in Turkey'



We continue to campaign for the Istanbul 10 who have been detained for peacefully protecting human rights in Turkey. They include **Idil Eser** of Amnesty International, and were arrested in Istanbul on 5 July. Known as the Istanbul 10 they, along with Amnesty's **Taner Kılıç**, are being tried for terrorism-related crimes – an absurd accusation intended to stifle their human rights activism. They are currently in prison.

Monthly Letter: Bahrain

Further persecution and oppression of human rights defenders is being witnessed across the Middle East including in Bahrain. **Nabeel Rajab** was the Head of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights and has been detained several times since 2012. On 10th July 2017 he was convicted of 'publishing and disseminating rumours and false news' and he is now facing a two year prison sentence. Amnesty views him to be a Prisoner of Conscience and his arrest politically motivated in order to silence his peaceful work on behalf of human rights. Please address, sign and post this letter, which will cost £1.17 if within 10g.



Keep Refugee Families Together



Amnesty is part of a wide coalition that includes the British Red Cross, Oxfam, the Refugee Council and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) who are supporting a private member's Bill being proposed by Angus MacNeill MP. The Bill will receive its second reading on 16th March 2018 and calls for the separation of refugee families to end as they have a devastating impact on children; the Bill would expand the definition of 'family member' so that

children arriving in the UK would be able to sponsor an adult to join them; this is not possible under existing law. The Bill would also give refugee children the right to be reunited with their parents and to reintroduce legal aid for reunion applications. We wrote to our three local MPs (Jo Johnson, Bob Neild and Colonel Bob Stewart) asking them to support the Bill.

Present on 14th November: Neville White, Vivien Glanz, David Howkins, Waltraut Gilchrist, Wendy Simmons, Peter Martin, Rindi Baaker and Cindy Asokan. **Apologies:** Patsy Paine, Gladys Edmonds, Margaret Coppard and Vivienne Andrews.

Meetings are held in the Wesley Room, Orpington Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington commencing at 7.30pm. **E-mail** amnestybromley@gmail.com **website:** www.amnesty.org.uk/bromley

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