

Bognor, Chichester & District Amnesty Group

Newsletter, March 2018

Dates for your diary

Sat 24/03/18: Chichester Street Collection

Tue 19/06/18: Kate Allen (Director, UK Amnesty) at Chichester Cathedral

Sat 30/06/18: Emsworth Book Sale

Dear Writers,

This year is the 70th anniversary of (me and) the great UN Declaration of Human Rights, so we are trying to focus on the latter in all our events.

LOCAL AMNESTY EVENTS

SATURDAY 24/03. We want VOLUNTEERS for our STREET COLLECTION in Chichester. We can collect 10 am -3 pm, but any time you can spare in between is gratefully received. We are hoping for as many people as possible to rattle a tin, if only for an hour or so that day. Does anyone know any buskers, singers or musicians who can help by performing then? Tins and tabards provided. Please contact Jillie Webber on (01243) 371463.

In June (yes it seems a long way off but...) we have a double whammy of a Talk by UK Amnesty's Director at Chichester Cathedral on the evening of the 19th and SALE, mainly of books, in Emsworth at the end of the month. Full details to follow.

OTHER EVENTS

On 23 March, the play "The Bundle – An Asylum Seeker's Story" in St Paul's Church, Chichester at 7.30 pm. The play is based on the real story of a Chechen lawyer and her three young children who fled to find safety in Britain. Suggested donation £5 (adults) or £2(students). Order in advance at sanctuaryinchichester@gmail.com or at the door, or get tickets from St Olav Christian Bookshop. See the website www.sanctuary in Chichester.org

21-22 April is **Football Welcomes Refugees** weekend. Locally, we have the Sanctuary in Chichester football project –see overleaf.

Carry on Writing!!!!!!!!!!

Bob DEWICK

Amnesty action: campaigns & letter-writing

Action: Northern Ireland & abortion rights

Women and girls are suffering due to the near-total ban on abortion in Northern Ireland. They can face up to life in prison for a health service freely provided on the NHS everywhere else in the UK. This Victorian-era law predates the light bulb. It must be brought into the 21st century – urgently, before more women are criminalised, forced to travel for procedures, or left to suffer alone.

Tell the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland that abortion is a healthcare and human rights issue — a matter for women and their doctors, not police and judges <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/issues/womens-human-rights>

Action: CHILE – Solidarity action with Rodrigo Mundaca

Background to this action:



This World Water Day (22nd March), take action in support of Rodrigo Mundaca and the Defence Movement of Earth, Environmental Protection and the Access to Water (MODATIMA) in Petorca Province, Chile. **‘There are colleagues that don’t go out into the street because they’re afraid. All of those that have been on the front lines against water theft have suffered from these situations’ Rodrigo Mundaca**

In an arid region of central Chile, Rodrigo Mundaca defends community access to water and exposes its illegal extraction by politicians and businesses. A spokesman for MODATIMA, a non - governmental organisation that aims to protect people’s right to water, Rodrigo has received death threats, been physically attacked, and taken to court.

Between 2012 and 2015, the Chilean authorities initiated four criminal cases against Rodrigo for exposing illegal water extraction in Petorca Province. Other MODATIMA members have faced legal action, death threats, and attacks. Many are afraid to leave their houses.

Campaigning by activists like you around the world has already had an impact on Rodrigo’s situation. He and his colleague Verónica from MODATIMA were summoned to testify at a hearing on Thursday 25 January in a case that was opened following MODATIMA making a complaint about death threats. Rodrigo believes this new hearing was a result of Amnesty’s campaigning: before our efforts, the case was completely paralysed.

However, since Rodrigo and Verónica testified, there has been no news from the prosecution.

What you can do

1. Tell Rodrigo and other members of MODATIMA that you stand in solidarity with them in their fight to defend their community’s access to water. Send cards and letters to: **Rodrigo Mundaca, Correos de Chile – La Ligua, Calle Esmeralda La Ligua, Región de Valparaíso, Chile**
2. Tell the Chilean Embassy in the UK about the action you’ve taken in solidarity with Rodrigo and MODATIMA and why.

Urge the Chilean Embassy in the UK to use their influence to allow Rodrigo Mundaca and MODATIMA to be able to continue their human rights work free from threats, harassment and intimidation.

Call on them to provide effective protection for Rodrigo Mundaca and all other MODATIMA members at risk, in consultation with them, and in accordance with their wishes.

Ask them to publicly recognise the important and legitimate work of human rights defenders working on land, territory and environment issues.

Send your letters to: **HIS EXCELLENCY MR ROLANDO DRAGO, Embassy of Chile, 37 - 41 Old Queen Street, London, SW1H 9JA**

Rodrigo Mundaca and MODATIMA are one of 5 cases that Amnesty UK are campaigning with and for as part of our Brave campaign for Human Rights Defenders. Find out more about the campaign here: www.amnesty.org.uk/brave

See www.amnesty.org.uk/bognor-chichesterand-district/about-0 for further information about the group

The Sanctuary in Chichester Football Project

SIC [<https://sanctuaryinchichester.org>] is a local group of volunteers, and part of a nationwide initiative called City of Sanctuary [<https://cityofsanctuary.org>], which "holds the vision that the UK will be a welcoming place of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution."

SIC is involved in a wide range of activities and now want to establish a Football Project. This initiative originated from a group of young refugees and asylum-seekers who approached SIC with the request to support them in establishing their own football team, called **Nations United**. It has become increasingly acknowledged that, across the globe, football possesses the potential to be an enhancing and empowering humanitarian force for good, both on a community and individual level [<http://www.amnesty.org.uk/footballwelcomes>] and your Amnesty committee has already alerted Amnesty UK to this local project.

SIC are in the developmental stages of this project. Funding is very helpful, but so is goodwill, ideas, guidance and support. In a letter written collaboratively by the 15 young men who have currently expressed an interest in playing football, the following has been highlighted as current needs:

- "coaching, to encourage our skills to develop. Some of us have played at a good standard at youth level, but would like to develop even further, and express our abilities and talents. Some of us have dreams of being able to be professional footballers, and maybe even represent our new country!"
- kit and balls;
- a regular base/pitch to train on and play matches;
- encouragement and support;
- "We also want to have some fun, whilst we learn English better, and get to meet more people."

If you are able to offer something to this worthwhile project, please contact Jon Bowra for the SIC Football Project on jonbowra@hotmail.com , and please do forward this information on to someone who may be able to help.

There is also an article in the Chichester Observer about the project:

<https://www.chichester.co.uk/news/first-all-refugee-football-team-launches-in-chichester-1-8380075>

Data Protection Guide

With the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) coming into force in May 2018, Amnesty has recently updated their Data Protection guide for groups collecting data of individuals such as names and email addresses.

Committee members are currently reviewing this new guidance and we will be in touch shortly with any revisions and updates for you, as members of the Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group, about the data we hold about you.