



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL Bromley & Orpington Group May 2018 Newsletter



COME TO OUR NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 8th May
Tuesday 12th June

Speaker: *Hugh Sandeman: Egypt – Human Rights in Crisis*
Campaign Meeting

Our thanks to Roger Knight of Bexleyheath for sponsoring this month's Newsletter

Egypt: "Human Rights in Crisis"

Speaker: Hugh Sandeman
AI country co-ordinator - Egypt
Tuesday 8th May 2018 at 7.30pm
All Welcome!

West Africa Action: Mauretania



and are in poor health, sustaining injuries that suggest cruel, inhuman and unusual treatment. The Government has indicted them for 'violent rebellion' and 'riot incitement', but their activity was conducted peacefully by persistently raising

the issue of systemic slavery in the West African country. For those online, you can watch a four minute YouTube video about this issue at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBW5ocdUwnM>

We wrote to the President and Minister of Justice regarding the sharp deterioration in the right to freedom of expression in Mauretania. **Moussa Bilal Biram** and **Abdellahi Matalla Saleck** have been held in a Saharan desert prison for over a year: their only crime – speaking out against the practice of slavery in Mauretania. Both are human rights defenders, and have been detained in a prison 1,200Km from their homes whilst they await a Supreme Court hearing. Both have been reportedly

tortured

Why are Moussa and Abdellahi suffering in a remote prison with no realistic possibility of visits by their lawyers or loved ones? Simply for speaking out against slavery.

Amnesty Quiz Night

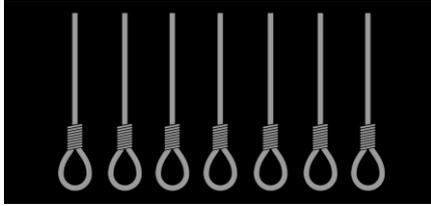
Find yourself shouting at the TV during Mastermind?
Join us for a fun evening at Amnesty's first ever Quiz Night
Saturday 30th June from 7pm (bring your own picnic)

St Martin Chelsfield off the A224

We are currently recruiting teams and interested participants

£10 entry: all monies to Amnesty

Contact Neville to take part or join a team!



Death Sentences Fall in 2017

In what can sometimes seem a bleak world situation, AI says it has seen a glimmer of hope in a fall in the use of the death penalty and in capital sentencing. In 2017, the number of executions fell by 4% compared to 2016, and sentences fell by 17%. However 21,000 people remain on death row worldwide. In sub-Saharan Africa, **Guinea** became the 20th State in the region to abolish the death penalty; the new president of Gambia announced an immediate moratorium and review. In Kenya mandatory death sentences for homicide were abolished. Indonesia did not carry out an execution all year, and Iran made important legal changes to its Code which has reduced the number of capital sentences passed down. At the end of 2017, **106 countries** were fully abolitionist and a further **142 countries** had abolished it in practice. Just four countries account for 84% of all executions worldwide. For the first time in many years Amnesty recorded executions at fewer than 1,000 (993) compared to 1,032 in 2016. Data does not include China – the world’s most potent executioner and where figures are unobtainable – which leaves Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan the four most significant countries for carrying out the death penalty. Executions doubled in Palestine to 16 (all in Gaza). In total executions were carried out in 23 countries – the USA carried out 23 executions in 2017. Belarus is the sole executioner in Europe (2 executions in 2017). 2,591 sentences of death were handed down – a 17% fall over 2016 which was a record high. Amnesty, in its report, points to several distressing trends: the execution of child offenders; the sentencing of people with mental or intellectual incapacity; sentencing after unfair or rigged trials; forced confessions leading to a sentence of death and mandatory sentences in a number of countries where extraneous or mitigating circumstances cannot be taken into account. In addition to Guinea, **Mongolia** abolished the death penalty in 2017.



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Good News

On 16 March, the **Refugee Family Reunion Bill** had its second reading in the House of Commons – and passed to the next stage! This takes us one **GIANT** step closer to reuniting refugee families. We needed at least 100 MPs to vote in order for the Bill to pass the second reading. We're delighted that **129 MPs supported bringing refugee families together including** co-sponsor Bob Neil, MP for Bromley & Chislehurst. 42 MPs opposed. Of our two other local MPs, Jo Johnson (Orpington) was not present and (Col.) Bob Stewart (Beckenham) opposed.

Present on 10th April: Neville White; Vivien Glanz; Vivienne Andrews; Gladys Edmonds; Ted Burke; Wendy Simmons; Patrick & Carolyn Nield and Peter Martin. **Apologies:** David Howkins; Patsy Paine.

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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