

## SOLIHULL AMNESTY GROUP

### Minutes of meeting held on Monday 18 June 2018

Present: Celia, Cathy, David, Janet

Apologies: Bernard, Pauline, Luisa, Meghan

Minutes of May meeting: The minutes stated that Luisa will modify our facebook entry to make Cathy an administrator. Luisa will actually concentrate on twitter at present.

We have been invited to talk to the Baha'i group in Solihull rather than one of them being invited to come to one of our meetings, as stated in the minutes.

#### Future Events:

- **Amnestea Sunday 12 August** at 26 St Bernards Rd. 2.30 - 5pm. Celia gave out invitations to be distributed. She will contact helpers 2 weeks before. David offered loan of table and chairs.
- **Street collection Saturday 25 August**

#### Secretary's Items:

- **Monthly action: a)** Celia has circulated an email action for Iranian prisoner of conscience Esmail Abdi who is in the notorious Evin prison for standing up for workers' rights and calling for quality education for children. We are asked to send an email to the authorities to ask for him to have immediate access to appropriate health care.  
**b)** We posed for a photo holding 4 candles to mark Gabriella Ratcliffe's 4<sup>th</sup> birthday. AI will send these photos to Nazanin Zakhari-Ratcliffe's family as a means of expressing solidarity with them.
- **Future meetings:** We agreed not to meet in July because of holiday absence. We will discuss our future meeting programme on 20 August.
- Information given out about talk by MP for Sutton, Andrew Mitchell, on 19 July
- We have been asked to provide a speaker to give a brief introduction to AI's work before the showing of the film 'Education under Fire' at a meeting of the Baha'I at the end of June. Noone can make that date. Celia will reply and explain that we need more notice.

#### Second 'Individual at Risk' case

At our May meeting we sent a request to AI via twitter asking how we can obtain a new 'individual at risk' case. We also made this request in this year's group planning pack. We have received no response from AI to these requests. At the meeting we composed an email letter to Farshid explaining this problem and expressing our concern about whether group letter writing campaigns are any longer an AI priority.

#### Burma Update

Celia spoke about the current situation in Burma focussing on the following:

- 8 000 prisoners were released in April. Most had committed drug related offences but 36 political prisoners were included.
- Persecution of non Burmese ethnic groups is widespread. Shan, Chin and Karen groups are affected as well as Rohingya. Persecution has increased since the country was opened up to international investment. The government does not want ethnic groups to have the power to protect their valuable local resources.

- UN action to protect Rohingya has been ineffective. The UN security council has resisted pressure to refer the Burmese government to the International Criminal Court because they expect that the referral would be vetoed.

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DATE OF NEXT MEETING 20 AUGUST      Minutes: Celia      Teas: David