



# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## Bromley & Orpington Group

### Summer 2018 Newsletter



**COME TO OUR NEXT MEETINGS**  
*No meeting in August*  
**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September**      **Speaker – Tilly Lavenas ‘Mexico: Human Rights in Crisis’**

Our thanks to Gerald Wiley of Bromley for sponsoring this month’s Newsletter

**Speaker: ‘Mexico: Human Rights in Crisis’**  
**Tilly Lavenas, AI Country Co-ordinator**  
**Tuesday 11 September 2018**  
**ALL WELCOME**

#### Supporting Transgender Rights in Finland.



We were delighted to welcome **Richard Kotter** to the meeting. He spoke about the troubling case of **Sakris Kupila** who was a teenager when he realised his birth gender didn’t express who he is. Sakris has faced abuse, harassment and threats in Finland because of his public campaign to get the law around transgender issues changed, forcing him to give up his studies as a medical student. In Finland, to have his gender legally recognised, he is required to be forcibly sterilized. Transgender people face intimidation and threats in many countries, but the law was successfully changed in Norway so that

forced sterilization is no longer required and the same is true in France. In the UK the government is consulting in a change in the law that will make gender transfer easier. Over 350,000 people have joined the Amnesty campaign in support of Sakris and as a result, he is now safer and has been able to resume his studies. The law remains oppressive in Finland for transgender people, but Amnesty is hopeful the international campaign will promote progressive change.

#### Group Finance

Balance brought forward	£446.69
Income	£765.82
Expenditure	£59.96
Balance at 10 <sup>th</sup> July	<b>£1,152.55</b>
<b>CHANGE</b>	<b>£705.86</b>

Income included donations to the Chair’s Appeal of £325 and proceeds from the **Amnesty Quiz Night** of £420.82. Our first very successful Amnesty Quiz Night saw around 40-45 people vie for the title of cleverest table (although the editor requested a steward’s enquiry to the answer of one question!), and raised over £420 altogether from entry fees, raffle ticket sales and refreshments. A great evening was had by all and our very grateful thanks go to Vivienne and Margaret for organising the event.



The annual **Greetings Card Campaign** ‘Write for Rights’ is one of the highlights of the campaigning year. We now know that the 2017 campaign generated 5,500,000 individual actions worldwide, with positive change seen in **7 out of 10** of the cases featured. We are proud to be one of more than

200 Amnesty groups campaigning on behalf of the 10 individuals world-wide. We know we make a difference: Thank you for taking part in this act of solidarity!

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Bromley Little Theatre**  
**In support of Amnesty International presents**  
**“CHARLES III”**

**By Mike Bartlett**

“Sometime in the future Charles III is on the throne and facing a constitutional crisis as he refuses to sign in to law a Bill restricting the freedom of the press. Relevant, thought provoking and utterly magnificent. This award winning play is not to be missed.

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October at 7.45pm (see flyer)**  
**Tickets £12 from David Howkins 01689 823793**

**Good News:**



**Liu Xia**, the widow of Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo was unexpectedly released in early July around the anniversary of her husband’s death and allowed to travel to Germany. Liu Xia had spent nearly eight years under house arrest in Beijing, without charge after her husband was awarded the Nobel peace prize in absentia. He was jailed in 2009 for his part in writing a political manifesto, Charter 08, calling for peaceful political reform and the end of one-party rule. Liu, who we were proud to have as our Prisoner Action File, died in

2017 of liver cancer after being denied permission to leave the country for medical treatment. Liu Xia herself was never charged with any crime but she was restricted to her Beijing apartment, where she was kept virtually incommunicado and under heavy surveillance. She battled severe depression and threatened to kill herself earlier this year, so news of her surprise release was greeted with joy by friends and activists.

**Supporting the BRAVE:**



As part of Amnesty’s **BRAVE Campaign**, we wrote to our MPs calling for the increased recognition and protection of Human Rights Defenders (HRD’s) worldwide. This campaign is in recognition of the shocking increase in attacks, intimidation and killings of those on the frontline defending Human Rights. 2017 was the deadliest year yet with over 300 HRD’s killed according to the organisation Frontline Defenders. Amnesty considers this to be a global crisis and believe the UK Government must respond with renewed efforts to ensure HRDs all over the world receive support consistently from the UK by offering strong and effective Ministerial leadership

**Save the Date: Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October – open meeting with Bob Neill MP talking about his human rights work as a barrister and Parliamentarian: The Town Church, 2 Ethelbert Road, Bromley 10.30-12.30pm. Talk and refreshments.**

**Present on 10<sup>th</sup> July:** Neville White, Vivian Glanz, David Howkins, Gladys Edmonds, Wendy Simmons, Waltraut Gilchrist, Margaret Coppard, Peter Martin and Vivienne Andrews. **Apologies:** Patsy Paine, Ted Burke and Rene Eastwood.

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

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