

# Newsletter: October 2018

## Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group



<b>Dates for your diary</b>	<b>Nov-Dec: Write for Rights greetings card campaign – details soon</b> <b>08/12/2018 10:00 - 12:00 Write for Rights card-signing, Cathedral Green, Chichester</b> <b>10/12/2018 19:30 - 21:00 celebration of 70th anniversary of the UDHR; committee meeting, Friends Meeting House, Chichester</b> <b>20/03/2019 19:30: Group AGM, Friends' Meeting House, Chichester</b>
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Dear writers,

Congratulations to our ex-Treasurer, Colin WHITE, who is getting married in November. Thanks to all those who came to the "Live Better Together" events and to Margaret Robertson's letter-writing evening on 10/10.

### Local events

I hope to send the Write for Rights details with the next newsletter. We shall also be sending cards from our CATHEDRAL GREEN TABLE on SATURDAY 8/12. We start at 10 am and go on until noon or until all cards are signed and put on our Christmas tree, ready for sending. Contact me on (01243) 823016 to volunteer.

The following MONDAY 10/12 is the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the foundation of Amnesty's work. This calls for a cake, which we hope to cut at a meeting, 7.30 onwards, at the Upper Room of the Friends' Meeting House, Priory Road, Chichester; we'll have a committee meeting afterwards.

### Other events

- 10/11/2018, 18:00 **In praise of non-Remembrance: How should we remember and what we should forget in the commemoration of war?** Lecture by Simon Keyes, Professor of Reconciliation and Peacebuilding, University of Winchester. Come for tea with the Quakers from 5.15pm before the lecture at the Friends Meeting House, Chichester, PO19 1NX, <http://chichesterquakers.org.uk>
- 10/11/2018, 19:15. **Quiz Night**, Horsham Amnesty at Trinity Church Hall, Rushams Road, Horsham. Enquiries to [Horsham.Amnesty@outlook.com](mailto:Horsham.Amnesty@outlook.com)
- Until 10/12/2018 **Whisper Her a Poem: Poetry-fest for Azza Soliman**, Amnesty Cambridge City Group. Azza Soliman is a strong woman who, at great personal cost, is making a difference for many women in Egypt and beyond. She is an inspiration to many, and what better way to capture that inspiration than in a poem, dedicated to her, standing in solidarity with her? The poetry-fest for Azza was launched on 13 September and concludes with an event on 10 December, Human Rights Day. Submit poems here: <https://form.jotformeu.com/82247704515355> and, once approved, will be sent to Azza, published on the group's social media channels and may also be chosen to be read out. Details of the poetry-fest can be found online here: [www.amnesty.org.uk/cambridge](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/cambridge)
- 29/11 Women's Human Rights Defenders Day
- 12/12 BRAVE Campaign for Human Rights Defenders – contact me
- There are two vacancies on UK AMNESTY'S Board – contact me

Carry on writing!

*Bob Dewick, Amnesty*

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### Amnesty action: campaigns & letter-writing

#### **EGYPT URGENT ACTION : AMAL FATHY Update 1**

##### ***Update from Margaret Robertson:***

**Please take urgent action on behalf of Amal Fathy before 14 November 2018**

##### **Who is she?**

Amal Fathy is a victim of sexual harassment who was arrested after posting a video on her Facebook page in which she shared details of her experience of sexual harassment and criticism of the government's failure to protect women

##### **What are the new charges against her?**

She was originally charged with 'spreading false news', 'possession of indecent material' and 'use of insulting language'

**She now faces new charges of 'belonging to a terrorist group', 'broadcasting ideas calling for terrorist acts' and 'publishing false news.'**

##### **What is her current situation**

**On 29 September 2018 she was sentenced to 2 years in prison and fined 10,000 Egyptian pounds**

**The first appeal hearings against her sentence will be held on 25 November 2018**

**On 14 October the State Security Prosecutor will decide whether to renew her pre-trial detention for a further 15 days**

##### **What can you do?**

##### **Please write to the authorities named below to :**

- Urge them to release her immediately and unconditionally as she is a prisoner of conscience, arrested solely for peacefully expressing her opinions;
- Call upon them to recognise the legitimacy of human rights defenders and to allow them to carry out their activities without fear of reprisal as set out in 1998 UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders

##### **Public Prosecutor**

Nabil Sadek, Office of the Public Prosecutor, Dar al-Qada al-Ali, Down Town Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt (Dear Counsellor)

##### **President**

Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, Office of the President, Al Ittihadia Palace, Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt, email: [p.spokesman@op.gov.eg](mailto:p.spokesman@op.gov.eg) (**Your Excellency**)

##### **Printed copies to :**

##### **Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Human Rights**

Ahmed Ihab Gamal-Eldin, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Corniche el-Nile, Cairo, Egypt, Email: [contact.us@mfa.gov.eg](mailto:contact.us@mfa.gov.eg)

**His Excellency Mr Nasser Ahmed Kamel Ali**, Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 26 South Street, London W1K 1DW

### **Action: Join the UK's Biggest Family Photo Album**

##### ***Update from Kath Shakespeare:***

Family photos can capture wonderful moments of love and togetherness - the first day at school, a holiday snap, or a shared family meal. But for refugees separated from their families by unfair UK rules, these photos are often their most cherished possession. The Home Secretary Sajid Javid could change these rules and make a lasting difference to refugees in the UK.

##### **What you can do:**

Amnesty is creating the UK's biggest collection of real family photos, to show the Home Secretary that the UK believes in keeping families together. Amnesty need as many photos as possible so that he can't ignore us - that's where you come in!

Submit a photo of your family on the Amnesty website - it'll be added to a giant album to be displayed at Parliament in October. It will also be added to an online digital version of the photo album, so you'll be able to see your action online.

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/uk-biggest-family-photo-album>

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### **BRAVE CAMPAIGN – Stand Up for the Human Rights Defenders (HRDs)**

**Update from Margaret Robertson:**

**2018 is the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United Nations Human Rights Defenders Declaration**

Yet sadly in **2017** there was an unprecedented surge in attacks, arrests, harassment and even killings of human rights defenders throughout the world. **Over 300 human rights defenders paid with their lives for courageously defending victims of human rights violations, 57 died in Brazil alone.**

**Amnesty's Brave campaign** aims to call upon the UK Government to prioritise its work in support of human rights defenders by developing a coherent strategy involving ;

- Ministerial leadership
- High priority contact with relevant Embassies and High Commissions
- Providing significant funding
- Focusing on HRDs facing particular challenges e.g. women HRDs

**Please help by calling upon your local MP or writing directly to the Foreign Secretary to call for action.**

You might like to include discussion of

- the alarming scale of attacks on HRDs throughout the world
- Amnesty International's *Brave* Campaign aims
- specific concerns for women Human Rights Defenders such as **Azza Soliman** (see briefing sheet)
- a call for the UK government to develop a strategy to support HRDs
- MPs' participation in Parliamentary debates on HRDs in November

**Write to your MP / Foreign Secretary** at House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

- Nick Gibb (MP Bognor and Littlehampton)
- Nick Herbert (MP Arundel and South Downs)
- Gillian Keegan (MP Chichester)
- The Rt. Hon Jeremy Hunt (Foreign Secretary)

#### **AZZA SOLIMAN : Briefing Sheet**

**Azza Soliman, Egyptian lawyer and human rights defender**

**Every day, Azza Soliman risks her own safety and freedom to defend survivors of abuse in Egypt.**

Azza bravely speaks out for victims of torture, arbitrary detention, domestic abuse, and rape. She co-founded the centre for Egyptian women's legal assistance and later Lawyers for Justice and Peace to give much-needed legal aid, support, and literacy lessons for women in poverty and survivors of abuse.

Because of their courageous and selfless work, Azza and other Egyptian Human Rights Defenders have been labelled as spies and national security threats. They have been targeted with smear campaigns and government surveillance - and security forces and pro-government media constantly harass them. Many of them face up to life in prison, as a result of the politically motivated court case known as 'Case 173'.

Recently, Azza was arrested and interrogated. She now faces charges such as slandering Egypt's image by claiming that women in the country face rape. She has been banned from travel, her assets have been frozen - and she could face time in prison.

**You can help Azza Soliman**

- by writing to your MP as part of the Brave Campaign to support Human Rights Defenders
- by signing the petition at [www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/brave/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/brave/)



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