

Human Rights Under Threat - Fighting Back

Amnesty International **North West Conference 2019**

Saturday March 2nd
10 am – 4 pm

Brownhill United Reform Church, Brownhill Road, Blackburn, BB1 9QY.



Conference Papers

LOCATION

Address: Brownhill United Reform Church, Brownhill Road, Blackburn, BB1 9QY

Brownhill United Reform Church is located to the north of Blackburn in the district of Brownhill just off the A666

Limited parking is available at the church, please arrange to car share if possible. If you have to park on surrounding roads, please do so respectfully.

The nearest train station is the Ramsgreave and Wilpshire Railway station which is just a few minutes' walk from the venue. The Ramsgreave and Wilpshire station is on the Manchester Victoria - Clitheroe route. The 8:41am departure from Victoria arrives at Ramsgreave at 9:39am with no need to change trains. There is also a station in the centre of Blackburn, but this will necessitate a taxi or bus journey (No 22).

The church is on the Number 22 Clitheroe to Blackburn bus route – Stop Bulls Head.

TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY

9.00 onwards	Registration (+tea/coffee)
10.00	Welcome - Julie Bullough, NW Regional Representative
10.15	<p>Panel Discussion Chaired by Tom Chigbo, AIUK Board Member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Human Rights in the UK: Scott Dawes, Government & Political Relations Manager – Women's Rights: Valerie Wise, local politician and activist – Refugee Rights: Julia Savage, Asylum Matters
11.45	<p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Take part in a photo action in support of the Stanstead 15
12.30	Lunch / Stalls / Networking
13.30	<p>Tom Chigbo and Hugh Sandeman, AIUK Board Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What are the current important issues for Amnesty activists
14.00	<p>Workshops – Please sign up at registration desk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Destination Occupation: Tourism and Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: led by Garry Ettle, Palestine Country Coordinator. – Death Penalty: led by Rhiannon Griffiths from the AIUK Death Penalty Project – Human rights in the UK: led by Sini Rinne-Kerridge, NCVO Charities Evaluation Services – Where next for Syrians: led by Haytham Alhamwi from Rethink Rebuild and Ellis Brooks, Country Coordinator.
15.00	<p>Keynote speech</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sergei Nikitin, ex director AI Moscow, will talk about his experiences of representing AI in a hostile environment.
3.45	Closing remarks and depart

Workshops

After lunch there will be 4 workshops running in parallel. You will need to sign up at the registration desk when you arrive. It would be helpful if you could have a read of the workshop outlines and decide which one you want to go to beforehand. Please be aware that spaces for each workshop will be limited so be prepared to swap to a second choice if necessary.

Destination Occupation: Tourism and Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: led by Garry Ettle, Palestine Country Coordinator

This workshop will cover:

- Israeli Occupied Palestinian Territories (IOPT) summary
- Settlements (their impact)
- Occupation - 50 years (settlement goods).
- Destination Occupation (ill-advised travel)

Death Penalty: led by Rhiannon Griffiths, Death Penalty Project

While the world is increasingly rejecting the brutality inherent in the death penalty, there are still thousands of people at risk of execution. The Anti-Death Penalty Project is an activist run group campaigning against the practice, raising awareness and fighting for individuals on death row. Come and learn about the group, how Amnesty is working to abolish capital punishment, and how you can be a part of it.

Human Rights in the UK: led by Sini Rinne-Kerridge, NCVO Charities Evaluation Services

The National Council for Voluntary organisations (NCVO) has been commissioned to work with Amnesty International UK to facilitate a review of human rights within the UK. This is part of a wide consultation at all levels within Amnesty in order lay the foundations for a strategy on human rights in the UK over the long-term. This session will be active, participatory and about your priorities for taking action.

Where next for Syrians: led by Haytham Alhamwi from Rethink Rebuild and Ellis Brooks, Syria Country Coordinator

This interactive workshop will both reflect on the crisis in Syria to date and look at new ways to support human rights. We will:

- Take action for the tens of thousands of victims of enforced disappearance.
- Is it time for Syria's 5.6 million refugees to return?
- Share the launch of the new campaign "We want seats at the table" supporting women's participation

Stalls

- Country Co-ordinators and actions
- School Speakers and Trainers
- Death Penalty Action
- LGBTI network
- Fundraising/AI leaflets
- North West Groups

SPEAKERS

Scott Dawes, Government & Political Relations Manager, AIUK.

As one of Amnesty's Government and Political Relations Managers, Scott leads on providing political analysis and insights in the Human Rights in UK programme and develops influencing strategies for priority campaigns. Prior to this, he has worked in politics and public affairs at Islamic Relief UK, the housing and homelessness charity Shelter and as a Parliamentary Researcher for an MP at Westminster.

Valerie Wise, local politician and activist

Valerie Wise was an elected member of the Greater London Council and chaired the first women's committee in the UK. She was an elected member of Preston Council and was leader of the Council for 18 months. Valerie was chief executive of a local domestic violence charity for many years and now works as a manager for a national charity.

Julia Savage, Asylum Matters

Asylum Matters works in partnership locally and nationally to improve the lives of refugees and people seeking asylum through social and political change. Julia works as Campaigns Project Manager for Asylum Matters across the North West and carries out research on behalf of the team. She has previously held posts campaigning alongside people in the asylum system within the North West and in Manchester and has also held various other roles connected to the enforcement and realisation of human rights, in the UK and abroad.

Tom Chigbo: AIUK Board Member

Tom was elected to the Board in 2017 and Chair's the Activism Sub Committee. He has been a member of Amnesty since 2006 and has been actively involved as a fundraiser in London, student group member at Cambridge University and local group member in Leeds. Tom is a Community Organiser with Citizens UK, a national charity uniting over 300 faith, education and civil society organisations for social justice. He joined the Board to help Amnesty strengthen our local campaigning and support local groups to build more active participation from members.

Hugh Sandeman: AIUK Board Member

Hugh Sandeman was elected to the Board of AIUK in 2018. He has been a member of the Kingston Amnesty Group since 1999, and a country coordinator since 2009 - initially for Algeria and Libya, then for the past three years as coordinator for Egypt. In 2013-2016, Hugh was chair of the AIUK country coordinators forum, and is also a schools' speaker for Amnesty.

Garry Ettle, Palestine Country Coordinator

Gary has been an Amnesty local Group member for around thirty years and the country coordinator for Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories for around 15.

Rhiannon Griffiths, Death Penalty Project

Rhiannon is currently working towards a PhD in international human rights law at the University of York. Alongside this, she is the Japan Country Coordinator and a Research Officer for the Anti-Death Penalty Project with Amnesty International UK.

Sini Rinne-Kerridge, Senior Consultant, NCVO Charities Evaluation Services

Sini is an experienced facilitator and trainer. She has worked with a wide range of organisations both in NCVO and in her previous evaluation consultancy and research role. She has an extensive track record of undertaking strategic reviews and impact assessments of advocacy

and public campaigns on international development and domestic policy, focusing on a wide range of areas including sustainable development, human rights, equalities, and climate change.

Haytham Alhamwi, Rethink Rebuild Society

Dr. Haytham Alhamwi graduated from the University of Damascus' Medical School in 1999. He was detained in Syria as a political prisoner from 2003 to 2005 and came to Manchester in 2007 to do his PhD which he completed in 2012. Upon graduation, he helped to establish Rethink Rebuild Society as a voice of the Syrian community of Manchester and currently serves as its Manager.

Ellis Brooks, Syria Country Coordinator

Ellis Brooks is Country Coordinator for Syria with Amnesty International UK. His day job is in the field of peace education, based in London. He first became involved in Amnesty in 2003 when he helped found the student group at Aberystwyth University.

Sergei Nikitin, Ex Director of Moscow Office of Amnesty International

Sergei Nikitin was born in Gomel, USSR in 1957. He studied semiconductor physics at the Leningrad Polytechnic Institute and worked at scientific research institutes in Leningrad and Gatchina. Trying to live adventurously, Sergei had many occupations, some scientific, and others artistic or humanitarian. He worked as a painter-decorator for a Leningrad Restoring Company in museums and old Russian estates. He learned English through the Beatles' songs. Sergei has been involved in historical research work on "Quakers and Russia" since 1996. In 1999, he started his job for an international Quaker organisation Friends House Moscow as a director of the office. From 2003 he worked as the Head of Amnesty International representative office in Russia for 14 years. In June 2017 Sergei retired and moved with his family to High Peak, where he lives with his wife Jenny and their 10-year-old son, Ivan.

Conference Working Party

Julie Bullough (Regional Representative and Fylde Coast Group), Jennifer Jaynes (Fylde Coast Group), Irene Ryan (Blackburn Group), Tinta Ali (Blackburn Group), Anne Walker (Manchester Group), Deborah Wood (Fylde Coast Group).