

Newsletter: July/August 2019

Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group



Dates for your diary	Sat 14/09/2019 Lunch and meeting in Horsham: Egypt campaign Sat 28/09/2019 Embassy Crawl: London Sat 19/10/2019 Arias and Songs for Amnesty: The Regis School of Music, Bognor Regis Sat 07/12/2019 Cards at the Cathedral Green, Chichester: Write for Rights campaign
-----------------------------	--

Dear writers

Thanks to Peter James for organising the PUMBLE, and booking better weather for it than we had before or after.

Local events

Alas, the planned Bognor Birdman and Pride March has been postponed to next year – we were hoping to have an Amnesty publicity table at the latter. Brighton & Hove Group are taking part as usual in their Pride event – meeting at Hove Lawns on **Saturday 03/08/2019**, ring 01273 689983 for details.

Further ahead, we have another Concert for Amnesty at the REGIS SCHOOL OF MUSIC, Bognor, on **Saturday 19/10/2019** at 7.30 pm, featuring Rebecca Grove, Stephanie Peat and Chris Coote. Rehearsals are going well. As in previous years, we will have free entry and hope for donations. Contact me for details (01243) 823016; more in the next newsletter.

Other events

Lunch and meeting in Horsham, **Saturday 14/09/2019**: please see overleaf

Lambeth Group are planning an Embassy Crawl in London on **Saturday 28/09/2019**. The theme this year is “Laws Designed to Silence”, and eight embassies will be targeted, with letters handed in at each – including one for Azza Soliman to the Egyptians. The crawl starts at 11 am at the Philippines Embassy near Trafalgar Square. More details in the next newsletter; please contact Margaret Robertson on mn_robertson@hotmail.com or (01243) 552113 if you would like to join Margaret and Kath representing our Group on the Embassy Crawl.

Carry on writing!

Bob Dewick, Amnesty

If you no longer wish to receive information about this Group, please reply to this newsletter with a request to **Unsubscribe**.

Please let us know if there have been any changes in your personal information

For more information about this Group, go to: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/bognor-chichester-and-district>

Newsletter: July/August 2019

Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group



Amnesty action: campaigns & letter-writing

Egypt: Latest News from campaign co-ordinator, Margaret Robertson:

Lunch in Horsham, Saturday 14 September 2019

Thanks very much to all of you who have supported the Egypt campaign in general, and the case of Azza Soliman in particular, over the past months. You will be very pleased to hear that we are hoping to get together with colleagues in the Horsham and Haywards Heath groups in September for a joint meeting to share ideas and experiences and to cooperate on planning future events. Horsham Group have very kindly invited us all to a lunch and joint meeting at 1 pm on **Saturday, 14 September 2019** at Friends Meeting House, Worthing Road, Horsham RH12 1SL so I hope as many people as possible will come along. Please contact me (01243 552113) or at mn_robertson@hotmail.com if you are interested or would like further details. It has been suggested that we might plan a joint visit to the Egyptian Embassy to protest against the current situation later in the year. If you can't make the event on 14 September but would like to get involved in future activities, please let me know. I'll look forward to hearing from you.

Action Cards

Thanks very much to all of you who responded to the call to action in the last newsletter against the widespread and arbitrary use of the death penalty in Egypt to suppress opposition. If you haven't yet taken part, there are still action cards available on this issue and the case of **Aser Mohamed** who was arrested two years ago at the age of 14 and is facing 15 years in jail after being tortured into 'confessing' to crimes he did not commit. Please contact me if you would like cards or further information at mn_robertson@hotmail.com

Action: Iran - Lawyer sentenced to over 29 years in prison

Human rights lawyer Amirsalar Davoudi has been sentenced to 29 years and three months in prison and 111 lashes, on charges stemming from his human rights work. He was interrogated in detention without a lawyer present and was convicted and sentenced in his absence. Under Iran's sentencing guidelines, he is required to serve 15 years of this sentence. He is a prisoner of conscience.

Amirsalar Davoudi is a prominent human rights lawyer who has represented many prisoners of conscience including human rights defenders, other civil society activists and members of ethnic and religious minorities. He was the lawyer of Iranian Kurdish woman Zeynab Jalalian, who was sentenced to death in early 2009 for the charge of "enmity against God" (moharebeh) after a grossly unfair trial. He played an instrumental role in the subsequent commutation of her death sentence; and has also persistently advocated for Zeynab Jalalian's access to medical care.

His imprisonment falls into a pattern in which the Iranian authorities take increasingly repressive measures against human rights lawyers to silence them and stop them carrying out their legitimate work.

What you can do:

Please write before **16 August**, in your own words or using the template letter below, to:

- **Please note that the best way to reach the Head of the Judiciary is to send it via Iran's diplomatic mission in Geneva and/or its UK embassy: we do not have an email address in Iran and it is very difficult to reach Iran via post.**
- **Head of the Judiciary:** Ebrahim Raisi, c/o Permanent Mission of Iran to the UN, Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28, 1209 Geneva, Switzerland
- Copy to: HIS EXCELLENCY Hamid Baedinejad, Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 16 Princes Gate, London SW7 1PT, Email: iranemb.lon@mfa.gov.ir

If you no longer wish to receive information about this Group, please reply to this newsletter with a request to **Unsubscribe**.

Please let us know if there have been any changes in your personal information

For more information about this Group, go to: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/bognor-chichester-and-district>

Newsletter: July/August 2019

Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group



Dear Mr Raisi,

Amirsala Davoudi

On 20 November 2018, human rights lawyer **Amirsalar Davoudi** was arrested by agents from the intelligence unit of the judiciary at his place of work in Tehran. The agents searched his office and home, confiscating documents and personal belongings before transferring him to section 241 of Tehran's Evin prison, which is run by the intelligence unit of the judiciary. Here, he was held for several months in solitary confinement, during which he was frequently interrogated without a lawyer present, before being moved to a cell with other prisoners. He was moved to section 7 of the prison on 2 June 2019. Since his arrest, he has been allowed limited contact with his family through infrequent visits and telephone calls. He has been permitted only two visits with his lawyer.

Amirsalar Davoudi was formally informed of his charges during the second half of January 2019. Subsequently, on 28 May 2019, he learned that branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran had convicted him, in his absence, on six charges and sentenced him to a total of 29 years and three months in prison and 111 lashes. The charges included "insulting the Supreme Leader", "spreading propaganda against the system" and "forming a group with the purpose of disrupting national security" in relation to his human rights work. They related to media interviews he had given and posts he had uploaded to a channel he runs on the mobile messaging app Telegram, which raised concerns about the authorities' treatment of lawyers and, more generally, the human rights situation in Iran. Under Iran's sentencing guidelines, he has to serve the lengthiest single sentence imposed for the most serious charge, which in his case is 15 years for the charge of "forming a group with the purpose of disrupting national security".

Amirsalar Davoudi is planning to submit a request for a judicial review of his case to the Supreme Court.

I urge you to release Amirsalar Davoudi immediately and unconditionally as he is a prisoner of conscience, jailed solely for his human rights work. Pending his release, ensure that he has regular contact with his family and a lawyer of his choosing. Please ensure that Iran's justice system is not misused to target or harass human rights lawyers and refrain from bringing criminal charges or any other proceedings against them that stem solely from the peaceful exercise of their rights.

Yours sincerely,

Good news Update

Northern Ireland

On 9 July, MPs voted to legalise same-sex marriage and extend access to abortion to Northern Ireland. These two historic wins are thanks to everyone like you, who signed Amnesty's petitions or emailed your MPs, who fought to get here. Thank you for joining us. This is what a powerful movement can achieve.

The Government will now have to extend marriage equality to Northern Ireland and legislate for abortion by 21 October, unless the devolved government at Stormont is restored – having collapsed in January 2017.

UK: arms to Saudi Arabia ruling welcomed as 'rare piece of good news for Yemen'

 (action in Newsletter January 2019)

On 20 June, the Court of Appeal announced that it had found the UK Government's decision to continue exporting weapons to Saudi Arabia as unlawful. This ruling followed a legal challenge brought by Campaign Against the Arms Trade, which was joined by Amnesty, HRW and Rights Watch UK.

This is the first time a UK court has acknowledged the risks of continued arms sales to Saudi Arabia. It is a great campaign win and a major step towards preventing further bloodshed in Yemen, but our work must go on. Amnesty continues to call for the immediate suspension of all arms transfers to all parties to the conflict for use in Yemen, and we will keep you posted on the campaign's next steps.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/uk-arms-saudi-arabia-ruling-welcomed-rare-piece-good-news-yemen>

If you no longer wish to receive information about this Group, please reply to this newsletter with a request to **Unsubscribe**.

Please let us know if there have been any changes in your personal information

For more information about this Group, go to: <https://>

www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/bognor-chichester-and-district