



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Bromley & Orpington Group

April 2019 Newsletter



COME TO OUR NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 9 April

Speaker – FGM (postponed from January)

Tuesday 14 May

Speaker – Humphrey Pring - Sevenoaks Refugee Group

Tuesday 9 June

Campaign Meeting

Our thanks to Gladys Edmonds of West Wickham, for sponsoring this month's Newsletter

Speaker: Gill Martin

“FGM: Mission with a Vision”

Gill will talk about her experience of working with a safe-house in Kenya
for women escaping forced genital mutilation and forced marriage

Tuesday 9th April at 7.30pm

++++ There will be a small sale of crafts made by the women ++++

Monthly Actions

We took action in response to the murder of an environmentalist and Human Rights Defender, **Samir Flores Soberanes**, who was killed in February as he attempted to stop a geo-thermal project in Mexico. He had suffered intimidation and beatings before being shot last year. No one has been brought to justice and we wrote to the Mexican President calling for an urgent investigation and for there to be no impunity for his killers. In another case, we wrote to the Egyptian authorities in solidarity with Italy three years after the murder of **Giulio Regeni**, an Italian student who was found mutilated in February 2016. To begin with the Egyptian authorities insisted his death was a suicide despite independent verification that his injuries were consistent with torture. His case shines a light on the shocking increase in human rights violations in Egypt in recent years for which there have been few convictions. No-one has so far been convicted for Giulio's murder. In addition to writing to the Egyptian authorities, we agreed to send a letter of solidarity to the Italian Embassy in London.

Amnesty Social

Around 10 of us gathered on March 6th at Café Medi in Orpington for our annual Amnesty social. We have been gathering for an annual social evening of food and conversation since the late 1980s – although the venue has moved around the borough several times.

California Death Penalty Moratorium

Governor Newsom of California has announced a moratorium on the death penalty for the duration of his time in office. Although the State has not carried out an execution since 2006, it has the largest number of death row inmates in the whole of the United States; the moratorium immediately protects the 737 men and women, or 1 in 4 of all those so convicted. The number of executions carried out in the USA has steadily fallen in recent years from a recent high of 98 executions carried out in 1998, to just 25 in 2018, carried out in 8 States. This is a remarkable turnaround given 30 States remain 'death penalty' jurisdictions versus 20 that are abolitionist. All but two of the 25 executions were carried out by lethal injection, with the two (in Tennessee) by electrocution. The longest time spent on death row by a US inmate is now 38 years.

Group Finance

Balance brought forward	£1,439.68
Income	£22.00
Expenditure	£900.00
Balance at 12th March	£561.68
CHANGE	(£878.00)

We received one donation of £20.00. Expenditure of £900.00 was the agreed first donation to Amnesty, bringing our 2019 total to £972.00. Please refer to the AGM Report for a full note of income and expenditure in 2018, and our approved budget for 2019.

SAVE THE DATE:
BROMLEY LITTLE THEATRE CHARITY PREVIEW
"We Happy Few"
by Imogen Stubbs
On the 75th anniversary of D-Day a big hearted celebration of life on the Home Front!
Thursday 6th June 2019 at 7.45pm
Tickets £12
Tickets available from David Howkins on 01689 823793

After 33 years with the Group and 27 years as Chair, Neville has announced he will stand down at the 2020 AGM. This will mark only the third time the Group has changed Chair since its foundation in 1962!

Reporters at Risk

The awful murder of Washington Post journalist **Jamal Khashoggi** in 2018 on what appears to have been the orders of senior Saudi Arabian figures shocked the world and – temporarily – put Saudi Arabia's poor human rights record in the spotlight. It also reminds us that the best type of journalism – news reportage – remains an occupation subject to persecution and violence. In 2018, 54 news reporters were killed in theatres of conflict or whilst pursuing their occupation. This continues a shocking trend of reporters being murdered and disappeared – 47 in 2017, 50 in 2016, 73 in 2015 and 61 in 2014. Closer to home – the Slovakian elections for President have been dominated by the murder of the young journalist **Jan Kruciak** and his fiancée in February 2018. Jan was working for Aktuala investigating tax fraud close to the ruling party. At the time of writing an uncontested anti-corruption candidate won a commanding victory in the first ballot for President.

Postage Rates: UK Postage goes up on 25th March; a 10g overseas letter (all destinations) will be **£1.35**, whilst letter post up to 20g will be **£1.35** for Europe and **£1.55** for the rest of the world. UK inland will be 70p First Class and 61p Second Class!

Present on 12th March: Neville White; Vivien Glanz; David Howkins; Peter Martin; Waltraut Gilchrist; Rindy Baaker; Patrick and Carolyn Nield; Vivienne Andrews, and Wendy Simmons. **Apologies:** Gladys Edmonds; Ted Burke and Margaret Coppard.

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

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