Truro and District Amnesty International Group

Minutes of **on-line** Meeting held on 13th May 2020

1. Present: Margaret George, Chris Ramsey, Carole Liesse, Wailim Wong, Shirley Sweeney, Hetty Tye, Karen Cooper.
2. Apologies: Melissa Ward, Georgie Wong.
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 Feb 2020: agreed. Because of Covid 19 pandemic, the April meeting did not take place, and all events mentioned in the March Minutes are either cancelled or postponed. Number 4, Melissa had agreed to take on keeping the website uptodate. She asked who is in charge at AIUK, as our website is no longer connected to the AIUK website. Chris agreed to look into this.
4. Treasurer’s report: Karen reported that we have £709.42 in the account. Our room booking at the Methodist church has been put on hold as we cannot foresee when we shall be able to get together physically.
5. Correspondence: all had been sent out to supporters by email.
6. General AI update: Chris raised a number of issues
7. Kate Allen has written to B Johnson to raise the danger of domestic violence which is particularly acute under lock-down, the problem of migrant and refugee communities having no access to services – they may be going underground for fear of attracting the attentions of the Home office - , and protection for key workers.
8. Since the retirement of Farshid the structure at AIUK has been chaotic and a successor has not been appointed. Naomi Westland is a key person; she is the Movement Building Manager. They are going to be appointing a Community organiser for Regional and National Teams.
9. The new Regional Rep is Cherry Bird from Minehead. She was previously the country co-ordinator for India. The Exeter group will run the Regional Conference.
10. Campaigns:

Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories: Chris reported. The IOPT newsletter has been sent out. There is a petition regarding Trip Adviser’s listing of West bank properties. Leif Abuzaid has had a travel ban imposed; there is a petition to the court and the outcome is awaited. Ubay Abadi is in administrative detention. A letter/email was to be sent. In E Jerusalem and the West Bank there is a problem with Coronavirus which is not being publicised. Of 12000 cases in Israel there have been 300 in the West Bank and 100 in East Jerusalem. The Israelis have closed down a coronavirus clinic in E Jerusalem. There has been a 6% increase in the number of children detained. Kate Allen visited Israel in February. The Palestinians are being squeezed out of their homes and land, and Netanyahu is going ahead with the plan to annexe more land on the West Bank.

Central America: Georgie had circulated the recent newsletter.

North Africa: Hetty had news from Egypt. The main action is on getting people released from prison because of the danger of the spread of the virus. She had a letter to sign for Aser Aziz who has been imprisoned since he was 14. Letters would be circulated by Margaret. Azza Soliman was due to have an appeal on 23rd April but this has been deferred till 18th June. She wants the return of her passport. Action cards are available, but difficult at present to get them signed. We discussed the fact that there are few women involved in public protests – this is due to the difficulty for women to become politically engaged and active

Shirley reported that she had seen on a TV programme an interview with the Ex-Minister of health in Mexico and also how in China some journalists who reported on Coronavirus were arrested and then killed.

1. Events:

All planned events have had to be postponed or cancelled, but we hope to get speakers for our monthly meetings which we shall continue on-line. For June it was suggested to ask Deborah Singer to speak on N Africa. Hetty agreed to contact her. Alternatively, Chris suggested Ulrike, the Central Europe organiser.

Karen suggested we could purchase films to show, for example Nae Pasaran or Muffi (a South African film). She will look into this.

1. We did a photo – action via a screen-shot calling for the release of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe
2. Next meeting: will be on **Wed 10 June** starting at 6.30, via the internet.