

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UNITED KINGDOM SECTION

## BOARD BALLOT

# ELECTIONS TO THE BOARD 2021-2024

- **Ballot notes**
- **Candidates' election statements**

Note: The candidate statements of up to 300 words are unedited

**Contesting five places on the Board:**

- |                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| • Dr Owen Collins | • Julia Pata       |
| • Ciara Garcha    | • Sen Raj          |
| • Pascale Hall    | • Jeevan Ravindran |
| • Tom Harrison    |                    |

The names of the candidates appear in alphabetical order by surname

- **Current Board members**

**VOTING ONLINE** will help us to reduce postage and processing costs.  
It is very quick and easy to do, and it is secure. Please consider voting online.

Please read the following notes before completing your ballot paper

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



# BALLOT NOTES

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## 1 THE BOARD

The Board is the senior committee of Amnesty International United Kingdom Section. It is made up of 15 members in total: 12 elected by the membership and three co-opted by the Board. Elected members of the Board serve normally for a three-year period of service and automatically retire. Provided they have not completed six consecutive years on the Board, those so retiring may stand again for election. The Company's Articles (38.1) require a minimum of 4 Board Members to retire each year. Where less than 4 Board Members have reached the end of their term of office Board Members either volunteer or are selected at random to retire. There are five places to be filled on the Board this year.

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## 2 RESERVED SEATS ON THE BOARD

Under Amnesty International United Kingdom Section's Articles, the 12 elected Board members should include seven reserved seats including:

- Two members nominated by local groups
- Two members nominated by one of the following network forums: Trade Union network, Rainbow network, Women's rights network, Student network and Children's rights network
- One member nominated as currently serving as a Country Coordinator
- One member aged 16 to 17 years on the declaration date
- One member aged 18 to 23 years on the declaration date

To meet the above quota, there are **four reserved seats** available this year:

- One member nominated by local groups
- Two members nominated by Networks
- One member aged 18 to 23 years on the declaration date

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## 3 NON-RESERVED SEATS ON THE BOARD

Under Amnesty International United Kingdom Section's Articles, the 12 elected Board members should include five non-reserved seats. To meet this quota, there is **one non-reserved seat** available this year.

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## 4 RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS

The following Board members will be retiring in 2021, vacating their seats: Hugh Sandeman (unreserved seat), Sen Raj (network seat) and Tom Harrison (network seat). There are also two further vacant seats: One unreserved seat that has been converted to a seat reserved for a member aged 18 to 23 years, and a local group seat which arises from Daren Nair's resignation from the Board in March 2021.

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## 5 USEFUL SKILLS

The Amnesty International United Kingdom Section's Nominations Sub-Committee supports the Board with the assessment of its skills and any particular needs that would improve its effectiveness overall including nominations and training.

Following its assessment, candidates with expertise and experience in the following areas are required:

- Finance
- Risk identification and management
- Human Resources
- Campaigning

The Board always welcomes candidates with experience of Amnesty activism, especially those who will contribute to our diversity. A wide knowledge base at Board level will enable us to continue to work effectively towards the achievement of our Strategic Plan and our human rights goals.

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## 6 THE BALLOT

### a Voting method

The election will be conducted using the Single Transferable Vote method (STV) which allows you to indicate your first, second, third, fourth and fifth preferences if you wish from the list of candidates.

### b Procedure

#### TO VOTE ONLINE

Please go to the following website: [www.amnesty.org.uk/boardballot](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/boardballot) and enter the Meeting ID: **149-041-016**. You will then be prompted to enter your **Voter Reference Number** and **PIN**.

#### TO VOTE BY POST

Using the enclosed form, vote by placing an X against the name of the candidate you most strongly support in column 1. You may then, if you so choose, enter an X in the 2nd column for your candidate

of second preference, an X in the 3rd column for your third preference, an X in the 4th column for your fourth preference and an X in the 5th column for your fifth preference. **You may select up to five preferences**, but do not vote for the same candidate more than once.

### c Deadline for voting

The completed ballot paper should be posted, using the envelope provided, in time for it to be received by the Independent Scrutineers no later than Thursday 17 June 2021.

### d Voter reference numbers

This serves only to confirm the authenticity of the ballot paper and will be used only by the independent scrutineers handling the count. Your vote is secret and will remain strictly confidential.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the Board election.

# CANDIDATES' ELECTION STATEMENTS

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## DR OWEN COLLINS

### Knowledge and experience

I bring 20yr of AIUK activism and a background in risk and financial management in the public and charitable sector. As Head of Fundraising and Development in a faith-based charity (turnover £6M), I understand that ethical fundraising is integral to good governance.

### Skills:

- Strategic Planning: voluntary governance roles in two charities – developing strategies/ managing teams
- Financial: current project management £1.2M
- Communication: honed by 20yr in higher education/voluntary sector, adept at engaging decision makers

Project Management: from capital redevelopment to emergency COVID-19 responses.

### Amnesty membership and experience

I joined Amnesty while in school; in the blink of 20yr I find I have been Chair/ Vice-chair of the Cardiff group for a decade. Under my leadership the group won AIUK's Human Rights Activism Award in 2019. I therefore understand the value and challenges of the grass-roots movement.

### Recent campaigning highlights:

- "Knit for Naz" initiative supporting Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe
- AGM resolution passed to end excessive cellular confinement in UK prisons
- Founding annual flagship "Stand Up in the Park" comedy festival

Time spent organising conferences, demonstrations, public debates and fundraising has inspired a new generation of activists in Cardiff. Having represented the views of AIUK in Wales, alongside other third-sector organisations, I'm ready for the next challenge.

### Election Manifesto

While the new Global Strategy (2021-2028) offers exciting opportunities, AIUK must not lose sight of founding principles. Alongside cheerleading local activism, I will guide implementation, mindful of:

- Resourcing local groups/networks appropriately
- Campaigning for prisoners of conscience/'core' activity
- Providing perspective/experience of a devolved nation

Professional expertise in fundraising, an under-represented skill on the Board, is also essential when charity finances have been rocked by COVID-19. A dyed-in-the-wool advocate for collective action, I want to provide a framework that enables everyone to campaign for human justice/freedom while meeting the challenges of sustaining income.

**Dr Collins is a nominee for a Local Group reserved seat, and an Unreserved seat. ■**

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## CIARA GARCHA

### Knowledge and experience

Sitting on the National Youth Strategy Youth Steering Group, I have considerable experience in strategic planning. For example I have: co-created the National Youth Strategy,

collaborating with AIUK staff, personally consulted over 120 young people and presented to the Board and Activism Subcommittee.

My activism is grounded in a long-standing desire to create a more inclusive and equal future. I assume a number of other activist and campaigning positions outside Amnesty, such as:

- Disabled Members' Officer at University of Oxford political group
- Oxford University Faculty Race Equality Action Group Member
- Writer on South Asian History and identity for Manchester Museum

### **Amnesty membership and experience**

Leading students in campaigning for human rights, I set up my school's Amnesty group aged 15. Currently, I am serving as the Campaign Coordinator for the Oxford University Amnesty Society. As a member of the National Youth Strategy Steering Group, I have co-created, researched, written and presented the National Youth Strategy. Following through with its implementation, I remain an active and vocal member of the Steering Group, committed to youth activism. As part of the National Youth Strategy consultations, I conducted Human Rights Education sessions for over 120 young people, highlighting the relevance of Human Rights in the classroom.

### **Election manifesto**

Events of the past few years have shown the power of young people when it comes to creating meaningful change.

I would like to help Amnesty work effectively for, and with, young people, harnessing their proven potential.

I am committed to making Amnesty a welcoming place, particularly for those from ethnic minority communities, who have limited engagement and representation in Amnesty. As a disabled and ethnic minority activist, I would be able to assist with the establishment of an Anti-racist Network and a Disabled Activists Network to ensure that Amnesty is relevant and accessible to all.

**Ciara is a nominee for a seat reserved for a member aged 18 – 23, a Network reserved seat and Unreserved seat. ■**

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## **PASCALE HALL**

### **Knowledge and experience**

Through being on the Student Action Network, I've learnt the importance of impactful large-scale campaigning and seen first-hand the vitality of Amnesty's grassroots movement. Through this, I learnt skills in communication, governance, adaptability (shifting to online activism) as well as the importance of teamwork to represent a wider network of activists. I've also worked frontline on sexual health rights (menstrual hygiene) with ICS Bangladesh, where I learnt project budgeting and handling risk.

### **Amnesty membership and experience**

I started volunteering at Books for Amnesty Brighton in 2017. Since then, my love for activism has grown. I joined the University of York student group and

## CANDIDATES' ELECTION STATEMENTS

was elected Vice-President in 2020, alongside concurrently representing students in the North-East on the Student Action Network. On StAN I worked alongside 7 other incredible activists to lead national campaigns, organise webinars, create resource packs and run the national Student Conference.

### **Election manifesto**

I am a big believer that organisational integrity should come from within the organisation. To ensure the longevity of Amnesty's mission, it must be as internally accountable and transparent as possible with its members. I would love to see Amnesty use their stature as an organisation to work with smaller NGO's and activist organisations, particularly to centre the voices of minority ethnic groups and indigenous communities. To tell stories that the mainstream media is silent on. I would also love to elevate the voices of youth movements within Amnesty – which I know are incredibly resourceful, creative, and responsive to ongoing human rights abuses.

Having volunteered at multiple levels of Amnesty, I know that at every membership level Amnesty activists are incredibly passionate and knowledgeable, and I'd love to even the playing field, ensuring members are more involved in central Amnesty campaigns as well as increasing connectivity between groups and networks at events outside of the formality of the national AGM.

**Pascale is a nominee for a seat reserved for a member aged 18 – 23, a Network reserved seat and Unreserved. ■**

### **TOM HARRISON**

#### **Knowledge and experience**

Board member since 2018.

Experience in key expertise areas:

- Risk – 25yrs business risk management, 10yrs risk identification and management on £m+ projects.
- Human Resources – 30yrs working with HR and ER professionals. 5yrs in Management Development. 15yrs of People Management.
- Campaigning – 20yrs personal participation on campaigns, as speaker, advocate and activist.
- Finance – 33yr career in finance. 30yrs financial governance of a trade union. Several accounting qualifications.

#### **Amnesty membership and experience**

In 1995 I supported my trade union to affiliate to AIUK and attended my first Trade Union Network Conference. Subsequently, I supported Amnesty speakers to attend 5 of my union's conferences. I became an individual member in 1997.

I've religiously attended National Conference/AGMs and an Extraordinary GM. I've chaired and acted as recorder on Working Parties and been a teller.

For 25 years, I actively promoted Amnesty within the Trade Union movement, taking campaigns to the Trades Union Congress, giving speeches and securing support. This contributed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between AIUK and the TUC.

#### **Election manifesto**

I joined the Section Board in 2018 after



30 years in trade union governance, having been elected President on 4 occasions, represented the union internationally and worked with Amnesty and TUC to build a stronger relationship. My 3 years on the Board have brought many new experiences and challenges; however, the fundamentals of governance are universal and with a clearer and deeper understanding of the organisation I'm keen to tackle another 3 years. I also lead the Board's Nominations Committee, which supports candidates to come forward for senior governance roles, overseeing support, selection and induction processes. I want to continue to further this work, which also includes recruitment of the organisation's director. It's this committee's job to make sure all recruitment is fair, legal and within the terms of our constitution, while ultimately strengthening our governance.

**Tom is a nominee for a Local Group reserved seat and an Unreserved seat. ■**

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## **JULIA PATA**

### **Knowledge and experience**

I am passionate about human rights, advocacy and accessibility; therefore, I founded and lead the Open Law Society at Queen Mary University. In Poland, I run an awareness campaign 'You Have the Right', work with the "New Wave of Activism" collective and hold protests against the abortion ban. Last year I worked as a Student Legal Advisor within the areas of Immigration and LGBTQ+ law. Currently, I am undertaking work experience at a law firm, working as a Student Support Worker with disabled students and participating

in the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women as a delegate.

### **Amnesty membership and experience**

I have been a member of Amnesty for almost 6 years – I started as an intern at the Moscow office, where I organised national protests against the 2018 World Cup, due to Russia's stance on LGBTQ+ rights. That same year, I became a Student Network Representative at AI UK and joined the Activism Sub-Committee. As a part of STAN, I hosted a workshop on human rights defenders at One Young World Conference and the Youth Summit in Parliament back in 2019. Currently, I am the co-president of the Amnesty International Society of Queen Mary University.

### **Election manifesto**

If elected as Board member, my goal is to push for more intersectional youth involvement across different areas of AI UK. There must be more leadership roles made for young people.

My main points of action will be increasing diversity and accessibility. I will ensure underrepresented activists are given a bigger platform and that their concerns are heard, especially BIPOC and disabled activists. Moreover, I want to better support immigrant activists by providing AI UK materials in different languages, such as Punjabi and Polish. I will also push for more online-based activism opportunities and better engagement with youth and student groups.

**Julia is a nominee for a seat reserved for a member aged 18 – 23, a Network reserved seat and Unreserved. ■**

## CANDIDATES' ELECTION STATEMENTS

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### SEN RAJ

#### Knowledge and experience

I'm a Lecturer in Law at Keele University. My research focuses on the human rights of people marginalised because of their race, gender and sexuality. I have extensive experience in campaign development and strong knowledge of good governance. I currently chair Amnesty UK's Campaigns and Impact Subcommittee and Law and Policy Group where I have steered AI UK's human rights policy and campaigning strategy. Prior to moving to the UK, I was on the board of Amnesty International Australia where I helped shape its previous strategic plan. Globally, I have represented both Amnesty Australia and Amnesty UK in discussions around the development of its strategic priorities for 2016-21 and 2022-30.

#### Amnesty membership and experience

I have been involved with Amnesty International for about 14 years. I started as a youth activist and refugee casework intern at Amnesty Australia. From there, I have served in a number of national and international activism/governance roles (in Australia): LGBTI spokesperson, chair of Diversity Steering Committee, board member, and delegate to the International Council Meeting. When I moved to England in 2017, I joined Amnesty UK and was elected to the Board in 2018. I'm currently in the Rainbow Network (committee member), Manchester Group (local member), Campaigns and Impact Subcommittee (chair), and Equality and Diversity Advisory Group (committee member).

### Election Manifesto

Amnesty International is a grassroots movement that seeks to prioritise anti-racism, democracy, equality, and safeguarding. My commitment to human rights coupled with my extensive experience of working in partnership with marginalised groups offers an important perspective as the Board cultivates the impact of the movement and addresses anti-racism work for the next strategic period. As someone connected to various minority communities, I am particularly passionate about engaging with our thriving networks and groups to strengthen consultation and to reach out to new communities to diversify Amnesty UK's human rights impact.

**Sen is a nominee for a Network reserved seat and an Unreserved seat. ■**

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### JEEVAN RAVINDRAN

#### Knowledge and experience

Campaigning is my strongest asset, as I have taken the initiative in much of my youth activism and led groups of young people. I've also managed a campaign budget and allocated funding where necessary. In my employment and student network roles, I've taken on administrative and planning responsibilities. In my work I've also encouraged people to look after themselves and their mental health first and foremost — that's the grounding of effective altruism.

#### Amnesty membership and experience

I've been involved with Amnesty since the age of 13, when I first joined the



youth group at my school. I became the group leader at 17 and facilitated our participation in Amnesty campaigns, ran awareness and theatre events, and produced a human rights journal. We were named one of the top 3 campaigning groups at the Amnesty Youth Awards. At Oxford University, I led the homelessness campaign and kickstarted the fight to repeal the 1824 Vagrancy Act, which was picked up in parliament by Layla Moran. I worked for Amnesty as a street fundraiser in 2018, becoming the highest-performing London fundraiser in July. I am a freelance human rights journalist and have written for publications from BBC World to ELLE on genocide in Sri Lanka, the far-right in the UK, and abortion access in Argentina.

### **Election manifesto**

As a young board member, I'm keen to make sure the voices of young people are heard at a directorial level. Bringing campaigners together at a time when we are limited by COVID-19 requires a rethink of our strategies and how campaigning can be most efficiently facilitated. I'd also like to get involved with student and regional groups and ask what they'd like to see more of from a board level. Making our management as inclusive and accessible as possible is really important to me, especially representation of marginalised groups and identities.

**Jeevan is a nominee for an Unreserved seat. ■**

# CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

The following are current elected and co-opted Board members.  
For more details, see [www.amnesty.org.uk/board](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/board)

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## EILIDH DOUGLAS

Eilidh is Chair of the Amnesty UK Section Board. She was previously Vice Chair from 2018-19. Before that, she was Chair of the Activism Subcommittee, tasked with overseeing the health, growth, and impact of Amnesty UK's grassroots activism. Eilidh is an Associate at international law firm CMS, specialising in dispute resolution in the energy sector. She also volunteers as a Supervising Solicitor at the Edinburgh Free Legal Advice Centre, provides pro bono advocacy for Shelter's Housing Law Service, and was Vice Chair of Equality Network, Scotland's national LGBTI equality and human rights charity. ■

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## SHARON LOVELL

Sharon is Vice Chair of the Board and has been an Amnesty member for over 20 years since undertaking a degree in youth and community studies at Birmingham University. She is currently a Director of one of the leading national advocacy charities that provides information, legal and advocacy representation to ensure some of the most vulnerable children, young people and adults have their rights upheld. She is experienced at campaigning for legislation changes to promote and protect human rights. Sharon is an active member of the Women's Equality Party and stood as an MP in the 2017 general election, to ensure gender equality is at the heart of Government policy and decision making. Sharon chairs the Campaigns and Impact Sub Committee and also chairs the safeguarding team for children, young people and vulnerable adults. She joined

the Amnesty Board in 2017. Sharon will serve on the Board until 2023. ■

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## MEREDITH COOMBS

A supporter of Amnesty International since his student days. Meredith has extensive experience of finance and accounting in both the commercial and charity sectors. He was latterly Director of Finance and Shared Services at St. John Ambulance for eight years before retiring in June 2015. He was appointed Treasurer in 2015. Meredith will serve on the Board until 2021. ■

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## LUCY BLAKE

Lucy was co-opted to the board in September 2016 to provide expertise in the governance of organisations and human rights law. She is a Managing Associate in the Dispute Resolution team at Linklaters LLP, with a specialism in anti-bribery and corruption work. Her experience in human rights includes working in Texas on death row appeals and at Liberty, as well as acting on numerous pro bono human rights interventions and other appeals. Lucy is also the co-founder of a grassroots refugee crisis fundraising initiative and has spent time volunteering in refugee camps in Greece and Serbia. Lucy will stand for re-appointment as a co-opted Director in 2022. ■

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## THOMAS CHIGBO

Tom was elected to the Board in 2017 and chairs 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. Thomas will serve on the Board until 2023. ■

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### **BASIA GIEZEK**

Basia has been a country coordinator in AIUK's South East Asia team since 2017. Between 2018-2019, she was Chair of the AIUK Country Coordinators Forum. She has experience in project management and volunteering for other charities and is currently doing a postgraduate degree in International Human Rights and Development at London South Bank University. ■

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### **ABIGAIL GRANT**

Elected to the Board in 2017. Abby joined her Local group at 13 before starting and chairing a youth group at her school for 4 years. She has attended the last 6 AGMs including being the first youth group to put a resolution to the AGM in 2016. Abby was also on the Youth Advisory Group from 2013/14. She is currently a member of the Kingston University Student group. Abby is currently studying for a degree in Politics and Applied Economics at Kingston University, with a keen interest in International Human Rights Law. Abby had also worked with time2change, Young Kent's Me2 as well as giving talks about social services and the foster care system. Abigail will serve on the Board until 2023. ■

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### **TOM HARRISON**

Tom joined the Board in June 2018 having stood for one of the two Networks reserved seats. Tom has been a family/individual member for 20+ years, and a member of the Trade Union Network Committee (TUNC) since 2011. He was elected Joint Vice Chair of the TUNC in March 2018. Tom has worked in banking for 35 years. He is currently a Project Manager. For the last 30 years he has been involved in the lay representation structures within his trade union. Tom has been a local rep looking after members throughout this time, and for the last 25 years an elected member of the union's Executive Committee, responsible for good governance of the union. He is currently President of his union having been elected by members on four occasions the most recent being March 2018. Through his union, the TUNC and the Trades Union Congress (TUC) Tom has been able to support Amnesty campaigns and help to engage the wider trade union movement over many years. This ongoing engagement and co-operation helped to secure the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed by both AIUK and the TUC in February 2009. To date this remains the only MoU signed between the TUC and any NGO/Charity. Tom will serve on the Board until 2021. ■

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### **HELEN HORTON**

Helen was elected to the Board in June 2019. Helen has worked in education and more recently in the voluntary sector working in the Asia and Pacific regions. She has been an individual and local

## CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

group member for over 30 years and chaired Lancaster Group between 1995-2002. ■

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### SUSAN JEX

Sue is a Director at Grant Thornton where she leads the people and culture risk practice, assisting firms from FTSE 100 to start ups with people and culture issues. Prior to this Sue worked in senior roles at HSBC for many years including as Group Head of Employee Relations, Group Head of Diversity and Head of Customer Service for the UK Bank. She is a qualified accountant and a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. She is also a co-founder and former trustee of the refugee charity Care4calais. She is passionate about humanitarian issues and the fair treatment of all in society. Susan will serve on the Board until 2021. ■

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### SEN RAJ

Sen was elected to the Board in June 2018. He is passionate about justice, glitter, social media, and pop culture. Sen is currently a Lecturer in Law at Keele University, where he teaches and researches human rights law. Sen has been actively involved with Amnesty International for a decade and has also served on the board of Amnesty International Australia. Sen is a Committee Member of the Amnesty UK Rainbow Network and is a part of the Board's Law and Policy sub-committee. Sen will serve on the Board until 2021. ■

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### HUGH SANDEMAN

Hugh was elected to the Board in 2018.

He has been active in Amnesty for 20 years as a member of the Kingston Group, and has been a country coordinator in AIUK's North Africa team since 2009. In 2013-2016, he was Chair of the AIUK Country Coordinators Forum. Hugh has worked as a company director, as a corporate finance advisor, and as a foreign correspondent. Hugh will serve on the Board until 2021. ■

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### REBECCA WARREN

Rebecca Warren joined the Board in 2017 to fill an unreserved seat. Rebecca has been a member of Amnesty since 1991. She is a Trustee of the Amnesty International UK Charitable Trust. She is a member of the Mayfair and Soho local group. Rebecca is a qualified accountant with more than 20 years' experience in the public, voluntary and commercial sectors, currently working for London South Bank University as Head of Financial Accounting. She is a campaigner on many issues, and is Treasurer of the Campaign against Climate Change and a Trustee and Treasurer of ShareAction. Rebecca is one of the Board Members that retire by virtue of the rotation requirement in Article 38.1 of the Articles of Association. Rebecca will serve on the Board until 2022. ■