

Newsletter: September 2021

Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group



Dates for your diary	10-17 October: Amnesty Week of Action 13-14 November: UK Amnesty AGM and student conference 10 December: Human Rights Day
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Dear writers

At last, good news from Egypt! A judge has stopped the case against Azza and removed the restrictions imposed on her. We have been campaigning for her for a long time. Full details below.

Many thanks to Breege Gallagher for organising our PUMBLE, which had a good turnout in spite of the weather. It was wonderful to meet face-to-face again, enjoy the walk and the splendid pub.

Do you think it would be a good idea to have our Group's AGM in a virtual meeting in November? We had booked our 2020 AGM for March in Bognor, but Corona spiked that. Please contact Kath Shakespeare on shakespeare.kath@gmail.com to share your views and ask how this would work.

Local events

Stop the Rights Raid Week of Action From **10-17 October** Amnesty UK and others are holding a **Week of Action on Human Rights in the UK**. The plan is to meet with as many MPs as possible at constituency level, to show how much we care about human rights and to ask them to defend them. We are hoping to get involved, so please do let us know if you would like to support this.

To support Group members taking part in the week of action and in our campaigning more generally, Amnesty has arranged four training sessions in September and October. Please register and read more about the events through the links below (sadly this Newsletter is too late for the first two events)

- **(3) Top tips to influence your MP and engage local media** Monday 27 September 6-7.30pm [Register here](#)
- **(4) Stop the Rights Raid: Ask the Experts** Monday 4 October 6-7.30pm [Register here](#)

Other events

Recording of the **Amnesty UK Online Activism Conference 2021** now available. For those of you who were not able to attend the event in person, recordings for the majority of sessions are now available to view (published unlisted on YouTube) via a conference report on the Amnesty UK website: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/london-region/online-activism-conference-report>

Save the date! Amnesty UK is planning for the **National Conference** and are hoping you will be able to join as well. A joint event held in London this year with a feast of sensational speakers, training sessions, performances, workshops and much more. In person and virtual event tickets available.

- 13 Nov - National Conference (members, non-members, students, everyone)
- 14 Nov - Student Conference (student members)

Kate Allen has recently retired, and to celebrate Kate's time at AIUK Amnesty UK are collecting memories and pictures, to put together a meaningful gift Kate can look back on, cherish and treasure. If you have any memories, photos, or anything else you would like to share,

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could you please send these either directly to [Selma](#) or to me before 30 September. Your old photos of Kate at AIUK events, your memories of a time she attended your local group meeting or an activist event, a demonstration or at an AGM, anytime you heard her speak at a public meeting on a campaign/human rights issue that's made an impact or anything you would like to share with her when she is reflecting on her time and career at AIUK.

Carry on writing!

Bob Dewick, Amnesty

Amnesty action: campaigns & letter-writing

Update: Egypt from Margaret Robertson, campaign co-ordinator

Great News: the case against Azza Soliman is dropped!

I'm sure you will all be delighted to hear that a judge has ruled that the Case 173 investigation into Azza Soliman (and also Esraa Abdelfattah, Negad el Bor'ei, Hossam Ali and Magdy Abdelhamid) has been dropped and their travel bans and asset freezes have been lifted. Thanks to all of you who have campaigned on her behalf for over several years. This is a very significant result and, we hope, will be followed by similar judgements in the cases of 20 other human rights defenders awaiting the results of investigations under Case 173.

- I have sent a card directly to Azza from us all expressing our delight at the verdict.



Aser Mohamed: New Action for 21 September hearing

Following this hugely encouraging result, we have been asked to renew our pressure on the Egyptian authorities to release Aser Mohamed, the teenage boy sentenced to 10 years in jail after making a false confession extorted under torture. His case is to be heard by the Court of Cassation on 21 September so we have been asked to make a concerted effort to appeal directly to the Egyptian Ambassador, Tarek Ahmed Ibrahim Adel and President al-Sisi to obtain his release.



As a follow up to the flowers sent to the Embassy on his behalf to mark *International Day In Support of Victims of Torture*, we have been asked to send messages in the form of doves (see template below) and accompanying letters/emails. **Please support this urgent action if you can.**

What you can do

To achieve maximum impact I should be grateful if you could print off (or scan/photograph) your signed message of your dove and post or email to me **by Saturday, 18 September 2021**

Margaret Robertson
30 Stempwood Way, Barnham, PO22 0LA, West Sussex
mn_robertson@hotmail.com

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I will then collect and post off a 'flock of doves' with an accompanying letter to the Ambassador on behalf of the group. I will also send a letter and accompanying photograph of the doves to the President in the run up to the court hearing on 21 September. If you wish to send your own individual messages as well that would have an even greater impact.

Please see below for templates to use for dove messages and letters/emails to send to

President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi (p.spokesman@op.gov.eg)
Office of the President, Al Ittihadia Palace, Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt

His Excellency, Tarek Ahmed Ibrahim Adel (egtamboff@gmail.com)
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egyptian 26 South Street, London W1K 1DW

Dove template - pre-filled



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Dove template - blank if you would like to design your own layout to include the message "Free Aser Mohamed on 21 September"



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Your Excellency,

The Case of Aser Mohamed Hearing 21 September 2021

I understand that the ten year sentence imposed on Aser Mohamed is soon to be reviewed by the Court of Cassation on 21st September 2021.

I believe that Aser Mohamed has been unjustly sentenced to 10 years in prison on the basis of evidence obtained under torture when he was a child and I call on the Egyptian authorities to quash Aser's conviction and release him. I also call upon you to launch an investigation into his enforced disappearance (for some 34 days) when he was just 14 years of age and his torture allegations.

Pending his release Aser should be provided with the means to communicate with his family and lawyers and the authorities should take measures to protect Aser's health. Aser suffers from a chronic allergy that causes respiratory difficulties which puts him at particular risk of Covid 19 according to the World Health Organisation's list of vulnerable groups.

I look forward to hearing from you further.

Yours sincerely



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Action: Egypt: Sanaa Seif

Urgent action is requested in the case of Sanaa Seif, sister of imprisoned human rights activist, Alaa Abdel Fattah. She has been sentenced to one and a half years imprisonment because of her peaceful attempt to complain about a violent assault on her, her mother and sister and the harassment suffered by the family because of her criticism of the Egyptian authorities.

Please use this template letter to send a message to

- President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi (p.spokesman@op.gov.eg)
- Copy to HE Tarek Ahmed Ibrahim Adel (egtamboff@gmail.com)

Dear President

Human rights activist and prisoner of conscience Sanaa Seif, 26, is serving an unjust one-and-a-half-year prison term, solely because of her peaceful exercise of her human rights.

Unidentified security forces seized Sanaa Seif on 23 June 2020, without presenting a warrant, from outside the Public Prosecutor's Office in Cairo, the Egyptian capital, where she was planning to file a complaint about a violent assault she had suffered the day before, in full view of security forces. That day, Sanaa Seif, her mother, Laila Soueif, and sister, Mona Seif were waiting outside the Tora Prison Complex in Cairo, to receive a letter from her arbitrarily detained brother, the activist Alaa Abdel Fattah. A group of women approached the family and beat them with sticks, tore their clothes, dragged them onto the ground and stole some of their belongings. To date, the Egyptian authorities have failed to investigate this attack.

On 17 March 2021, the 10th South Cairo Criminal Court convicted Sanaa Seif on bogus charges of "disseminating false news", "misuse of social media" and insulting a police officer on duty. The latter charge relates to a verbal altercation with a police officer in front of the Tora Prison Complex on the day of the assault and publishing reports of the incident on her social media. Sanaa Seif had also been publicly critical of the authorities' mishandling of Covid-19 outbreaks in Egypt's overcrowded and unhygienic prisons and has been calling for the release on those arbitrarily detained including her brother. Amnesty International has reviewed the evidence against Sanaa Seif and judges that the criticism she expressed did not amount to advocacy of hatred constituting incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence.

I therefore urge you to release Sanaa Seif immediately and unconditionally and to quash her conviction. I also appeal to you to order an end to the relentless harassment of her family; to conduct independent, impartial and thorough investigations into the assault against Sanaa Seif, her mother and sister on 22 June 2020; to bring those responsible to justice in proceedings meeting international standards

Yours sincerely

Action: Afghanistan crisis action

Thousands of Afghan civilians are in danger. Amnesty has stepped up our work to call on the UK government to ensure the UK plays its full part in securing safe passage out of Afghanistan for people at risk of being targeted by the Taliban and a humane response to the refugee crisis.

- Please take action here and share the action: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/afghanistan>
- AIUK has also been engaged in non-public efforts to support the evacuation of human rights defenders and other civil society activists out of Afghanistan. This has included significant engagement with UK authorities. You can [keep up to date with our public messaging here](#).

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