

Newsletter: December 2021

Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group



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| Dates for your diary | Tue 25 January 2022, 17:30: Introduction to Equity and Inclusion course (online) Thu 27 January 2022: Holocaust Memorial Day Sat 19 February 2022: Concert for Amnesty, Christ Church, Chichester Thu 24 March 2022: Group AGM, Regis School of Music, Bognor |
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Dear writers

Thank you for all your time, energy and commitment over the last year, despite the challenges thrown at us as a result of the pandemic. As always, it makes a huge difference to those at risk of human rights abuses, to raising awareness and influencing positive human rights change.

This month's newsletter mainly focuses on on-going actions in support of our campaigning in Egypt.

Local events

Sat 19/02/2022: Concert for Amnesty, Christ Church, Chichester. Plans are progressing for an in-person concert for Amnesty: save the date! Details to follow in the New Year.

Other events

Sat 08/01/2022, meet 12 midday. Campaigning Action outside Parliament calling for the closure of Guantánamo and for justice for those still detained/former detainees, organised by members of the *UK Guantanamo Network* (which includes a number of Amnesty groups/activists). 11 January 2022 will mark the 20th anniversary of the opening of Guantánamo. Join activists from Brighton and Lewes to demand the closure of the site: the action is to walk in single file to Parliament Square and then past Downing Street to Trafalgar Square for speeches, then back in single file to Victoria Tower Gardens. The action is anticipated at 2-3 hours.

- Please contact co-ordinator Sara Birch of the Lewes Amnesty Group to advise if you are able to join the protest: sarabirch50@hotmail.com, as the aim is for 100 volunteers who are prepared to join the action, wearing an orange jumpsuit. Sara will help with any questions and will provide volunteers with all the information needed to take part in the campaigning action.
- If you would like to see a film of a recent protest in Brighton (filmed by Amnesty activist Sinai Noor) you can visit this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YGufaeCADbg>

Thu 27/01/2022 Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD)

- Online: **UK Ceremony for Holocaust Memorial Day 2022** will be streamed online on **Thursday 27/01/2022 at 7pm**. You can register to watch the Ceremony online, which runs from 7pm to 8pm. At 8pm, get ready to **Light the Darkness**: households across the UK will be lighting candles and putting them in their windows to remember those

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who were murdered for who they were, and against prejudice and hatred today

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/take-part-in-holocaust-memorial-day/ukhmd/>

- There are other online and local events to mark HMD, such as planting a memorial oak tree (e.g. Horndean), in-person commemorations (e.g. Havant) and online lectures (e.g. hosted by the Freud Museum, London). Details about the various activities can be found on the HMD website:

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/take-part-in-holocaust-memorial-day/activities/>

Tue 25/01/2022, 17:30 - 19:30 Introduction to Equity and Inclusion course (online). This two-hour introductory learning session will look at the core principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism. Facilitated by Amnesty's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Lead Danny Nasr, participants will explore the contemporary language of inclusion, gain a greater understanding of individual privilege and the impact it has on their roles, as well take part in constructive conversations on what anti-racism means for AIUK.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/introduction-to-equity-and-inclusion-tickets-219850768567>

Championing Change: human rights and the climate crisis. This three-week course is by FutureLearn for Amnesty and is designed for anyone who wishes to explore the relationship between climate change and human rights. No expertise is needed; the only requirement is a desire to understand and improve this serious global concern.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/climate-change-human-rights>

Carry on writing!

Bob Dewick, Amnesty

Amnesty action: campaigns and letter-writing

Action: Sahrawi activist raped by Moroccan forces

On 15 November, Moroccan security forces broke into the house of Sultana Khaya, Sahrawi woman activist and defender of Sahrawis' right to self-determination. They raped her and sexually abused her sisters and 80-year-old mother. This is not the first time Moroccan forces have committed acts of torture and other ill-treatment against Sultana Khaya and her family, who have been under de facto house arrest since November 2020.

To find out more:

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/urgent-actions/sahrawi-activist-raped-moroccan-forces>



What you can do:

Please email the following template letter to the Moroccan ambassador in London, asking for the letter to be forwarded to the Head of Government:

To: Head of Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mr Saad Eddine el Othmani

c/o HE Mr Abdesselam Abouddrar (ambalondres@maec.gov.ma)

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Please forward to The Head of Government

Your Excellency,

Sultana Khaya

At 5.30am on 15 November, dozens of members of the Moroccan security forces in civilian clothes broke into the house of Sahrawi woman activist Sultana Khaya, where she is under de facto house arrest along with her two sisters and mother, subjected her to rape and sexually assaulted her sisters and mother. They also searched the house, after entering from the roof, damaging doors and closets, throwing belongings onto the floor and pouring toxic substances around the house. The authorities have still never presented Sultana Khaya with an arrest warrant or justification for the house arrest.

Sultana Khaya told Amnesty International that she was left with wounds from the rape. She did not go to a doctor because she is prevented from leaving the house and from receiving visitors, due to their house arrest. Security forces have repeatedly assaulted Sultana Khaya, members of her family and their visitors since the start of the house arrest in November 2020.

I urge you to put an immediate end to the brutal attacks against Sultana Khaya and her family and to carry out a prompt, thorough, independent, impartial, transparent and effective investigation into the security forces' abusive force and attacks against her and her family, including the report of rape and sexual assault,. I also call on you to ensure that those suspected to be responsible are brought to justice in fair trials. I appeal to you to order that Sultana Khaya and her family are provided with access to justice and effective remedies, including adequate compensation, and guarantee of non-repetition for the violations of human rights to which they have been subjected. I further appeal to you to order an immediate end to the arbitrary house arrest against Sultana Khaya and her family and to uphold their rights to freedom of movement, expression and association.

Yours sincerely

Egypt update

Many thanks to all of you who have taken action on behalf of all our Egyptian human rights appeals throughout the year. Sadly, the number of cases shows no sign of diminishing but we are encouraged by positive results in some cases, particularly news that Patrick Zaki George, human rights researcher, has been provisionally released until his trial on 1 February 2022.

Azza Soliman and Case 173

Thanks to everyone who is campaigning on behalf of **Azza Soliman** and others charged under Case 173. Although a judge has ordered the lifting of her travel ban and assets freeze, this has not actually been implemented yet. Her case will be heard in court on Monday 13 December, so please keep actions going in support of Azza and all remaining cases under Case 173 by emailing President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi (details below), calling on him to order:

- that all restrictions against Azza Soliman be lifted immediately
- the Egyptian authorities to drop Case 173 completely



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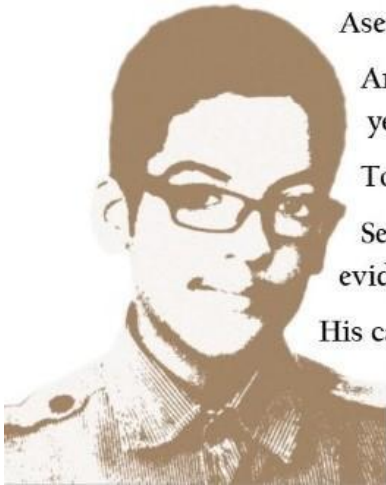


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- the Egyptian authorities to lift all travel bans and stop all asset freezes against all human rights defenders still subject to these measures

Aser Mohamed

Aser's court hearing has been postponed yet again and is now supposed to take place on **2 January 2022**. If you have not yet written on his behalf it is not too late to send the message below to President al-Sisi (details below), calling for his immediate release. Further action to follow.



Aser Mohamed

Arrested and held in secret when he was a child of fourteen years

Tortured by secret police

Sentenced to ten years after an unfair trial based on torture evidence

His case comes up at the Court of Cassation on 21st November

Release him and all imprisoned children

Mohamed Baker (aka Mohamed el-Baqer)

Mohamed Baker, human rights lawyer, is one of the featured cases in Write for Rights 2021 so, if you were not able to take part in the Human Rights Day online greeting card writing meeting, you can find further details about how to write a message of support and solidarity to him directly at

[Write for Rights 2021 Campaign](#).

You can also email President al-Sisi (details below) calling for his immediate and unconditional release from the appalling conditions in which he is being held. He will be in court on Monday 20 December so immediate action would be very welcome.

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



Ibrahim Ezz el-Din

A new action for Ibrahim Ezz el-Din is planned for the New Year.

Thank you again for all your support throughout this year, which is greatly appreciated.

Margaret Robertson, Campaign Co-ordinator

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