Truro and District Amnesty International Group

Minutes of on-line meeting held on 12th Jan 2022

1. Present: Chris Ramsey, Margaret George, Carole Liesse, Hetty Tye, Karen Cooper, Wailim Wong Georgie Wong, Paul Kelly, plus 7 supporters from Penzance, Launceston and Plymouth..
2. Apologies: none
3. Talk on Mexico by Tilly Lavenas (country coordinator): Tilly outlined good things (high literacy rate of 95% and that bans on same-sex marriage had been ruled unconstitutional.) But there are many bad things – impunity, drugs cartels in control, the military being used instead of the police, disappearances, the murder and harassment of journalists and HR defenders. Migrants from other Central American states crossing Mexico are in danger, and more so again since Biden has reinstated the ‘remain in Mexico’ policy. Femicide is a major problem with an estimated 10 women killed every day. AI is campaigning against violence against those who protest about femicides. Wendy Galarza Herrera was in the Write for Rights campaign this year – she was shot while attending a protest about the murder of a woman. There is a call for those responsible to be brought to justice. Tilly agreed to send details of campaigns to Chris, for circulation to the group. Her talk was followed by questions and discussion.
4. Photo action: we did a photo action as part of the campaign for the refugees who are trapped on the Belarus/Poland border, with the slogan, ‘Poland: stop refugees freezing’.
5. Minutes of meeting held on 8th Dec, matters arising: we need to discuss where to hold our Write for Rights action in Dec 2022. All ideas welcome! It may be possible to sell more cards if supporters sell them to friends/workmates, as well as holding the stalls.
6. Treasurer’s report: Karen reported that we have £1050 in the bank. We owe the affiliation fee of £75. It was agreed to send £500 to AIUK.
7. Regional campaigns:

North Africa: Egypt. Hetty reported the good news that Aser Mohamed has been acquitted, but there is no news yet of his release. There is bad news that Mohamed Baker (who spoke at the regional conference in Exeter in 2018) has been sentenced to 4 years in prison, following a trial in December.

Central America: Georgie spoke about the new campaign about violence against those who protest about violence against women.

IOPT and Lebanon: Chris will circulate the latest newsletter. It contains a review of the history of the separation wall. 2 Palestinians have been killed recently. In good news, the Israelis have suspended plans to build new settlements. There is a new campaign aimed at JCB which is supplying machinery being used by the Israelis for demolitions and illegal settlements. We are asked to write to the local council to ensure they do not have contracts with JCB. Chris will draft a letter to go out to Cornwall Council from the group.

There was no report on the former USSR, but Barrie Hay is due to speak at our next meeting. On the Death Penalty, Wailim will send out any information as his internet connection was bad.

1. Forward planning:
2. **future meetings**. In February, we have Barrie Hay on the former Soviet Union. It was suggested we might have a speaker from the Israeli Committee against house demolitions.
3. **Street collection in Truro**: it was agreed to go for Sat 28th May.
4. AOB: Georgie had written to MP C Mackrory, about the Policing Bill and had a reply that she is entirely in favour of it.
5. Next meeting: **Wed 9th February,** **7.00pm** viaTeams. We shall have Barrie Hay, country coordinator for Former USSR speaking. This meeting will be on Amnesty Teams, with access via an email link very similar to Zoom.