

MEDIA

HANDBOOK



AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL







MEDIA HANDBOOK

This booklet offers practical advice on how to develop and maintain good media relations, and can be used alongside other information, materials and training provided by Amnesty International UK. This new 2019 edition supersedes previous versions and will be updated again in the future.

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17:49



Amnesty: 'catalogue of violations' by Israeli police against Palestinians

Palestinians face repression from Israel and Palestinian Authority, human rights watchdog says



Bethan McKernan *Middle East*

MAKING THE HEADLINES

Media work is vital to Amnesty and human rights

By getting involved in media work you are following in the footsteps of many Amnesty activists, including Amnesty's founder, Peter Benenson. In 1961 he launched the organisation with an article in the Observer newspaper in response to a story he had read about two Portuguese students imprisoned for drinking a toast to liberty.

Years later, he famously said:

'It's the publicity function of Amnesty that has made its name so widely known. Not only to readers in the world, but to governments – and that's what matters.'

Through the media it is possible to reach large numbers of people, influence public and political figures, and ultimately bring about change.

SUPPORT FROM AMNESTY UK

The Media Unit

Can advise on press releases, PR events and stunts, who to contact and generally how to deal with the media.

The Community Organising team

Can provide ideas for media work and additional background briefings on campaigns, including special packs for events such as general or local elections.

The Community Fundraising team

Can help you organise eye-catching events that will raise money for Amnesty, and help boost Amnesty's profile.

Amnesty UK offices

Scotland and Northern Ireland also undertake media work with local activists.

For contact details and further information, see page 23.

MEDIA TIPS

🗨️ If you can use humour, fun or music in your media work do so. Sometimes all activists, even Amnesty ones, can come across as too earnest. Go have some fun!

David Nicholl, activist

SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Nowadays it couldn't be easier

Nearly everyone has all they need for media work: internet access; a laptop, tablet or computer; a printer; and a smart phone.

Local media is hugely influential and more trusted than national media. People often care most about what is close to home, and value local news as much as national or international news – and that includes MPs.

If we want decision-makers to be aware of Amnesty and listen to our concerns, we need to be seen and heard in the media spaces they occupy. Your work with local media will help us make a difference.

In five minutes

- Re-tweet Amnesty. All the key spokespeople to follow can be found at www.amnesty.org.uk/amnesty-uk-spokespeople
- Share our updates on Facebook with your friends and followers.

In 30 minutes

- Write a letter to your local paper (see page 14) for details. The letters pages are among the most read in local newspapers.

THE DEEPER DELVE

Are you a group member?

Offer to become the group's media officer. This role involves leading the media work and taking responsibility for getting to know the local press and developing relationships with them. The Media Unit can help with contacts, and also provide training sessions in skills such as how to write a press release.

Are you an individual member?

If you are fundraising or doing an event for Amnesty, don't forget to tell people about it. Contact your local media directly. Look at pages 8 and 12 for tips on how to do so.

Are you a member of a network?

Offer to become the network's media officer.

Have you got media experience?

Become a trainer and help train people to feel confident in using the media. Simply contact either the Media Unit or the training team at Amnesty (see page 22 for details).

EXPECTATIONS: HOW DOES MEDIA WORK AND WHEN?

Everyone who is part of the Amnesty movement should feel empowered and confident to communicate and spread awareness about the causes and issues we campaign on.

For activists across the UK to deliver successful regional media work, it is important that we all share the same messages and use the appropriate spokespeople. The table (right) sets out roles and expectations for different Amnesty members to ensure this works in the best way.

| Part of the movement | When should I do media work? | With what type of media? | Who needs to approve the media activity? |
|--|---|--|--|
| Local groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote an event or activity. To generate coverage and raise awareness of campaigns the group is running. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional media outlets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you have any concerns and want to run a press release or media enquiry past someone, contact the Media Unit. |
| Student groups/ youth groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote an event or activity. To generate coverage and raise awareness of campaigns the group is running. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional media outlets Student/university media outlets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you have any concerns and want to run a press release or media enquiry past someone, contact the Media Unit. |
| Networks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote an event or activity. To generate coverage and raise awareness of campaigns the network is running. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional media outlets Student/university media outlets Sometimes specialist outlets (eg LGBTI+ press) – you should coordinate with the Media Unit to avoid duplication. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Media Unit will support by promoting the networks and the major campaigns they run to national media. Networks to work with the Media Unit on this. If you have any concerns and want to run a press release or media enquiry past someone, contact the Media Unit. |
| RMSO/ Regional Rep | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support regional activities and groups/networks media work | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional media outlets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RMSO support volunteer or the Media Unit |
| Researchers/ programme managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When we have national/regional media enquiries about a specific piece of research, policy or campaign. For a difficult media enquiry. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional and national media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Media Unit |
| Amnesty UK Media Unit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Media Unit does regional media work on office-led campaigns or research, or for a regional visit (eg someone whose case we're campaigning on, or if our director travels). AIUK will coordinate to ensure groups are involved in any regional media activity. The Media Unit leads on all national media work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National and some regional media | |

HOW TO GET INTO THE MEDIA

Get the media to cover your stories in the way you want

Media work can be one of the most enjoyable parts of campaigning. Use your imagination to come up with an interesting event, stunt or photo/film opportunity to generate media coverage for an Amnesty campaign or message.

It's often the quality of the creative idea that counts, so spend time coming up with an idea that makes journalists think: 'That's interesting – I want to find out more.'

First ask yourself a few basic questions.

OBJECTIVE

Why are we doing this?

- Do you want people to take action? Is that action a letter, an online activity or a petition?
- Do you want them to come to a rally or event?
- Do you want them to put pressure on your local MP to raise something in parliament?

MEDIA TIPS

The press contacts lists you supplied were great. I sent a last-minute email to the whole lot and BBC North West TV rang me back asking for photos of Nigel Kennedy's appearance at our vigil for Burma in Manchester. Thanks for all the encouragement!

Mike Reed, Manchester group

TARGETS

Who do we want to reach?

Do you want your key message to reach the public or decision-makers? This will influence the type of media outlet you target and your message.

MESSAGE

What one key point do we want to get across?

This needs to be clear and effective to the public or a press photographer. Amnesty UK usually provides a campaigning message, but if it's your own event, try to boil your message down to one simple sentence or soundbite.

LOCAL ANGLE

Is there a link between the story and a local setting?

Does this issue or campaign impact on local people? Are local companies, universities or MPs relevant or involved? Our issues are often international, but the fact that the local Amnesty group is doing something can be enough to generate media interest.



FOOTBALL

Amnesty International calls on England players to stand up for migrant workers building facilities for next World Cup in Qatar

Maryn Ziegler

Thursday August 26 2021,
1.00am, The Times



Thousands of migrant workers have been employed to build the facilities Qatar needs to host the next World Cup, such as the Lusail Stadium, above
ALAMY

Amnesty International, the human rights campaign group, has called on England players to take a leading role in pushing Fifa and Qatar to improve the rights of migrant workers and investigate unexplained deaths among the workforce ahead of next year's World Cup.



The family of imprisoned British-Iranian citizen Anooosheh Ashoori held a protest outside Downing Street today (Image: Dave Burdett)

NEWS

FOOTBALL

CELEBS

EXCLUSIVE: Brit 'injected with mystery jab' in Iranian jail as family call on PM to act

Several prisoners inside the notorious Evin Prison in Tehran, including British-Iranian citizen Anooosheh Ashoori, were injected with what they were told was a Covid vaccine, but after four years of cruel imprisonment, his family say they have "no confidence" in his captors.

By **Dave Burke**, News reporter
17.23, 11 Aug 2021 | **UPDATED 17.26, 11 Aug 2021**

COMMENTS

A British national who has spent four years in a notorious Iranian jail has been suffering side effects after being given a mysterious "vaccine" by his captors, his family said.

Anooosheh Ashoori's loved ones say they have "no confidence" that the jab was a Covid vaccine, as they held a protest outside Downing Street to mark the anniversary of his arrest.

Today his wife Sherry Izadi and children Arayan and Elka accused **Boris Johnson** of ignoring their suffering, staging an "empty chair" protest and asking "Why won't you meet us?"

They were joined by Richard Ratcliffe, whose wife Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe has been arbitrarily detained in Iran since 2016.

mirror.co.uk

swLondoner

HOME NEWS SPORT LIFE ENTERTAINMENT FOOD & DRINK EDITOR'S PICKS

NEWS



NEWS

Amnesty International celebrates shining light in the darkness for 60 years

20 May 2021 | **Ella Sagar** | **Follow swsw_Londoner**

Global human rights charity Amnesty International celebrated its 60th anniversary today with south west London groups commemorating the milestone in different ways.

The charity was founded in 1961 by Peter Benenson on the idea that ordinary people can change the world and stand up for humanity and human rights.

swlondoner.co.uk

HOW TO CREATE A SCENE

A well-planned image or photo stunt can transform your campaign into an eye-catching, crowd-gathering occasion that gets media coverage and makes a bigger impact

WHEN COMING UP WITH AN IMAGE

- Ask yourself: would it work as a photo in the newspaper or online?
- Make it relevant to your story.
- Include people: 90 per cent of photos in local media outlets have local people in them. It's even better if they're children, but remember you must have their parents' permission first.
- Check what photos your local paper tends to publish, so you know what interests them.
- Avoid a straight line-up picture if possible.
- Practise: take some shots and work out how to improve them. A close-up of one person or an 'action shot' can be very effective.
- For print media, your image **must** be high-resolution.

EXAMPLES OF PHOTO-OP EVENTS

- Demonstrations in chains, cages or behind bars
- Birthday cakes for anniversaries
- People wearing masks or distinctive costumes
- Gallows
- 'Die-ins'
- Marches
- Anything big, colourful, macabre or unusual.

MEDIA TIPS

Talking to the local media about our Amnesty work here in Jersey holds no fear for me any more – once you've done it once or twice, you get to enjoy it.

Collette Crill, Jersey group

CELEBRITY SUPPORT

The support of a local celebrity – for example, an MP, mayor, actor, sports star or musician – helps to increase your story's appeal and often their appearance will ensure coverage, so make sure you plug it. Also make sure they are briefed about Amnesty and the specific issue you're highlighting. If they're a well-known name with a high-profile, let the Media Unit know, as the story could go national (or even international).

TIMING AND HOOKS

Journalists are always looking for new or timely events. The right peg makes your story more newsworthy: for example, hold an event about executions in China to coincide with the Prime Minister or a local MP visiting China.

Alternatively, tie in an event or photo opportunity with appropriate dates. For example:

27 January: Holocaust Memorial Day

8 March: International Women's Day

17 May: International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia

20 June: World Refugee Day

21 September: International Day of Peace

10 October: World Day Against the Death Penalty

10 December: Human Rights Day

RIGHT Amnesty activists dressed as the Statue of Liberty protest outside the US embassy in London to mark Donald Trump's first 100 days in office.
© Marie-Anne Ventoura

TIPS FOR EVENTS

- Make sure an Amnesty spokesperson is available before and/or after the event to give quotes and interviews to media.
- Have your own photographer available at the event in case the local papers can't send their own.
- The best time for a media stunt is around 10-11am on a weekday; fewer journalists and photographers work during the weekends or in the evenings. Weekly newspapers have a 'press day' by which time stories and pictures must be submitted

- to be featured in the latest print publication. Virtually all newspapers publish articles and photos on their websites and via social media accounts too.
- TV and broadcast media will want a sense of movement and theatre. Activists chained together outside the town hall might make a good picture for a newspaper, but a march through the city centre is more likely to attract TV cameras.
- The Media Unit would be happy to discuss any ideas or answer any questions you have. See page 23 for contacts.



HOW TO WRITE A PRESS RELEASE

Press releases can be about the launch of a new group, an event, the release of a prisoner – anything you want to announce that you believe is worthy of media attention

Regional media are usually keen to cover events concerning local people. But beware: the overworked journalist will give your press release a maximum of 30 seconds, so you've got to grab their attention quickly.

- Step 1:** Write your press release. See right for an example.
- Step 2:** Find out where and to whom you should send it.
- Step 3:** Email it over, making sure you get the timing right.
- Step 4:** If possible, make a follow-up phone call, or at least send a reminder email.

WHERE TO SEND IT

Wherever possible, try to send your release to a named journalist. A good source for this is www.media.info, or the publication's own website. You can also try looking on Facebook or Twitter for contacts. The Media Unit can also help.

- **Local paper:** Send it to the news and picture desks, as well as the news and features editors.
- **Local TV/radio stations:** Send it to the news editor.

WHO TO SEND IT TO

All the newspapers, websites, radio stations and (if there is a strong visual element to the story or event) TV stations in your area.

WHEN TO SEND IT

- **Local paper:** Many local papers go to print on Monday or Tuesday (and are published on a Thursday). Make sure your press release reaches the journalist the previous Thursday or Friday. If you want a journalist to come to your event, try to give them at least one week's notice.
- **Local radio/TV stations:** Send the press release so that it arrives at least two days before the event.

TIPS

- **Always date your press release.** If the journalist can use the information immediately, use the phrase 'For immediate release'. If you do not want the information published before a certain date then write 'Embargoed until...'.
 - **Start with an informative and catchy headline.** This should be two lines maximum. Journalists will use this to decide whether to read on.
 - **Avoid long paragraphs and sentences.**
 - **Use clear and simple language.**
 - **Stick to the facts.**
 - **Stress the local angle.** Make it clear why local people will be interested in your event. The more local the better.
 - **If there is a photo opportunity, state this clearly, with date, time and location.**
 - **Include your contact details.**
 - **Always spell check and proofread your press release before sending it.**

XXX Amnesty Group
PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGOED: 00.01 Monday 28 April 2019

**HEALTH AND SAFETY GONE BAD: LOCAL ACTIVISTS
HIGHLIGHT PLIGHT OF AFGHAN WOMEN WORKERS**

Local people wearing safety gear to take to the streets of **LOCATION**
to urge the UK government to protect women's
rights in Afghanistan

On **DATE** local Amnesty International activists dressed in hard hats
and high-visibility vests will ask people in **LOCATION** city centre to
show their support for Afghan women.

Members of the public will be asked to pose for photos with
'danger' signs and placards commemorating victims of violence to
urge the UK government to take action to protect Afghan women
workers.

Afghanistan is one of the most dangerous places in the world to be
a woman. You can be jailed for the 'crime' of fleeing your abusive
husband, denied an education, and seen as inferior to your male
relatives. Women teachers, doctors, lawyers and human rights
activists are at particular risk. Death threats are common and many
have been killed, simply for doing their jobs.

Local Amnesty activist **NAME** said: 'Teachers, doctors, lawyers,
activists and politicians are important jobs but they shouldn't be
dangerous ones. Brave Afghan women risk so much to educate, to
care and to shape the future of their country. They are the hope
for Afghanistan's future and the UK government must not abandon
them now.'

ENDS

Notes to editors

The **XXXX** Amnesty Group was founded in **XXXX** and has
campaigning on a range of human rights issues, including **XXXX** and
XXXX. It meets every **XXXX** at **XXXX**.

For background information,
see www.amnesty.org.uk/afghanistan

Contact: **XXXX** on (insert phone number and email)

NAME OF GROUP

DATE IS VITAL

An embargo helps you
choose when the news is
released

THE HEADLINE

First thing the journalist
reads, so it must be catchy

THE SUBHEAD

Includes your second key
message

THE INTRO

Must be punchy and
include what, when, where,
why and who

INCLUDE A QUOTE

The media loves a personal
angle. Include a great
soundbite – a snappy
comment – in the quote

ABOUT AMNESTY

Include a short paragraph
about your group. Add
details of your meetings to
attract new supporters

CONTACT DETAILS

Essential as journalists
need someone to get in
touch with

HOW TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Every month local, youth and student groups have letters published in their local papers

In addition to thanking people for their support, letters can be a great way of highlighting a particular campaign or concern. The Media Unit regularly provide template letters for groups to adapt and send.

Letters should be topical, for example referring to a major news story or using a relevant date in the calendar.

They should be short and punchy – around 100 to 200 words, ideally. They are most likely to be published if there is a strong local link.

If you would like to be included in the distribution of template letters, contact the Media Unit (see page 23 for details).

MEDIA TIPS

I have always been a letter-writing crank and I felt quite comfortable about becoming the press officer for our group... Much of the work is routine, like scanning the local press and being goaded into writing a letter to the editor whenever a human rights theme arises. It's always best to have a local "hook" to inspire readers to support Amnesty locally. Don't be put off if they don't print every one. I also always try to get our events and actions in the "What's On" section.

Graham Jones, Sheffield group

Letters

Too little, too late for fleeing Afghans

DEAR Editor, Given the speed and scale of the human rights crisis in Afghanistan, the UK's offer to resettle up to 20,000 vulnerable Afghans in the "coming years" risks being too little too late.

Teachers, journalists, women human rights defenders and those who've worked with the UK are among the thousands of people at immediate risk under the Taliban.

Amnesty International recently reported on how Taliban fighters murdered nine ethnic Hazara men in grisly killings which saw several victims tortured to death. Caught flat-footed, the UK now needs to act with urgency and real generosity.

We strongly support the proposed resettlement scheme to come.

However, the ongoing evacuation and relocation effort should be made eligible for at-risk Afghans trapped in the country, as well as their family members, not just current or former UK employed staff.

Afghans who arrive in the UK independently should receive protection, including those who are already here, and the Home Office should drop draconian plans to criminalise

those who seek asylum in the UK. It should also look urgently to extend family reunion visas to enable the UK's Afghan community to provide sanctuary to their loved ones who need to flee the country.

Sutton Coldfield Amnesty International Group

Birmingham Post

Letters

Pressing for release

SIR – Many of your readers will have been following the distressing case of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, the British woman detained in Iran for nearly five years after a grossly unfair trial.

Nazanin is just one UK-Iranian dual-national targeted by the Iranian authorities in recent years.

Another is Anoosheh Ashoori, a 66-year-old former engineer subjected to a sham trial that involved 'confessions' extracted via torture.

We're working closely with the UK Government to do more to secure Nazanin and Anoosheh's release.

The former foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt has recently criticised the Government for not doing more to help them.

He's right, and we'll be pressing for more action in the coming weeks.

Readers can stay in touch with our campaign for Nazanin and Anoosheh by visiting amnesty.org.uk/campaign-update-nazanin-and-anosheh, where they can also watch our very moving 10-minute film with the families made shortly before Christmas.

Worcester News

Free Anoosheh

Dennis Bradley, secretary, Hornsey and Wood Green Group, Amnesty International, writes:

Many of your readers will have been following the distressing case of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, the British woman from West Hampstead who has been detained in Iran for nearly five years after a grossly unfair trial.

Nazanin is just one UK-Iranian dual-national targeted by the Iranian authorities in recent years.

Another is Anoosheh Ashoori, a 66-year-old former engineer subjected to a sham trial that involved 'confessions' extracted under torture.

Amnesty International is working closely with both families to press the UK government to do more to secure Nazanin's and Anoosheh's release. The former foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt has recently criticised the government for not doing more to help them. He's right, and this local north London Amnesty group will be pressing for more action in the coming weeks.

Readers can stay in touch with Amnesty's campaign for Nazanin and Anoosheh by visiting amnesty.org.uk/campaign-update-nazanin-and-anosheh, where they can also watch a very moving 10-minute film with the families made shortly before Christmas.

Ham High Broadway



TEMPLATE LETTER

TWO MINUTES TO MAKE A TIMELESS DIFFERENCE

Sir

As we prepare for the festive season, I would ask readers of **[name of newspaper]** to spare a minute or two to take part in Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign.

It doesn't take long to write a card to someone whose human rights are being denied, but it can have a great impact.

For example, it could make a real difference to someone like Raif Badawi from Saudi Arabia, who was sentenced to ten years in prison and 1,000 lashes simply for blogging about free speech. Or to Yolanda Oqueli in Guatemala, who has suffered assassination attempts and harassment because she has protested about a mining development in her area.

Prison conditions have improved, threats and intimidation have ceased, and people have been released from prison after cards and letters were sent.

So amid the shopping frenzy of this time of year, please stop for two minutes to write a card for someone you don't know. Those two minutes could have an impact that will last a lifetime.

Visit www.amnesty.org.uk/write

Yours

[name]

[name of Amnesty Group]

HOW TO USE ONLINE TOOLS

Websites, social media and online tools can help you spread Amnesty's campaigns

NEWS AND LOCAL WEBSITES

Keep up to date with the news websites in your area – every local radio station and newspaper will have one. Get to know the most relevant journalists and look for opportunities to offer them Amnesty content. Many local news and community websites and blogs also have sections advertising events – another way to get your group noticed.

CONNECT WITH THE NEWS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

No self-respecting journalist ignores social media, particularly Twitter, in gathering local news and views on current affairs, so you shouldn't either.

Follow local journalists, news and community sites on Twitter and chat with them to build a relationship. If you follow them, they are likely to follow you back to get your Amnesty updates. Tweet them news, press releases, events or Amnesty reports – whatever matches what they write about or what you think they might be interested in.

A useful source of good practice and information on Twitter is the Media Unit's account @NewsFromAmnesty. Follow both accounts and re-tweet them when appropriate. The Media Unit can also provide you with a list of other notable Amnesty spokespeople to follow.

PROMOTING YOUR OWN GROUP ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Try to promote everything your group (or Amnesty nationally) is doing on your group's Facebook page and Twitter account: forthcoming events, actions on www.amnesty.org.uk and blogs. If local journalists and community groups are following your accounts, you never know what else they might pick up.

The main Amnesty website has articles explaining new Amnesty reports, blogs from our campaigners, online actions, and more – all things you can use on Twitter and Facebook to show local media, and potential group members, that your group is active and relevant to them.

A WORD OF WARNING

Some people have suffered embarrassment or worse from an inappropriate tweet or Facebook post. You'll be safe using updates from our official accounts or content from www.amnesty.org.uk, but please don't share things that are at odds with Amnesty's position. The best rule of thumb is: if you're not sure, don't post – your gut instinct is usually right.



WRITING FOR THE WEB

Writing for the web can be different from writing offline. Here are some tips to help you get your message out.

Focus

Keep the copy as focused as possible. It needs to be brief and to the point.

Top line

Put your key message in the top line of the page. If advertising an event, put the title, date and location so it is the first thing people see.

Clear call to action

Think about what you want the reader to do. Whether it's take action or attend a meeting, encourage them to get involved – and make it easy for them to do so.

Simple language

Don't assume knowledge and try to avoid acronyms. You can expect everyone to know some acronyms such as UN or BBC, but try to avoid, or explain, more Amnesty-specific ones like STAN or global ones like UNRWA or ASEAN.

Break up text

Use shorter paragraphs and more subheadings than you would in print. This helps break up the page and makes it quicker to read.

CREATING AND USING YOUR LOCAL GROUP WEBSITE

While social media is the perfect tool for getting your message out in short updates, it can be useful to couple it with your own website for longer pieces of writing and to advertise meetings. A website can also provide details of your group media officer and host any press releases you have issued.

We offer all local groups access to an Amnesty-branded website free of charge. Email activism@amnesty.org.uk to learn more and get set up.



HOW TO HANDLE INTERVIEWS

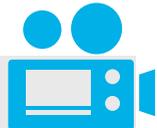
Two important components make a good broadcast interview: communicating key messages and facts, and presentation

IF YOU ARE ASKED TO DO AN INTERVIEW, FIND OUT:

- how long it will last;
- whether it is live or pre-recorded, in a radio or TV studio or elsewhere;
- the rough line of questioning and/or the first question.

Before being interviewed, check the latest news to avoid being wrong-footed.

TV INTERVIEWS



EXTRA PREPARATION

Notes are not a practical option in front of the camera so rehearsal is even more important. With lights shining on your face and a microphone thrust under your chin, you need to really know your points.

DRESS APPROPRIATELY

Choose an outfit that is simple, comfortable and professional. Avoid distractions such as large stripes or oversized earrings. You want the audience to focus on what you've got to say, not what you're wearing.

WHERE TO LOOK

Focus on the presenter or reporter, not the camera. Maintain eye contact.

RELAX, BE YOURSELF AND ENJOY IT

This is a great opportunity for you to speak about an issue you feel passionate about, so try to enjoy the experience.



RADIO INTERVIEWS

DEVELOP YOUR KEY MESSAGES

Have one or two key messages or 'talking points' in front of you. Use stories or case studies to illustrate points – it 'humanises' the issues or campaign – and a clear slogan or shocking statistic for added emphasis.

PREPARE IN ADVANCE

Amnesty uses a matrix system to help deal with interviews. Draw three columns: in the first write three key messages, in the second write down some cases studies, and in the third write some statistics. This acts as a grid with all the key data you'll need.

Spend about 20 minutes before the interview reviewing your notes. Think about likely questions – and answers. Rehearse the main points out loud. And practice: get a friend to ask some questions to help you get ready.

DON'T ASSUME KNOWLEDGE

Find out what kind of audience the show attracts – and tailor what you say accordingly. Speak clearly, avoid jargon and *do* state the obvious. It's easy to lose listeners if your discussion becomes too complex too quickly. Think of the interview like a conversation with a family or friend unfamiliar with the issues. This can also help with nerves, rather than imagining an audience of thousands.

SOUNDBITES AND REPETITION

Use slogans and repetition to emphasise a point – but don't overdo it.

GOOD PRESENTATION

Be friendly, alert and enthusiastic. Experts have found that content only makes up 7 per cent of the total impact, while presentation counts for 93 per cent. On radio it's all about your voice. On TV it's also about eye contact and body language.

DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

Avoid defensive answers and always tell the truth. If you don't know the answer, just say so. Don't make 'off the record' comments.

ACTION

Always provide 'hope'. Explain how people can get involved to make a difference and remember to say 'Amnesty' frequently.



PHOTO An Amnesty activist takes part in a TV interview © Amnesty International

HOW TO KNOW YOUR AMNESTY FACTS

Doing media work on behalf of Amnesty means answering questions about the organisation

USEFUL FACTS AND FIGURES

Use them as a reminder when preparing for an interview and include them in your media work documents.

- Amnesty International is a global movement of more than **10 million** people who take injustice personally. We campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.
- Over **200,000** people in the UK support Amnesty. We have **280** local groups, over **100** student groups and **440** youth groups.
- Amnesty UK receives most of its income from individual members and supporters. Here, and internationally, Amnesty does not seek or accept funds from governments for its campaigning work.
- Amnesty highlights and works to end abuses committed by governments and armed opposition groups. It is independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion.
- Amnesty works by lobbying governments and officials, supporting individuals and their families, organising initiatives with other organisations, operating education programmes and through a wide range of campaigning activities.
- Amnesty campaigns on behalf of prisoners of conscience, women's rights, and to end torture, the death penalty and human rights abuses that keep people in poverty.
- In 1977 Amnesty was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its campaign against torture.

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Latest on current human rights themes including the impact of the UK Section's campaigning and education work. View online at www.amnesty.org.uk/issues

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The Media Unit is available for advice, information and up-to-the-minute briefings on the latest Amnesty position. You can call any of the direct lines during office hours or, if it is urgent, the duty press officer on the out-of-hours number early in the morning, late in the evening and at weekends.

BELOW One month after the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, Amnesty activists 'renamed' the street outside the Saudi embassy in London

TRAINING

Workshops are available for groups to learn about current campaigns and human rights issues and help to put ideas into action. Workshops on communicating your message, creating photo opportunities and answering tricky questions are also available.

To book a session, contact your local trainer training@amnesty.org.uk

More information: [amnesty.org.uk](https://www.amnesty.org.uk)



MEDIA UNIT

To reach a specific member of the media team, please visit [amnesty.org.uk/amnesty-media-team](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/amnesty-media-team) or email media@amnesty.org.uk with your query.

If it is urgent, please call our on-duty press officer on **07721 398984**

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Amnesty International is a movement of ordinary people from across the world standing up for humanity and human rights. Our purpose is to protect individuals wherever justice, fairness, freedom and truth are denied.

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October 2021

www.amnesty.org.uk

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