Truro and District Amnesty International Group

Minutes of on-line meeting held on 9th Feb 2022

1. Present: Chris Ramsey, Margaret George, Hetty Tye, Wailim Wong, Georgie Wong, Paul Kelly.
2. Apologies: Carole Liesse, Karen Cooper.
3. Talk on Russia by Barrie Hay (country coordinator): Barrie spoke about the dangers to opposers of the regime and Human Rights defenders. He highlighted the cases of Aleksei Navalny and Elena Milashina, a journalist working in Chechnya who has been threatened and physically attacked. There is a petition for her on the AI website. In 2021 ‘Memorial’, the international memorial society, and Human Rights centre were both liquidated and declared to be foreign agents. There are 2 urgent actions currently (both already circulated within our group) for Lilia Chanysheva and Zarema Musaeva. The talk was followed by questions. Barrie was able to say that the Amnesty Office in Moscow, which was closed down, has now reopened.
4. Minutes of meeting held on 12th Jan, matters arising: Chris had sent the photo action to Karen who had been able to put it onto social media. He wrote to Cornwall Council about contracts with JCB and received a detailed reply explaining their ethical policies on contracts, but not specifically addressing the JCB concern.
5. Correspondence and Monthly Updates for groups: already circulated.
6. Treasurer’s report: Karen reported that we have £1178.35. This is before the payment of the Affiliation Fee (£72) and the donation of £500 agreed last meeting. £97.50 has come in in subs, and we are paying out £5 per month to HSBC.
7. Regional campaigns:

North Africa: Egypt. Hetty reported that Azza is still waiting for the lifting of restrictions, and Aser Mohamed has not been released despite being acquitted. There is worry he may be recharged. Patrick George Zaki has been released pending trial. Hetty would be sending out a letter to be sent to the authorities in Egypt on behalf of Ibrahim Ezz El Din, pointing out that they are disobeying their own laws.

Central America: Georgie spoke about the new campaign supporting those who speak up for women HR defenders.

IOPT and Lebanon: Chris spoke about a lengthy new AI report which has been launched, which categorises the Israeli government as practising apartheid. He will summarise the main findings and circulate them to the group.

Former USSR: Barrie Hay spoke at the meeting.

Death Penalty: Wailim reported that Papua New Guinea is abolishing the Death Penalty; in the USA, Utah is likely to pass a law through the Senate, abolishing, and it is also up for debate in Oklahoma, but not sure here which way it will go. In Iran, they are still executing people who were minors when they committed alleged crimes.

1. Forward planning:
2. **future meetings**. **9th March**, we have Laura Trevelyan, Priority Campaigns Manager at AUIK speaking on Human Rights Issues in the UK. On **13th April**, Linda Ramsden, UK Dirctor of Israeli Committee against House Demolitions, will speak on HR issues in Palestine.
3. **Regional Conference in Exeter, 12th March**. Details have been circulated. Supporters are asked to contact the Exeter Group to let them know who is coming.
4. **Mayor’s Charity event, 14th May**. We have applied for a stall
5. **Street collection in Truro 28th May**: this is booked.
6. AOB: there was discussion about moving to in-person meetings. Feelings were mixed. It may be possible to run hybrid meetings (in person and online). Chris will get back to the Methodist Church to sound out about booking a room and the cost. Margaret will contact the new Moresk Centre to find out about facilities and costs.
7. Next meeting: **Wed 9thMarch,** **7.00pm** via zoom. Laura Trevelyan speaking. See 8.1 above.