



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK

ANNUAL REVIEW

2021

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



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This annual review reports on the 2021 work of Amnesty International UK Section and the work carried out or funded by Amnesty International UK Charitable Trust in 2021. Amnesty International UK Charitable Trust delivers its objectives primarily by making grants to Amnesty International UK Section and the Secretariat of Amnesty International.

Front cover: © Getty Images

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Last year was a testing one for human rights. Conflicts, crises and emergencies broke out across a world still reeling from the pandemic, further intensifying inequality and injustice.

This review shows how your generous support enabled Amnesty International to rise to these challenges, secure important victories and make meaningful change – in the UK and globally.

The crisis in Afghanistan was a major focus in 2021. As the Taliban took over, we documented mass human rights violations and the spiralling humanitarian situation, and launched an urgent response to support refugees fleeing the country.

The use of powerful surveillance tech was another priority. Amnesty International played a key role in the Pegasus Project, a ground-breaking investigation that revealed how repressive governments are using a dangerous spyware against heads of state, human rights activists, journalists and lawyers.

Alongside these efforts, our work sparked UN investigations, shaped new laws to support survivors of abuses, and led to the arrest of soldiers accused of war crimes. We shone a spotlight on the Chinese government's massive, systematic abuses against Muslims in Xinjiang and provided evidence that helped to convict a Syrian official of crimes against humanity – a historic achievement that offers hope for justice to survivors of human rights violations globally.

We also confronted issues closer to home. Following testimonies from staff members, Amnesty International UK acknowledged that

we have exhibited institutional racism. This is not good enough for any organisation, let alone one that champions human rights. In response, we commissioned an independent investigation and report on the steps we need to take to change, and committed to implementing the recommendations. We are taking the first steps in making improvements to ourselves that we recognise are long overdue and will very much need to continue.

Finally, 2021 reminded us all of the power of collective action. Hundreds of thousands of Amnesty International UK supporters sent appeals to authorities, helping to secure the release of Saudi women's rights defender Loujain al-Hathloul, student leader Paing Phyoo Min in Myanmar, and NGO worker Germain Rukuki in Burundi, among many others.

Thank you so much for supporting Amnesty International UK and helping us to stand up for human rights around the world.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Sacha Deshmukh'.

Sacha Deshmukh
Chief executive, Amnesty International UK

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK – PART OF A GLOBAL MOVEMENT

Since 1961, Amnesty International has grown from our founder’s call to action into a global movement of over 10 million people, working to defend and promote all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

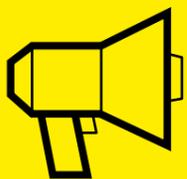
Amnesty International UK is one of the largest national sections in our global movement, with close to 480,000 supporters, members, and activists. We provide funding for Amnesty International’s work around the world and campaign for positive human rights change globally and in the UK.

HOW AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ACHIEVES CHANGE



INVESTIGATIONS

Our experts on the ground investigate human rights violations by governments and others around the world.



CAMPAIGNS AND ADVOCACY

We encourage and influence governments, political organisations, businesses and individuals to support and respect human rights.



HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AND TRAINING

We support people to know and claim their rights through education and training.



A POWERFUL MOVEMENT

The power of our global movement of 10m people is crucial to achieving positive change for human rights.

WELCOME – OUR NEW SECRETARY GENERAL

DR AGNÈS CALLAMARD

In March 2021, we welcomed Dr Agnès Callamard as our new secretary general to lead our global work and be Amnesty International’s chief spokesperson. Agnès, who first worked at Amnesty International in 1995-2001, has been a prominent figure in the human rights world for decades. Agnès was a United Nations Special Rapporteur leading ground-breaking investigations on extrajudicial executions, and then director of the Global Freedom of Expression Project at Columbia University. With a rise of political hostility to human rights and global leaders taking inward-looking positions

on international issues such as migration and the climate emergency, Agnès is rallying the movement to meet the challenges head on.

‘Where governments and corporations seek to silence those who speak out against their abuses, to obfuscate the truth, and to undermine or reject human rights norms, the rigorous investigations and uncompromising campaigns of Amnesty International are more vital than ever. I am honoured to work alongside the supporters to defend and demand respect for all human rights for all.’



“If our leaders won’t lead us to rights, then rights must lead us to each other. We need to take charge – human rights charge – and demand together global governance for the rights of each one of us, to the exception of none of us, in the interests of all of us.”

Dr Agnès Callamard

CRISIS INVESTIGATION: AFGHANISTAN

With a focus on supporting people affected by crisis and conflict, Be There brings together Amnesty International's crisis response and refugee and migrant rights work under one strategic programme. In 2021, Afghanistan was a key priority. As the Taliban took over Kabul, our investigators documented the mass human rights violations and spiralling humanitarian situation. Amnesty International also launched an urgent response to support Afghan refugees fleeing for safety and human rights defenders trapped in the country.



“My notebooks were filling up with these crimes that needed to have a light shone on them... As we were fleeing [the Taliban] and as we got caught in the crush of people I lost everything else that I had taken to Afghanistan. But those notebooks stayed in my backpack. We got them home and were able to publish in the weeks that followed.”

Brian Castner, Amnesty International weapons investigator

📷 Afghan people climb atop a plane at Kabul airport on 16 August 2021, as thousands try to flee the city. © Wakil Kohsar/AFP via Getty Images

INVESTIGATING ABUSES

Over the year, Amnesty International shone a light on the widespread human rights violations against civilians in Afghanistan, gathering vital evidence, generating global media coverage and pressing the international community to take action.

As Taliban forces closed in on Kabul in late July, our investigators travelled to the city to gather testimonies from witnesses, journalists, and human rights defenders, while our Digital Verification Corps – a global network of volunteer activists – verified video evidence. This fed into a briefing published in September, documenting the killing of civilians and former government workers, repression of women and girls, crackdown on freedom of expression, attacks on journalists and door-to-door searches for human rights activists, among a litany of abuses.

Amnesty International followed this up by issuing a series of updates on the situation in Afghanistan, highlighting the plight of women and girls, and by briefing US officials. In December, Amnesty International launched a hard-hitting report, *No Escape*, that combined on-the-ground investigations with analysis of satellite imagery, videos, photographs, and medical and ballistics information. It exposed torture, extrajudicial executions and killings by the Taliban during the final stages of the conflict in Afghanistan, as well as civilian casualties caused by the US military and former Afghan government forces.



📷 Afghan women chant slogans and hold placards during a women's rights protest in Kabul on 21 October 2021. The Taliban violently cracked down on media coverage of the women's rights protest, beating several journalists. © Bulent Kilic/AFP via Getty Images

SUPPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND REFUGEES

The airlift operation following the Taliban takeover of Kabul left behind thousands of Afghan people at risk of reprisals, including human rights defenders. Amnesty International responded quickly, calling on the US government and the international community at large to prioritise evacuation, protection, and resettlement.

As well as advocating for those left stranded, we closely monitored the plight of Afghan people who sought safety abroad, documenting illegal pushbacks at European and Central Asian borders and ill treatment in places such as Belarus. Amnesty International urged all countries involved to live up to their international obligations and promoted innovative solutions, such as people-powered community sponsorship programmes for refugees.

In October, Amnesty International issued an advocacy briefing about the lack of safe routes out of Afghanistan for people at risk. It showed how those left behind after the airlift faced formidable obstacles to seeking safety, with neighbouring countries closing their borders to Afghan people without travel documents, leaving many with no choice but to make dangerous crossings.

Amnesty International continues to work on the Afghanistan crisis in 2022.

RESPONDING TO GLOBAL CRISES

There was a welcome return to on-the-ground investigations for the **Be There** team in 2021, as pandemic travel restrictions were gradually lifted. Combined with remote and digital work, Amnesty International's investigations, campaigns and advocacy took us to crises and conflicts in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, China, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Niger and beyond. Through collaboration with volunteers, local activists, journalists, civil society organisations, and media outlets including the Washington Post, CNN and Al Jazeera, this work had huge impact helping protect vulnerable people, sparking international action and holding human rights abusers to account.

“Volunteering enabled me to go in depth on a single issue, beyond other methods of online activism... working on assignments together with other volunteers from around the world provided me with a sense of achievement and purpose.”

A Decode Surveillance NYC volunteer

The year started with Amnesty International investigators interviewing refugees who had fled the bloody conflict in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region. Meticulously piecing together dozens of testimonies and cross-checking them against satellite imagery and video footage, Amnesty International published the first detailed account of the massacre, making global headlines and changing the conversation at the UN.

Alongside this and work on Afghanistan (see pages 6-7) and Xinjiang (see pages 16-17), Amnesty International investigated and documented human rights abuses in Niger, Mozambique, Myanmar, Haiti, Cambodia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, the territory of Nagorno Karabakh in Azerbaijan, and South Sudan. Through an innovative project, Decode Surveillance NYC, over 7,000 volunteers helped investigate the use of invasive and discriminatory surveillance cameras and facial recognition technology by police in New York.

The Be There programme of work had a significant impact in 2021:

- Amnesty International's investigations prompted the UN Human Rights Council to establish an expert commission to examine human rights violations in Ethiopia.
- One of the main recommendations in our report, *Legacy of Terror: The Plight of Yazidi Child Survivors of ISIS*, and in our advocacy work was for the inclusion of children in any reparations scheme for the survivors of Islamic State crimes. Amnesty International's report was stated to have been “instrumental” to the final law extending to include reparations for Yazidi survivors abducted as girls and boys.
- Meetings with Azerbaijani government authorities led to four soldiers being charged with war crimes for desecrating bodies and destroying gravestones in an Armenian cemetery.
- Our report, “*You're going to your death*” *Violations against Syrian refugees returning to Syria*, exposed the torture, disappearance and arbitrary detention of returned refugees by Syrian officials. The report led to the Lebanese authorities scrapping plans to deport six refugees back to Syria.

IN 2021, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S BE THERE PROGRAMME:

Worked on human rights issues in **45 COUNTRIES**

Carried out **9 HUMAN RIGHTS INVESTIGATIONS**

Engaged more than **7,000 VOLUNTEERS** in examining police surveillance and use of facial recognition technology in New York

Published **13 REPORTS** and major briefings



WON a Webby People's Voice Award and an Arias Award

Produced a video on the protests in Myanmar that was viewed more than **500,000 TIMES**



 Ethiopian refugees who fled the fighting in the Tigray region transport jerrycans of water at Umm Rakuba camp in eastern Sudan's Gedaref state, on 11 August 2021. © Ashraf Shazly/AFP via Getty Images

SECURING JUSTICE FOR

SYRIA

Amnesty International has played an important role in the campaign to secure justice for the victims of Bashar al-Assad's regime. Amnesty International investigators unearthed evidence to help hold regime officials to account, and Amnesty International UK provided Syrian human rights defenders, activists and organisations with advice, training and workshops on issues ranging from strategy to security. In 2021, this helped to achieve a historic victory when for the first time a former Syrian official was convicted of crimes against humanity.

“Amnesty has always been a great supporter to us and played a key role in the trial... Amnesty is a trusted and reliable organisation, so its reports were taken into account. From them, the judge saw what happened in Syria in 2011-12, the forced disappearances, torture and killings in detention centres.”

Anwar al-Bunni, human rights lawyer and former detainee of the Assad regime who helped to bring al-Gharib and Raslan, his former captor at Branch 251, to trial.

📍 Protest in the Syrian opposition-held city of Idlib, March 2021.
© Juma Mohammed/IMAGESLIVE via ZUMA Wire/Shutterstock



Syrian activists – including those supported and trained by Amnesty International UK – joined survivors and victims' families and two of the lead Syrian organisations to work with the European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights in Germany to build cases against Syrian officials. The principle of universal jurisdiction allows courts of any country to prosecute people for crimes under international law – war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity – committed outside its territory.



German and French police arrest Anwar Raslan and Eyad al-Gharib, a more junior Syrian intelligence officer.



Raslan and al-Gharib's trial starts at the Higher Regional Court in Koblenz, Germany. It is the first time Syrian officials accused of committing crimes under international law have appeared in court. Amnesty International provides the judge with important reports and testimonies from Syria-based witnesses.



In a historic moment for justice, Raslan is found guilty of crimes against humanity – including torture, murder and rape of detainees – and sentenced to life in prison. Similar cases against Syrian regime officials are also underway in Austria, Sweden and Norway.

2016 >> 2018 >>



The group connect a German prosecutor investigating Branch 251 – an infamous military intelligence facility in Damascus – and senior Syrian intelligence officer Anwar Raslan, with key witnesses and victims. The prosecutor also collects in-depth Amnesty International reports documenting human rights violations in Syria since the start of the conflict in 2011.

FEBRUARY 2020 >>

APRIL 2020 >>

FEBRUARY 2021 >>

JANUARY 2022



Al-Gharib is convicted and sentenced to four and a half years in prison for his role in the torture of detainees.

EXPOSING WEAPONS OF MASS SURVEILLANCE

During 2021 Amnesty International played a key role in a ground-breaking investigation, revealing how repressive governments used a powerful spyware against heads of state, human rights activists, journalists and lawyers, resulting in widespread human rights abuses.

Amnesty International supporters demonstrate against the presence of the NSO Group at the International Security Expo in London, September 2021. © AI



“NSO Group is the worst of the worst in selling digital burglary tools to players who they are fully aware actively and aggressively violate the human rights of dissidents, opposition figures, and journalists.”

Edward Snowden, president of the Freedom of the Press Foundation

The Pegasus Project is a game-changing collaboration involving more than 80 journalists from 17 media organisations in 10 countries coordinated by Forbidden Stories, a Paris-based media non-profit organisation, with technical support from Amnesty International.

In July 2021 the project revealed how Pegasus spyware, sold by Israeli surveillance firm NSO Group, had been used to facilitate human rights violations around the world on a massive scale, following the revelation of the phone numbers of 50,000 potential targets.

The targets included at least 180 journalists in 20 countries, as well as scores of human rights defenders and other activists. Family members of the murdered Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi and 14 heads of state, including presidents Emanuel Macron of France, South Africa’s Cyril Ramaphosa, and Pakistan’s Imran Khan, were also targeted.

Amnesty International’s Security Lab played a crucial role in exposing the forensic evidence that proved the data could be connected to Pegasus, by conducting cutting-edge forensic tests on mobile phones to identify traces of the spyware.

OUTCRY, INVESTIGATIONS AND CRIMINAL CASES

The Pegasus Project sent shockwaves around the world, provoking an international outcry, and prompting calls for investigations and demands for greater controls on spyware. Many of those who discovered their devices had been targeted launched criminal cases, including in France and Mexico. India’s Supreme Court set up a technical committee to look into whether the government had used Pegasus to illegitimately target people.



Uncovering the Iceberg report cover illustration. © Toscanabanana 2021

“Apple commends groups like the Citizen Lab and Amnesty Tech for their ground-breaking work to identify cybersurveillance abuses and help protect victims.”

Apple

The European Parliament voted to create a ‘committee of inquiry’ to investigate abuses of Pegasus by member states and awarded the Pegasus Project the Daphne Caruana Prize for Journalism, while the US Department of Commerce placed NSO Group on a trade blacklist because of its ‘malicious cyber activity’. Apple subsequently launched a legal action against NSO Group to ‘curb the abuse of state-sponsored spyware’, praising Amnesty International for their vital work.

NSO Group were also prevented from promoting its spyware at a major trade fair in London – the International Security Expo 2021 – after Amnesty International UK sent an urgent letter to the organisers.



The Pegasus Project is a collaboration by more than **80 JOURNALISTS** from **17 media organisations** in **10 countries**.



11 COUNTRIES were named as suspected clients of NSO Group: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Hungary, India, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Morocco, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Togo and UAE.



AT LEAST 40 JOURNALISTS from nearly every major media outlet in India were selected as potential targets.



Amnesty International’s forensic tools were made open source and have since been installed **OVER 70,000 TIMES**, allowing users across the globe to add to the growing list of confirmed attacks.

STANDING UP FOR PEOPLE WHOSE RIGHTS ARE BEING ABUSED

Supporting people whose rights are being abused is at the heart of Amnesty International's work. Through our annual *Write for Rights* campaign, we mobilise hundreds of thousands of people around the world to take action for those enduring unjust imprisonment, torture, persecution and other human rights violations. As these success stories from 2021 show, *Write for Rights* has a huge impact.



© Hathloul family

WOMEN'S RIGHTS ACTIVIST FREED

Women's rights defender **Loujain al-Hathloul** was released from prison in Saudi Arabia in February 2021 after nearly three years behind bars enduring torture, sexual harassment and solitary confinement. She was arbitrarily detained in 2018, alongside 12 other activists, and convicted in a grossly unfair trial simply for promoting women's rights. Amnesty International collaborated with others in a high-profile campaign to secure her freedom and challenge Saudi Arabia's widespread human rights abuses. We celebrate Loujain's release, but we continue to call for her unjust conviction to be quashed and her travel ban lifted.

"Loujain al-Hathloul should never have been forced to spend a single second behind bars. She has been vindictively punished for bravely defending women's rights in Saudi Arabia, and for exercising her right to freedom of expression."

Lynn Maalouf, Amnesty International



© Private

STUDENT LEADER RELEASED

Slam poet and student leader **Paing Phyo Min** was released early from prison in Myanmar as part of a mass amnesty in April 2021. He was arrested two years earlier after his satirical poetry troupe, *Peacock Generation*, performed shows that criticised the military. Amnesty International featured Paing Phyo Min's case in *Write for Rights 2020* and Amnesty International's supporters across the globe sent more than 300,000 messages to him and the authorities in Myanmar during the campaign.

NGO WORKER REUNITED WITH FAMILY

There was positive news for another human rights campaigner featured in *Write for Rights 2020*. NGO worker **Germain Rukuki** was freed from prison in Burundi in April 2021 after spending four years behind bars because of his peaceful activism. Initially handed a 32-year sentence on baseless charges, he was jailed before getting the chance to hold his youngest child, born just weeks after he was detained in 2017. Amnesty International supporters across the world sent more than 436,000 solidarity messages and appeals on Germain's behalf. He has now been reunited with his family, who fled Burundi for fear of reprisals.



© Amnesty International

JUSTICE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST

In July 2021, there was a vital step towards justice for the family of Honduran environmental and indigenous rights activist **Berta Cáceres**, a leading campaigner against the Agua Zarca hydroelectric dam who was killed in 2016. David Castillo, the man in charge of the Agua Zarca project, was found guilty of participating as 'co-author' of the murder. Amnesty International, which has long documented attacks against human rights activists in Honduras, welcomed the judgement, but continues to call for all those involved in Berta's killing to be held accountable.

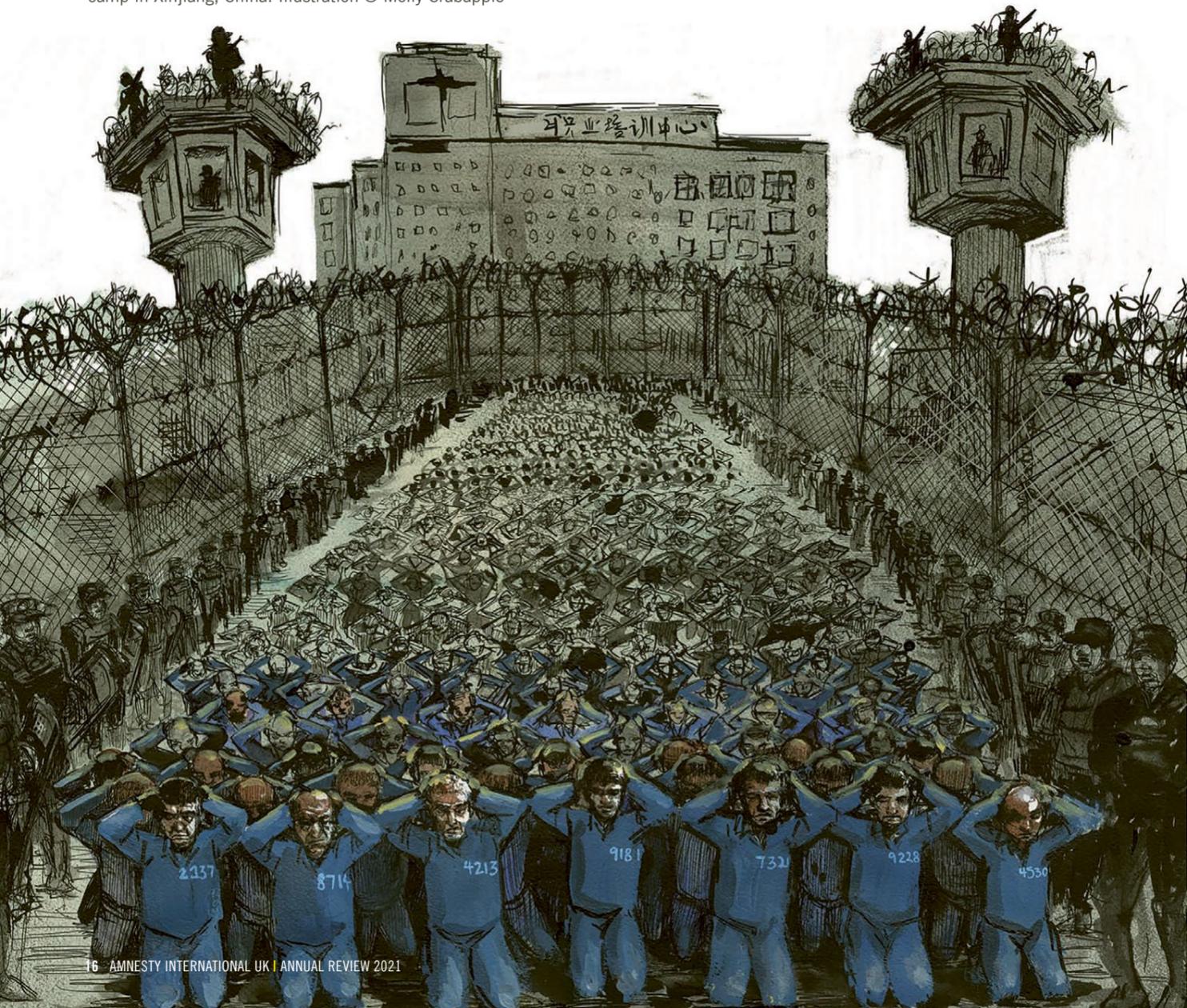


© Amnesty International & Camila Villota B

EXPOSING CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

In 2021 Amnesty International shone a spotlight on China's massive, systematic abuses against Muslims in Xinjiang, publishing a comprehensive investigation, campaigning on behalf of detainees and those who have fled, and pressing the international community to take action.

📷 Guards surround a large group of detainees in an internment camp in Xinjiang, China. Illustration © Molly Crabapple



“Two guards took me from the cell and dropped me off [at the interrogation room]. Two men were inside... If I told them I had been praying, I had heard that I would get sentenced for 20 or 25 years. So I told them I never prayed. Then they became upset... they hit me with a chair until it broke.”

Mansur, who says he was tortured multiple times while in internment camps

Since 2017 the Chinese government has caused immense suffering in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. As many as one million men and women from predominantly Muslim ethnic groups have been arbitrarily detained in internment camps or prisons as part of a campaign of subjugation and forced assimilation.

After an in-depth investigation, Amnesty International published a 160-page report – *Like we were enemies in a war* – in June 2021. Based on first-hand testimonies from former detainees and others present in Xinjiang during the crackdown, as well as analysis of satellite imagery and data, it is the most comprehensive account yet of life inside the internment camps.

The report revealed how members of ethnic minorities are often detained on the basis of lawful activities most of us take for granted – the number of children they have, having WhatsApp on their phones, or simply their ethnicity or religion.

Inside the camps, detainees are subjected to a relentless and forced indoctrination campaign, physical and psychological torture, and other forms of ill-treatment. From the moment they enter the camps, detainees' lives are extraordinarily regimented. They are stripped of their personal autonomy, with every aspect of their lives dictated to them. Detainees who deviate from the conduct prescribed by camp authorities – even in innocuous ways – are reprimanded and regularly physically punished, often along with their cellmates.

The report also demonstrated how, inside and outside the camps, Xinjiang's Muslims are one of the most heavily surveilled populations in the world. After being released, former internees are put under near-constant electronic and in-person surveillance for months, including invasive 'homestays' by government cadres who monitor them and report 'suspicious' behaviour.

Their freedom of movement is also heavily restricted, with large numbers of security forces patrolling the streets and thousands of checkpoints.

The evidence gathered in the report shows the Chinese government has committed a series of crimes against humanity.



📷 Petition handover at the Chinese Embassy in London, demanding the release of all people detained in internment camps and in prisons in Xinjiang, 7 October 2021. © AI

**MORE THAN
323,000 PEOPLE**
signed our *Free Xinjiang
Detainees* petition in 2021.



CAMPAINING FOR DETAINEES

The report *Like we were enemies in a war* provided detailed information about more than 60 people who are missing or detained in Xinjiang. Since its publication at least two of the featured detainees have been released and at least seven have been allowed to communicate with family members in China via video or phone calls. The report garnered significant global media coverage, and Amnesty International followed it up with a campaign calling for the closure of the internment camps. We also pressed the United Nations to take action and urged countries such as Morocco not to deport ethnic Uyghurs to China, where they would be at grave risk.

CHALLENGING THE GREAT RIGHTS ROBBERY

Amnesty International UK is responding to the government's attempt to roll back human rights in the UK.



Human rights in the UK came under intense pressure in 2021, as the government introduced several major pieces of legislation threatening our fundamental freedoms. The Policing Bill represents an enormous and unprecedented extension of policing powers in England and Wales, while the Nationality and Borders Bill, far from 'fixing' our asylum system, will make vulnerable people even more vulnerable.

The government also announced a plan to end prosecutions, inquests, judicial reviews and civil claims arising from the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland, denying victims justice and ensuring communities remain divided. To make matters worse, its proposed reforms for the Human Rights Act – a vital tool for holding authorities to account in the UK – would subordinate our hard-won rights to the whims and ambitions of politicians.

Given the size of the government's parliamentary majority, Amnesty International UK knew it would be difficult to stop all this legislation. As a result, we focused on removing the worst aspects of the bills, while building public understanding of the importance of human rights and stimulating debate to ensure these abusive measures are removed in the future. This project will remain central to Amnesty International UK's work.

SIGNS OF PROGRESS

Despite this challenging situation, there were also significant signs of progress in 2021. In January, the High Court quashed the convictions of 15 human rights defenders prosecuted under terrorism-related legislation after peacefully preventing a deportation flight at Stansted airport in 2017.

Amnesty International UK had repeatedly called for the charge against the 'Stansted 15' to be dropped as it was excessive and could discourage other activists from taking non-violent direct action. Around 12,000 UK supporters, members and activists sent solidarity messages to the Stansted 15 as part of our 2021 *Write for Rights* campaign.

In March, the Scottish government committed to introduce a new bill incorporating four international human rights treaties into Scottish law, something for which Amnesty International UK has long campaigned.

May McKeith, one of the 'Stansted 15', at Chelmsford Crown Court before a sentencing hearing on 6 February 2019. Their convictions were quashed in 2021. © Getty Images

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is now being incorporated into Scottish law, with the support of all political parties at Holyrood. The next steps will be further incorporation of economic, social and cultural rights, women's rights, elimination of racial discrimination, disability rights, environmental rights, and protection of the rights of LGBTI+ and older people.

Later in the year Amnesty International UK teamed up with organisations including Liberty, Stonewall and Freedom from Torture to stage Stop the Rights Raid, a high-profile week of action opposing the threats to laws protecting human rights in the UK. In October, numerous letters and online messages were sent by supporters and members urging MPs to defend our human rights legal protections.



Demonstrator Patsy Stevenson is arrested on the bandstand of Clapham Common, where a vigil was taking place for Sarah Everard in London on 13 Mar 2021. © James Veysey/REX via Shutterstock

“Far from world-leading ‘championing of freedom’, we actually got a major attack on human rights protections in the UK that would dramatically weaken people’s abilities to hold the government to account and to defend themselves when the state violates their rights.”

Tom Southerden of Amnesty International UK's law and human rights programme on the government's proposed reform of the Human Rights Act

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE UK



↑ School children take part in a climate strike in Glasgow on 24 September. © Jeff J Mitchell via Getty Images

OUR EDUCATION WORK

A key part of Amnesty International UK's work is to support people across the UK to know and claim their rights through our human rights education and training programme.

“At Rise Up, everyone was passionate and determined, and all with a resolve to fight for their individual cause. The mentors believed in you and our goals. I now have a sharper campaign focus.”

Millie Vasudevan on how Amnesty's campaign training programme helped her work tackling racism in universities.

RISE UP



📷 Rise Up's final weekend for the 2021-22 cohort featured a Dragon's Den-style session, with participants actively learning to pitch for support for their campaigns.

2021 was the third year of our Rise Up programme, providing training for young activists to design and manage their own campaigns, on the human rights issues that matter to them and their communities. Supported by the Co-operative Bank UK in 2021, 20 participants aged 16 to 24 from across the UK joined workshops, talks and sessions to build their activism skills and develop campaigns on issues they care about. Their final weekend of training finished with a Dragon's Den-style session where participants pitched to a panel of Amnesty International UK staff for funds and support for their campaigns. It gave them the experience of pitching, and we now look forward to following them as their campaigns advance as part of the Rise Up alumni group.

"I enjoyed the chance to interact with people who cared about the world in different ways. The work we did coalesced my ideas in something more tangible – less of a personal passion, more an action plan I can bring to the world. I felt like I was a part of something bigger."

Alina Imykshenova, campaigning for climate justice

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS BOOK

In September 2021, we launched *Know Your Rights and Claim Them*, a comprehensive guide for young people interested in human rights and activism. It was co-authored by Angelina Jolie, UNHCR special envoy, Amnesty International UK, and Professor Geraldine Van Bueren QC, one of the drafters of the landmark Children's Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was also written in collaboration with youth activists and children from 34 countries.

The book – published in the UK, Australia, Canada, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Greece, New Zealand, South Korea and the United States – is due to launch in at least another eight countries in 2022. Free copies have been distributed to school libraries and marginalised communities in the UK, in partnership with the School Library Association, and funded by the Lightbulb Trust. To accompany the book, we also produced an online course, *An Introduction to Child Rights*, as part of our expanding Human Rights Academy, and an audio edition which was shortlisted for a British Book Award.

We worked closely with young people to publicise the book to ensure their voices were heard, from appearing with Angelina Jolie at the online launch to US podcast interviews.

The global media coverage helped make children's rights part of an ongoing conversation. In October, youth activist Vinuki Bakmeedeniya spoke about

the book at a UN General Assembly event, which contributed to an important breakthrough – the decision to develop a Guidance Note on child rights mainstreaming in the framework of the UN's Call to Action for Human Rights. This is a key tool for a more systematic inclusion of child rights across the UN system, and crucial to achieving the full realisation of children's rights.



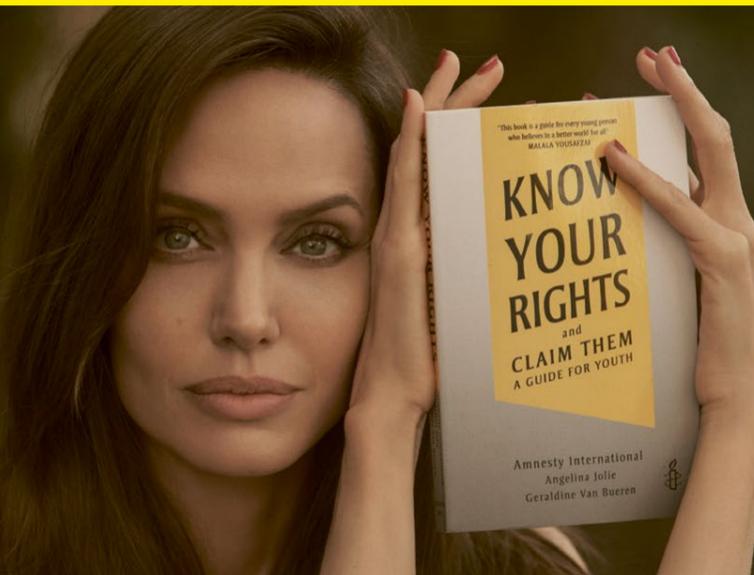
"Rights are not just words written in this book. Rather, there are stories here that we tell you to remind the world of these rights and their importance."

Muhammad Najem, who is well known for documenting children's experiences of the conflict in Syria through social media.

"Today we have youth engaged and ready to fight, but many struggle with misinformation from adults, a lack of awareness about their rights, and a lack of knowledge of how to use the specifics of their rights. We need to give them the tools to strengthen their fight and empower them"

Angelina Jolie

📷 Angelina Jolie with the book *Know Your Rights and Claim Them*, published in September 2021.



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL STATISTICS

OUR GLOBAL MOVEMENT

60 YEARS

of fighting for our human rights



OVER **10 MILLION**

supporters, members, and activists worldwide in over 150 countries and territories, including almost 480,000 in the UK



Amnesty International has a local presence in more than

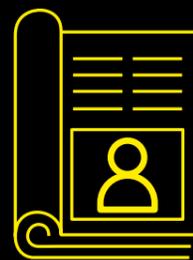
70 COUNTRIES

including the UK



Amnesty International's 2021 report on the state of the world's human rights covered

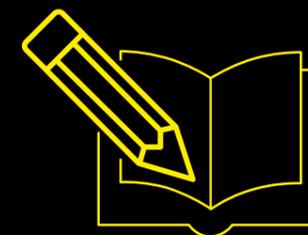
154 COUNTRIES



HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AND TRAINING

160,000

people around the world are now using the online courses provided by Amnesty International's Human Rights Academy



355

Amnesty Teachers delivered human rights education to 6670 students in the UK



20 YOUNG PEOPLE

participated in Rise Up, Amnesty International UK's activist training programme, supported in 2021 by the Co-operative Bank

Amnesty International UK's school speakers programme reached **2038** children and young people with messages about the importance of human rights

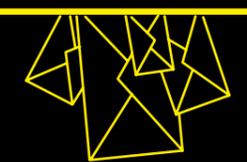


TAKING ACTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Our 2021 Write for Rights global campaign resulted in over

4.6 MILLION

actions taken in support of people and communities whose rights are being abused.



NEARLY 1 MILLION

of these actions were thanks to Amnesty International UK supporters, members and activists

110 FOOTBALL CLUBS



took part in Amnesty International UK's Football Welcomes initiative in 2021, helping create a more welcoming environment for refugees living in the UK

IMPROVING OUR ORGANISATION

In 2021, testimonies by staff members forced Amnesty International UK to recognise its own institutional racism and to start the process of addressing it.



“We should be held as an example of inclusive working environments, yet we've found ourselves failing. Our staff and supporters rightly expect and deserve better. We must now work hard to draw that better future and make it a reality.”

Andrew Lines, Chair of Trustees

Tackling racism – a discussion panel on racial justice at the 2021 Section AGM. © Marie-Anne Ventoura/AI

‘Our movement, like many social movements, isn’t inclusive,’ said Sen Raj, chair of the Amnesty International UK Section Board, in his AGM speech in June 2021. ‘As a movement of people committed to “fighting the bad guys”, we often assume good intent and charitable motivations inoculate us from the bigotries we fight against. This is a mistake.’

His speech followed a series of powerful testimonies from current and former members of staff about their experiences. It is important to recognise and clearly acknowledge that Amnesty International UK has exhibited institutional racism. Over many years we failed to properly embed equality, inclusion and anti-racism in our culture and practices. This is not right for any organisation, let alone one with our mission and purpose.

Speaking to staff in 2021, chief executive Sacha Deshmukh said: ‘We have to acknowledge that the improvements that we need to make in Amnesty International UK are years overdue. And while the critical issues raised relate to racism, and we have now recognised that Amnesty International UK did exhibit institutional racism, it is equally critical to recognise that the ways in which we have let down our colleagues have not just been limited to racism.’

‘There are a range of ways that, for much too long, Amnesty International UK has not provided an inclusive working environment. Unacceptable behaviours by some staff and activists that should have no place in a human rights organisation have been tolerated or ignored, and there has not been

a recognition that a working environment built on trust and respect is critical to our responsibilities as an employer and also delivers the best human rights impact by far.’

The failures exhibited by Amnesty International UK are all too common in the not-for-profit sector, but the fact that others exhibit similar behaviours provides no excuse.

Amnesty International UK is being transparent about the reality of the improvements that we have started, but still need to take much further, in order to be clear and held to account about the extent of the transformation of culture and working environment that we have a duty to deliver for all our colleagues. We have been supported in that by an independent investigation, whose report we have published on our website and whose recommendations we have committed to implementing in full. But we are well aware that the responsibility for transforming lies only with ourselves.

Although we have started to make improvements, we do not under-estimate the breadth and depth of the transformation required for Amnesty International UK to become a truly anti-racist organisation. As Sen Raj said: ‘We all have a responsibility to face into these conversations... Anti-racism isn’t a state – it’s an ongoing practice of learning and accountability.’

Sen Raj, the Chair of Amnesty International UK Section speaking at the Section AGM in June 2021. © Marie-Anne Ventoura/AI

GOVERNANCE

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK FUNDING OUR HUMAN RIGHTS WORK

Amnesty International operates in the UK as two distinct, but related, legal entities: Amnesty International UK Section Charitable Trust ('the Charitable Trust'), a charity registered in England and Wales (no 1051681) and Scotland (no 03139939), and Amnesty International United Kingdom Section ('the UK Section'), a limited company (company number: 01735872). Each entity is governed by its own Board.

The Charitable Trust fulfils its objectives by funding a range of charitable activities, in the UK and internationally, to promote the rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and various international treaties. It gives most of its grants to the UK Section and the Secretariat of Amnesty International.

The UK Section is responsible for the bulk of our campaigning, education and advocacy work in the UK. It is primarily funded by its membership subscriptions and by grants from the Charitable Trust.

The work featured in this review was carried out by the UK Section and/or funded by grants from the Charitable Trust.

For full audited accounts of both entities for the year ended 31 December 2021, see: [amnesty.org.uk/finances](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/finances)

Registered office:

17-25 New Inn Yard
London
EC2A 3EA

Members of both Boards and the senior management team are accurate as at end of July 2022.

THE BOARD OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

UNITED KINGDOM SECTION

Dr Senthorun (Sen) Raj, Chair
Ciara Garcha, Vice Chair
Helen Horton, Deputy Vice Chair
Meredith Coombs, Treasurer
Nabil Ahmed
Lucy Blake
Sarah Bond
Thomas Chigbo
Owen Collins
Susan Kerr
Abigail Grant
Tom Harrison
Emily Helsby
Julia Pata
Rebecca Warren

THE TRUSTEES OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

SECTION CHARITABLE TRUST

Andrew Lines, Chair
Dr Deborah Charnock, Vice Chair
Awmaima Amrayaf
Nisha De Silva
Ciara Garcha
Shirah Z Mansaray
Helen Moulinos
Dr Senthorun (Sen) Raj
Dr Subo Shanmuganathan
Rebecca Warren

Senior Management Team

Sacha Deshmukh, Chief Executive
Rosie Chinchin, Director of Fundraising
Iréne Fufeyin, Director of People and Culture
Tim Hancock, Director of Chief Executive's Office
Kerry Moscogiuri, Director of Supporter Campaigning and Communications
Toby Woffenden and Ben Smith, Director of Corporate Services, (job share)

WE NEED YOUR HELP

TO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS

IN 2022 AND BEYOND



£1,500

could contribute to the annual cost of delivering training to teachers in human rights education, linked to the relevant curriculum areas for schools in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.



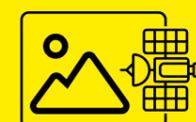
£3,000

could cover the cost for ten Amnesty International researchers to attend online hostile environment awareness training.



£15,000

could fund a two week investigation in a crisis zone.



£30,000

could help us obtain crucial data (such as satellite imagery) to gather key evidence for our investigations.



£50,000

could fund activities of the Digital Verification Corps – working with six universities globally to train up the next generation of human rights investigators who in turn contribute key input to Amnesty International's open-source investigations.

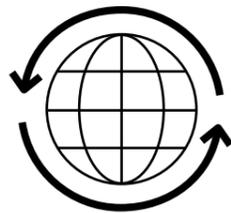
THANK YOU

At a time where we are witnessing extraordinary challenges around the world, the generosity of our close community of activists and supporters has never been more vital. Amnesty International will continue to investigate and expose abuses, educate and mobilise the public, and help transform societies to create a safer, more just world. We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion; meaning our work is only made possible thanks to the solidarity and commitment of people like you. Thank you for being part of our movement.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK SECTION CHARITABLE TRUST

TOTAL 2021 EXPENDITURE
£20,504,000



£11,397,000

Grants to the Secretariat of Amnesty International and other Amnesty International sections for human rights work.



£4,415,000

Raising funds and other trading activities



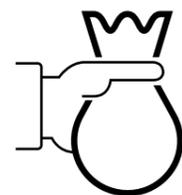
£1,234,000

Investment into activist recruitment



£852,000

Production and distribution of human rights publications and campaigning materials



£2,606,000

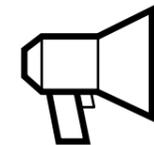
Grants to the UK Section for human rights work

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UNITED KINGDOM SECTION

TOTAL 2021 EXPENDITURE
£11,948,000



CAMPAIGNS AND ACTION



£1,062,000

Production and distribution of human rights publications and campaigning materials.

£1,104,000

Campaigns and activism support

£781,000

Advocacy and policy

£685,000

Media costs

£477,000

Refugees and asylum: ensuring that the rights of refugees and migrants are protected from the grassroots community level to the national policy level through community and events, policy and awareness raising.

£455,000

Campaigning in Northern Ireland and Scotland

£278,000

Campaigning to save the Human Rights Act

£274,000

Individuals at risk: standing up for real people, their families and their communities. The women, men and children we campaign for have all experienced human rights abuses first hand.

£207,000

Crisis response campaigning

£122,000

Human Rights Defenders: the Brave campaign – empowering young human rights defenders with the skills and knowledge to create change and protect human rights in their communities.

£110,000

Business and human rights

£103,000

Security and human rights

£90,000

Women's human rights

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AND TRAINING



£517,000

Human rights education: promoting and delivering human rights education in the UK through producing teaching resources, offering professional development to educators, providing speakers for schools and delivering activist skills training to supporters.

£192,000

Youth Activism and the Rise Up programme

BUILDING A POWERFUL MOVEMENT



£3,987,000

Raising funds and trading activities

£1,136,000

Investment into activist recruitment

£289,000

Activism in the community

£82,000

Contributions to the global movement

www.amnesty.org.uk

Amnesty International UK Section Charitable Trust

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