

BANBURY AREA GROUP AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



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We are ordinary people, who live in and around Banbury, who stand up for humanity and human rights. Our purpose is to protect individuals wherever justice, fairness and truth are denied.

We meet on the third Monday of each month except August. You are very welcome to join us. Sign up for email updates via the website.

As a global movement of over ten million people, Amnesty International is the world's largest grassroots human rights organisation.

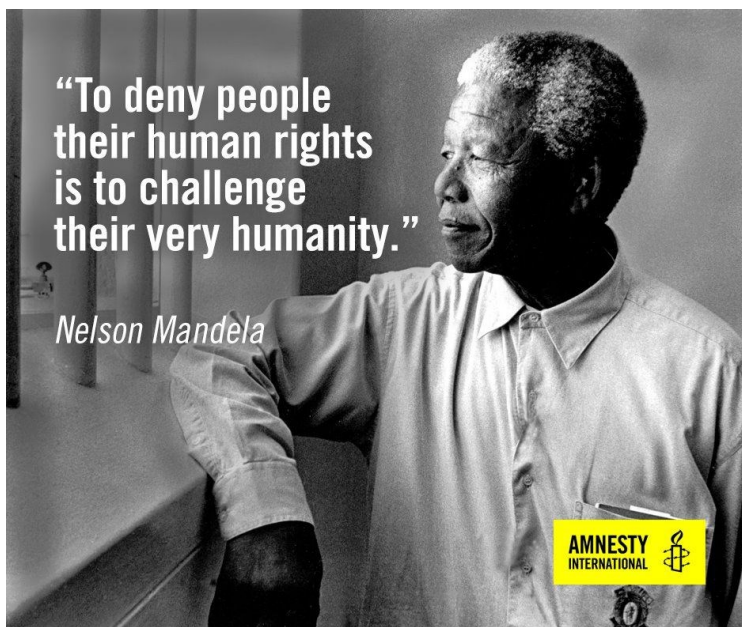
What are human rights and why do we fight for them?

The basic credo of human rights activists and of Amnesty International is set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948:

“All human beings are created equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”

Human rights are intrinsic to human beings. They express a significant part of what it is to be human and to flourish as a human being. They are not the creation of governments and can only be taken away from individuals illegitimately (a view governments, particularly authoritarian ones, don't like of course!). The idea of human rights is not new: it goes back hundreds if not thousands of years.

There are so-called “*civil and political rights*”: for example, freedom of expression, association and assembly and freedom from torture. There are also “*economic, social and cultural rights*” that seek to ensure basic standards of decent treatment for people in areas such as health, education, housing and employment. There are also “*collective rights*” such as the right of a group of people to a decent environment or to benefit from their resources.



Human rights are widely abused. Across large parts of the world, freedom, truth and justice are denied to huge numbers of people. People are killed, tortured, persecuted, abused and denied liberty by governments and increasingly by private armies, militias and even companies.

Amnesty and its supporters stand up for those being denied their human rights and work for a world where human rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

It is tempting to think that human rights are for “foreigners” and that they're not relevant in the UK because our basic freedoms are certain and we can trust the Government. This is not the case. Important human rights in the UK are under threat right now, whether rights of refugees or rights of legitimate protesters, and it's

necessary to be vigilant, particularly regarding treatment of marginalised communities.

Steps are being taken, to limit and deny the applicability of international human rights standards that the UK has committed to, in some cases even been the prime architect of. So there is much work for Amnesty to do both nationally and internationally to help particular individuals and groups, as well as to uphold the basic idea that human rights are universal and apply to everyone, everywhere.



What we do

We are currently campaigning for a number of 'Individuals at Risk' including a young Uyghur man called Yiliyasijiang Reheman, who has not been heard from since 2017. It is believed he has been sent to one of the many detention camps in the Xinjiang province of China. We've written to our MP, Government ministers and the Chinese Ambassador trying to establish his whereabouts. He has a wife and two young children, one of whom he has never seen.



Yiliyasijiang Reheman

Another case the group has been working on is for a group of cattle farmers in Angola, Africa. About two thirds of the lands they have traditionally used to graze their cattle have been taken by commercial ranchers.

They have been forced to survive on barren and drought ridden land pushing the communities to the brink of starvation. We've raised funds for them and written to the Angolan authorities to highlight their situation.

We are also active in two 'Country' campaigns, a new initiative focusing on human rights in Indian administered Kashmir and the long running situation of Palestinians in Israel and the Occupied Territories. We have been learning about the situation from Amnesty's Country Co-Ordinator and the recent report into Israel's systematic oppression of Palestinians.

Get Involved

"Those who today still feel a sense of impotence can do something: they can support Amnesty International. They can help it to stand up for freedom and justice"

Peter Benenson. Founder of Amnesty International

We are a small friendly group of ordinary people who speak up for others who have been denied fair treatment.

We meet once a month either to carry out letter writing and plan activities or hold an informative talk.

In recent years we have held fundraising Garden Parties and concerts, awareness raising talks and films and card and letter writing events. We have met with our MP several times. We work with local schools and give talks to various groups and organisations.

You are very welcome to turn up to any meeting or event and have a chat about what we do and how you could help. You don't need any experience or knowledge, we can introduce you to letter writing and explain the campaigns. You don't even need to be a member of Amnesty International.

If you want to do something about the unfairness and injustices you hear about then lending a hand with us is a great way to get involved.

You can email us for more information and follow us on Twitter and Instagram.

Forthcoming events

October—Mon 17th Group meeting

November—Mon 21st Group Meeting

December—**Write for Rights**-Annual national campaign writing cards and letters of solidarity to those who have been denied their rights. Date tbc.

"INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE."

Martin Luther King, African-American civil rights activist