

**Amnesty International**

### **Blackheath and Greenwich**

### **Newsletter**

# January 2023

## Group Meeting Tuesday, 10.01.2023 in the crypt of St Margaret’s church

*Meeting chair: Angela. Newsletter writer: Graham.*

1. **Introductions and Apologies**

Angela welcomed Bethan to the group.

Present: Angela, Bethan, Brigitte, David We, David Wi, Geoff, Graham, Jennifer, Roger and Tony

Apologies: Amanda, Anne F, Ann H, Ken, Olwen & Rachel

1. **Group AGM** Please see separate minutes- spoiler alert, Anne F elected chair!
2. **Country/regional campaigns**

West & Central Africa*–* Geoff***:*** Some good news from the AIUK team: In Niger, parliament has lifted prison sentences for libel and insults, often used in relation to human rights defenders and journalists. In response to AI research, Mali’s authorities launched an investigation into an ‘anti-terrorist operation’ carried out by armed forces and mercenaries from Wagner group which killed over 203 people. And in Guinea, a judicial investigation was launched against former political leaders and police for violations of the right to life, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, and torture following a constitutional crisis in 2020. AI had called repeatedly for an end to the impunity for these violations. No actions relate to the above, but Geoff will plan a letter on another case.

Central America - Roger: In *Mexico* violence is unrelenting. Over 26,000 people murdered in 2022 including many women and girls. This month's action is concerned with femicide. A letter will be circulated soon.

*Guatemala*, a former anti-corruption prosecutor, Virginia Laparra, has been in jail without trial since February.

*Honduras*.Two Guapinol environmental defenders, Aly Dominguez and Jairo Bonilla who were campaigning against the Los Pinares mining project have been murdered.

Further details from Roger or on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CentralAmericaMexicoTeamAIUK>

Central and Eastern Europe – Brigitte No report received.

China – Angela Urgent Action for detained journalist whose health has further deteriorated. A letter will be prepared for letter writing this month and circulated for on-line action.

Iran – Graham Urgent Action-at least 26 people are at great risk of execution in connection with nationwide protests after Iranian authorities arbitrarily executed two (now four) individuals following grossly unfair sham trials in a bid to instil fear among the public and end protests. Of the 26, at least 11 are sentenced to death and 15 are charged with capital offences and awaiting or undergoing trials**.**

1. **AIUK matters** (standing item)

AIBG participation / representation at next AIUK AGM (Working Group – Angela, Anne F, David Wi, Graham) – *Group to meet on 18 January.*

1. **Nov 2022 Booksale - debrief**

Donation to AIUK – update to remove any confusion we confirmed that the December meeting voted unopposed to donate £3000 to AIUK.

Feedback from Happy Fish – No news about a donation from them for the books collected at the end of the November sale. Brigitte to follow up.

Article in AIUK magazine re AIBG book sales has been drafted by Ann, Ken. Graham to supply photos, Geoff to coordinate with David at AIUK.

1. **Future fundraising initiatives** (standing item) postponed to later meeting.
2. **Winter social –** Brigitte kindly offered to base the social at her house on Tuesday 24 January thus combining it with letter writing. Details will be circulated by David Wi,
3. **Arrangements for future** **meetings**

Georgie Needham-Bennett, school in Woolwich – Woolwich School letter-writing no further news on this but Roger and Graham to follow up Sotez Choudhury to speak on AIUK anti-racism network.

1. **AOB** The meeting agreed with Geoff that Anne F and David Wi should be the contacts for AIUK going forward. David Wi to action.

**UPCOMING EVENTS 2023**

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| Tuesday 24 January | Winter Social &Letter Writing Brigitte’ House 7.30pm |
| Tuesday14 February | Group meeting in the Crypt of St Margaret’s Church |

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| **AIBG CONTACTS** | |
| **Position** | **Name** |
| Chair | Anne F |
| Secretary (enquiries contact) | David Wi |
| Treasurer | David We |
| Publicity & Social Media | TBA |
| Membership & AIBG Website | David WW & David Wi |
| Letter writing co-ordinator | Brigitte |
| Newsletter | Rota: Brigitte Graham Roger Tony |

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**Website**: [www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/blackheath-and-greenwich](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/blackheath#_blank)