

Dates for your diary	Saturday 27/01/2024: Holocaust Memorial Day March/April 2024: Group AGM (date TBC)
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Dear writers

Local events

Group AGM 2024, Bognor Regis: this is to provide formal notification of the Group AGM, which is due to take place at the end of March/beginning of April in Bognor Regis; date to be confirmed once venue is booked.

Other events

27/01/2024: International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust

- Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) promote and support Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) – the international day to remember the 6 million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, alongside the millions of people murdered under Nazi persecution of other groups and during more recent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. 27 January marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.
- HMD 2024: the theme is 'fragility of freedom' <https://www.hmd.org.uk/what-is-holocaust-memorial-day/this-years-theme/>
- **Light the Darkness:** Each year people from across the UK take part in the Light the Darkness national moment for Holocaust Memorial Day; at 8pm on 27 January people across the nation will light candles and put them safely in their windows. Follow this link to find out more about this action: <https://www.hmd.org.uk/take-part-in-holocaust-memorial-day/ukhmd/lightthedarkness/>



Follow this link to find out about **HMD events** near to where you live: <https://www.hmd.org.uk/take-part-in-holocaust-memorial-day/activities/> .

- 27/01/2024, 14:15 and 19:15 performance, Chichester Festival Theatre: Chichester marks Holocaust Memorial Day: [Women Who Resisted](#), a specially-commissioned one-woman show from novelist, historian and Ciceronian, Kate Mosse.
- 26/01/2024, 11:00, Havant Cemetary: Havant Borough Council, [Holocaust Memorial Commemoration](#). Followed by reception at the Public Service Plaza, with speaker Mr Bryan Huberman, who is a 2nd Generation speaker from the 45 Aid Society, who are a charity formed after the Holocaust by The Windermere Children.

Would you like to be one of Amnesty UK's Country Coordinators? Amnesty International Country Coordinators are volunteer activists who specialise in Human Rights campaigning for specific countries around the world.

- The Country Coordinator Forum is looking for new members to join the team. The voluntary role requires 7-9 hours of commitment each week. The **deadline for applications is 31 January 2024**.
- If you would like to see the roles currently available and what this involves, please follow this link to the Grassroots Campaigning page on the Amnesty website: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/jobs/activism>

Carry on writing!

Bob Dewick, Amnesty

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Amnesty action: campaigns & letter-writing

Egypt update from Margaret, our Campaign Co-ordinator

Tragically, the ongoing catastrophe in the Middle East, triggered by the horrific events in Israel and Gaza, have overshadowed other recent developments in the region.

Unsurprisingly, President al-Sisi won an overwhelming victory (89.6% of the vote) in the December presidential elections, having amended the constitution to enable him to stand for a third term and ensured that there were no credible opponents standing. However, we have heard from our Egypt Coordinator, Debora Singer, that one beneficial effect of the constant communication between UK Government and Egypt about the current conflict, is that:

- *The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has reported to us that they have had lots of engagement with the Egyptian authorities due to the conflict in Israel/Gaza. They said they are using every one of these opportunities at all levels (the Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary, Lord Tariq) to raise Alaa's case to show how important it is for the UK government. Foreign Secretary, David Cameron, is taking an interest in Alaa's case.*
- *While we cannot be sure, I believe that part of the reason that the government is raising Alaa's case so regularly during meetings about the conflict in the Middle East is due to the continuing pressure Amnesty members have been putting on them.*



It is, therefore, vitally important that we keep up the pressure to remind the Egyptian authorities about the need for justice for the **Giulio Regeni**, the Italian student allegedly murdered by security services in Egypt, and to continue to call for the release of **Alaa Abd El-Fattah**.

What you can do:

Please use the template message below to send as a letter or email to the Egyptian Ambassador in London to coincide with the anniversary of Giulio's death on **25 January**, to

- egtamboff@gmail.com
- His Excellency Nasser Kamel, Ambassador of Egypt to the United Kingdom, Embassy of Egypt in London, 26 South Street, London, W1K 1DW

Your Excellency,

I am writing at the time of the anniversary of the murder of **Giulio Regeni** eight years ago to ask for justice for Giulio and also freedom for another human rights defender, **Alaa Abdelfattah**.

Giulio Regeni, 28 at the time of his death, was a PhD student at Cambridge University researching Egypt's independent trade unions. He was abducted from the streets of Cairo on 25th January 2016. His body was found on 3 February 2016, with numerous injuries indicating that he had been tortured. We continue to demand an independent investigation into his abduction and murder and for his perpetrators to be held to account.

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Newsletter: January 2024



Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group

Meanwhile Alaa Abdelfattah, 42, continues to be imprisoned after almost a decade. As a prominent human rights activist and writer, he played a prominent role in the 2011 protests and the public discourses at the time around the constitution, the law, the judiciary and democratic institution-building. He is currently held in Wadi al-Natrun prison after being unfairly convicted late in December 2021 on spurious charges of “spreading false news” in social media posts. Amnesty have studied his case and declared him a prisoner of conscience – and so is advocating for his immediate and unconditional release.

We believe these two cases are illustrative of systemic human rights abuses in Egypt, where thousands of people are arbitrarily detained for political reasons. Many of these cases involve human rights defenders being imprisoned for exercising, or defending, their right to freedom of expression and freedom of association. Amnesty believes that freedom of expression is a basic human right and it must be defended everywhere.

We would urge the Egyptian authorities to open a new chapter and to recognise the global importance of justice for Giulio Regeni and freedom for Alaa Abdelfattah.

Yours sincerely,

25/01/2024, Great St Mary’s Church, Cambridge, 18:00: The Cambridge University Amnesty Group is organizing a vigil for Giulio.

Article in *The Guardian*, 31/12/2023: [UK has failed to act to free Alaa Abd el-Fattah from jail in Egypt, family says](#) (this should take you to the ‘no paywall’ version of the article)

Want to do more?

Urgent Action Network

When you take action here, you do it as part of a movement of tens of thousands of people across the world, working together to raise our voices, demand justice and make change happen. Please do take action, in solidarity with individuals at risk everywhere: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/urgent-actions>

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