



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK FEBRUARY 2024

NEWS from WARRINGTON GROUP

ACTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

HOPE FOR HUMANITY

**GROUP MEETING – Thurs. FEB.15th. 7pm-9pm
Howley St. Community rooms. 15-17 Nora St.**

This month we are holding our official Annual General Meeting. All are welcome. If you do decide to join us let me know and I will email a copy of the agenda.

MATTERS RAISED AT THE JANUARY MEETING

Boycott Bill: The Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) this to be discussed further at Feb meeting

CASA – Central America: – 2 letter actions were emailed to group – Honduras re the implications of climate change for poor communities. El Salvador - continuing repression of human rights.



DEATH PENALTY: Kenneth Smith (Alabama)

Jurors recommended life but execution to go ahead this month using untried 'nitrogen hypoxia' – (breathed in depriving body of oxygen) Previous attempts using lethal injection had failed causing immense pain.

Members' news etc.

- British Nationals Alaa Abdel Fattah & Mehran Raof still not receiving consular visits. Andy Carter replied to my letter outlining all the UK is doing to obtain their release.
- Two Journalists from Gaza feared dead.
- Article by Sam Hamad re Israeli disinformation.
- Article from US magazine 'NATION' re the events leading up to the 7th Oct. attack.



The release of Matullah Wesa from the Taliban. He was an education activist promoting education

including for girls. He and his family are now living in Afghanistan.



GREECE - PYLOS SHIPWRECK:

Starkly divergent accounts from survivors and Greek authorities around the circumstances of the deadly Pylos shipwreck, underscore

the urgent need for an effective, independent, and impartial investigation.

The disparities between survivors' accounts and the authorities' version of the events are extremely concerning

The fishing vessel, *Adriana*, was carrying an estimated [750 people](#) when it sank on 14 June off the coast of Pylos. In the aftermath, accounts from several of the 104 survivors suggest that the vessel was towed by a Greek coast guard boat, causing the fatal wreck.

The Greek authorities have strongly denied these claims.

Survivors consistently stated:

The Hellenic Coast Guard vessel attached a rope to the *Adriana* and started towing, causing it to sway and then capsize.

In the hours before their boat capsized passengers on the boat pleaded by satellite phone to be rescued.

Officials of the Coast Guard said:

Individuals on the boat limited their request for assistance to food and water and intended to proceed to Italy.

The Coast Guard vessel used a rope to approach the boat to assess whether passengers wanted help, but after the first "negotiations", passengers threw the rope back and the boat continued its journey.

To ensure this is the last in a long list of tragedies in the Mediterranean, the EU should reorient its border policies towards rescue at sea and safe and legal routes.

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This interesting and disturbing article by Clare Maxwell helps us not only to understand the many idiosyncrasies in the US/Israeli relationship but also helps us to understand the Palestinian view point whilst it also makes us wonder why the Western powers have gone along with this for 70 plus years.

Why It's Important You Know What Israeli Leaders Are Saying

by Clare Maxwell,

Palestine Advocacy Project – USA

Palestine Advocacy Project is an all-volunteer organization in the US, that creates public media and education campaigns that educates the world to the Palestinian struggle and advocates for an end to Israeli human rights abuses.

American voters have learnt an important lesson: a politician who spouts unsavoury rhetoric often commits unsavoury acts as well.

Investigating what lies beneath public figures' smears and insults is an unpleasant task, but one that leaves us clear-headed and better equipped to participate in the political decision-making process. Yet even as we hold our own leaders up to the light this election season, the mainstream political and media establishments ignore the racist, violent, and downright pro-fascist language spouting from Israel's Prime Minister and other senior leaders.

A Prime Minister who advocates beating Palestinians "repeatedly," until the pain is "unbearable" cannot be trusted to command a military.

A Justice Minister who believes that Israel needs to destroy Palestinian homes because "otherwise, more little snakes will be raised there" will never be an agent of equality.

A country whose Minister of Culture proudly proclaims that she is "happy to be a fascist" cannot be called a democracy.

The violent rhetoric of these leaders underscores the violence that Israel has meted out, again and again, against the people of Palestine. That's why the Palestine Advocacy Project has launched its new "In Their Own Words" Campaign in university newspapers and other media across the country. We wanted to pull the curtain back and expose what sort of people are driving Israeli policy.

Israel, "America's closest ally," has enjoyed special privileges in the international community due to its relationship with the United States. Yet the United Nations Human Rights Council has cited Israel more times for human rights violations than any other country on earth. Why?

Israel has maintained a fifty-year occupation of the West Bank and the Golan Heights, kept the Gaza Strip under a suffocating siege, and turned Israeli citizens of Palestinian descent, who make up 20% of the population, into second class citizens with more than 50 discriminatory laws.

Yet despite all of this, the United States refuses to impose any penalty. Quite the opposite—Israelis by far the largest recipient of American foreign aid, despite already having one of the most powerful armies in the world, far more generous social benefits than the United States offers its own citizens (including single-payer healthcare) and one of the strongest economies in the Middle East.

Earlier this year, the White House signed a memorandum of understanding with Israel to increase its military aid to \$38 billion over ten years.

This is a truly unprecedented figure—the largest military aid package the United States has ever provided any nation. It's time for American voters to start thinking critically about whether Israel can truly be trusted with that kind of money, and whether this handout is the best use of our tax dollars. We, at Palestine Advocacy project, believe that ending military aid to Israel is long overdue.

I hope that seeing our advertisements opens a window for campus communities nationwide to look into the world of Israeli politics and begin to understand the hatred that we encourage there with each instalment of military aid. What you see won't be pretty, but as we've learned at home, the cost of not looking is just too high.

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." - Martin Luther King, Jr.