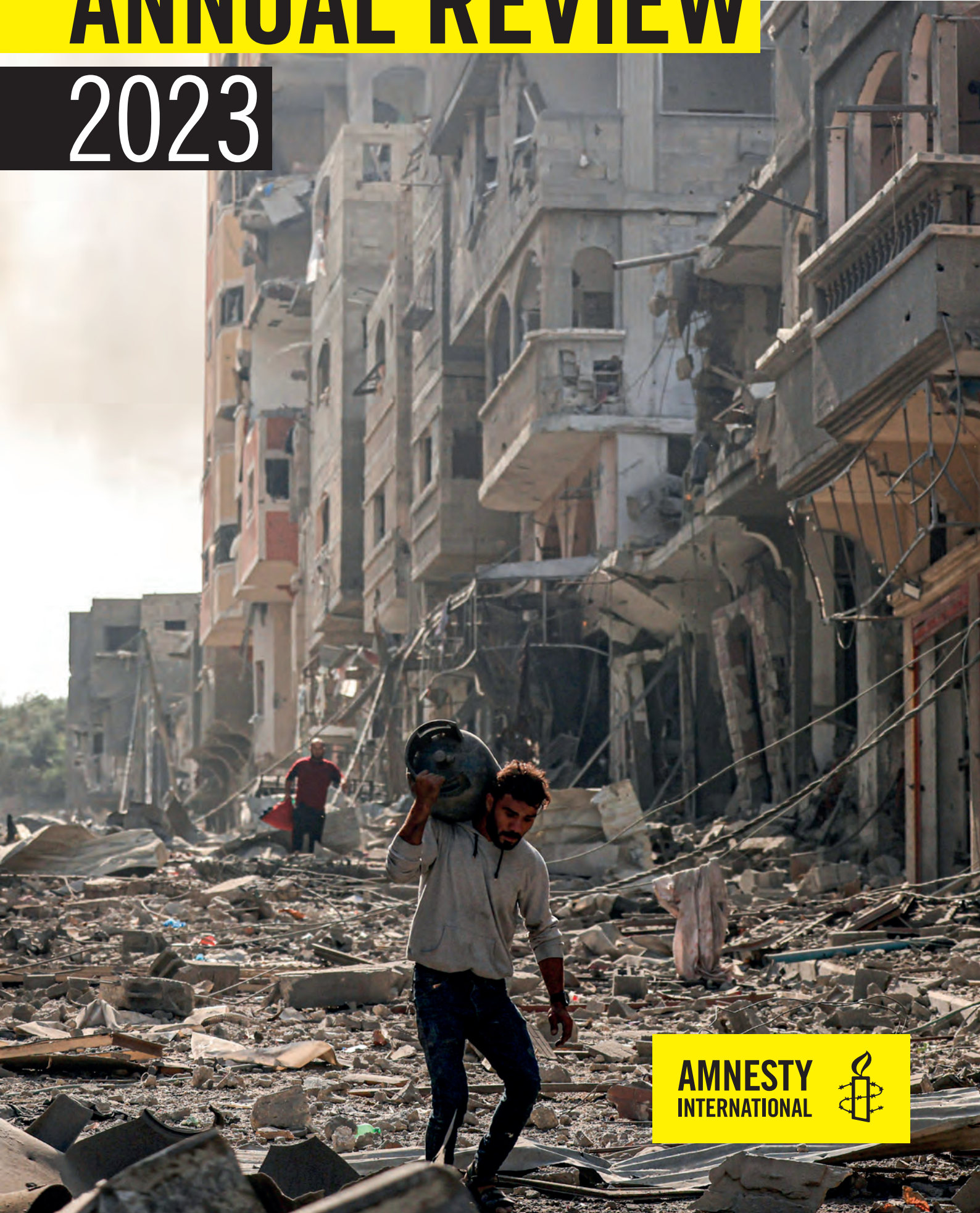


AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK

# ANNUAL REVIEW

# 2023



AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



# Contents

- 01 A future for human rights
- 02 Amnesty International UK – part of a global movement
- 03 Amnesty International statistics
- 04 Crisis investigation: Israel and Gaza
- 06 Tackling root causes: Ending Israeli apartheid
- 08 Investigating crises around the world
- 10 Defending the rights of older people
- 12 Tackling institutional racism
- 14 Defending the rights of people under threat
- 16 Protecting freedom of expression
- 18 Our human rights manifesto
- 20 Defending rights in UK law
- 22 Economic, social and cultural rights
- 24 Human rights education
- 26 Building a movement
- 28 Changing attitudes
- 30 Governance
- 31 We need your help to protect human rights in 2024 and beyond
- 32 Where the money went

This review reports on the 2023 work of the Amnesty International UK Section and the work carried out or funded by the Amnesty International UK Charitable Trust in 2023. Amnesty International UK Charitable Trust meets its objectives primarily by making grants to the Amnesty International UK Section and the International Secretariat of Amnesty International.

👁 Cover: A man carries a propane gas cylinder in the Jabalia camp for Palestinian refugees in Gaza City on 11 October, 2023, amid destruction caused by Israeli air strikes © Mahmud Hams/AFP/Getty Images

# A future for human rights

**In a world where the very idea of human rights is coming under increasing attack, the generosity of Amnesty supporters enables us to defend the rights of people in the UK and beyond.**

2023 marked the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: the recognition by states that 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights'. From this foundation emerged a framework of international law and institutions for states to hold each other to account for making those rights a reality. The system was never perfect, but has been critical throughout those years. Now, 75 years on from the original declaration, it is both more important, and under greater threat, than ever.

At the end of 2023, the consequences of states' failure to uphold human rights were most starkly evident in the staggering levels of bloodshed and suffering in Gaza. There, the Israeli government responded to war crimes by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups, with massive attacks on Palestinian civilians and destruction of civilian infrastructure. But the USA, the UK and many other governments, while they rightly condemned the Hamas-led attacks, failed even to support proper investigation of potential Israeli war crimes, even in light of overwhelming evidence. And they continued to export arms to Israel, despite the increasingly clear risk of genocide against Palestinians.

Thanks to your support, Amnesty International was able to investigate human rights violations by all parties. This enabled us to ensure that Amnesty, as an independent and expert voice, could counter the Israeli government's incorrect claims that its attacks on Gaza complied with international law and lent weight to our calls for ceasefire.

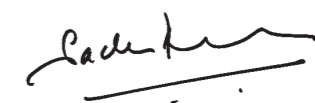
Your support also enabled us to draw international attention to human rights crises elsewhere: for example the millions of people displaced by warring military factions in Sudan and the plight of elderly people left behind in Ukraine's war zones.



Here in the UK, too, human rights have come under unprecedented attack. We mobilised a coalition of organisations to defend the Human Rights Act, the legal framework that underpins our human rights. The effort succeeded: in 2023 the UK government gave up its attempts to remove the Act. We continue to campaign against restrictions on the freedom to protest, and the assault on refugee rights which undermines the international Refugee Convention.

With a UK general election in 2024, we took the opportunity to bring a positive view of human rights into the centre of debate on the country's future. We prepared for this in 2023 by issuing a Human Rights Manifesto setting out our vision for a UK government, of whatever political colours, that champions human rights for all, at home and around the world. This is the vision that we take forward into 2024 and the years ahead.

Thank you for supporting Amnesty International UK and helping us to defend human rights for all.



**Sacha Deshmukh**  
Chief executive, Amnesty International UK

# Amnesty International UK

## Part of a global movement

Since 1961, Amnesty International has grown from a call to action by our founder, Peter Benenson, into a global movement of more than 10 million people. We work to defend and promote all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

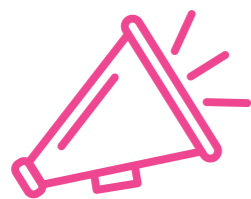
Amnesty International UK is one of the largest international sections in our global movement, with close to 498,000 supporters, members and activists. We provide funding for Amnesty International's work around the world and campaign for positive human rights change globally and in the UK.

### HOW AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ACHIEVES CHANGE



#### INVESTIGATIONS

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



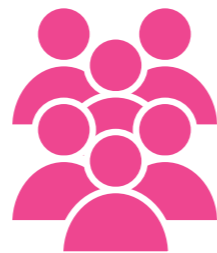
#### CAMPAIGNS AND ADVOCACY

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 10 million people is crucial to achieving positive change for human rights.

# Amnesty International

## STATISTICS

### OUR GLOBAL MOVEMENT

**60+**  
**YEARS**



of fighting for human rights

**10+**  
**MILLION**



supporters, members and activists worldwide in more than 150 countries and territories, including almost 498,000 in the UK

Amnesty International has a local presence in more than

**60**  
**COUNTRIES**



including the UK

Amnesty International's 2022 report on the state of the world's human rights covered

**156**  
**COUNTRIES**



### ACTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

**MORE THAN**  
**210,000**



people took action for human rights via the Amnesty International UK website in 2023

**MORE THAN**  
**2,500**



people participated in Amnesty-led training for human rights activists in 2023

# CRISIS INVESTIGATION

# ISRAEL AND GAZA

The catastrophic surge in violence in Gaza and Israel in October 2023 drew a swift and sustained response from Amnesty International's researchers in the region and our advocacy teams.



👁️ Rescuers pull a child out of a building hit in an Israeli air strike on Khan Yunis, Gaza, on 24 October 2023 © Mahmud Hams/AFP/Getty Images



👁️ Civilians flee after air strikes on Gaza City, 11 October 2023 © Mohammed Abed/AFP/Getty Images

The crisis in Gaza follows decades of violence which Amnesty International has documented over the years. The roots of the problem lie in a system of apartheid and illegal occupation imposed by Israel on Palestinians (see overleaf).

In the October 2023 Hamas-led attacks on southern Israel, more than 1,000 people – mostly Israeli civilians – were killed, thousands wounded, and some 245 were abducted. Amnesty was clear that the Hamas-led attacks, and continued abductions, constituted violations of human rights. The scale and nature of the Israeli government response was alarming from a human rights perspective. By the end of the year, Israeli military operations had killed 21,600 Palestinians and displaced 1.9 million, depriving them of food, water, shelter and medical help. Amnesty International investigated suspected war crimes, demanded protection for civilians and called for a ceasefire. We demanded that all violations of international law be urgently investigated by the International Criminal Court.

Our advocacy work is based on careful and impartial research. We interviewed eye-witnesses and survivors of attacks in both Israel and Gaza, carried out open-source investigations and analysed satellite data. Our Crisis Evidence Lab was able to verify videos showing Hamas fighters abducting and killing civilians in southern Israel on 7 October. Investigators also analysed satellite imagery that demonstrated the Israeli military violated international humanitarian law, including by failing to distinguish between military and civilian objectives.

We produced 17 research outputs, including accounts of Israel's unlawful use of white phosphorus in Gaza, airstrikes that caused mass

civilian casualties, and the use of US-made munitions in unlawful Israeli airstrikes. The US State Department and Pentagon announced that they would review our findings on the use of US munitions, and multiple US Senators referenced Amnesty International when petitioning President Biden to back a UN humanitarian ceasefire and withdraw his support for Israel. Evidence from our investigations was also used in the genocide case brought by South Africa at the International Court of Justice in December 2023.

Meanwhile, advocacy by Amnesty International UK focused on calling out potential violations of UK arms export laws, and the call for a ceasefire and for access to life-saving aid for people in Gaza. We have engaged all the main UK political parties, calling on the government and opposition groups to demand a ceasefire and explicitly oppose war crimes, whether perpetrated by Palestinian or Israeli forces. Media coverage for our response was extensive, and our outputs had an estimated reach of 60 million people.

This powerful mix of direct engagement and public awareness contributed to changes in policy and practice on the crisis. In November, in direct response to lobbying by Amnesty International UK, the UK government at last dropped its historic opposition to the International Criminal Court having any role in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In early 2024 Labour leader Keir Starmer revised his position on an immediate ceasefire.

Against the scale of the disaster unfolding in Gaza, these look like small gains. But they are steps in the right direction and have been made possible by supporters like you.

# Tackling root causes:

# ENDING ISRAELI APARTHEID

We took forward our long-term campaign to dismantle Israel's system of apartheid against Palestinians.



👁️ The Palestinian town of Huwara, in the occupied West Bank, after an attack by Israeli settlers burning vehicles and throwing stones at homes and passing cars © Nasser Ishtayeh/SOPA Images/LightRocket via Getty Images



Amnesty International UK's media outputs on Israel's apartheid in Jan-Sept 2023 reached an estimated audience of

**12.3 MILLION**



👁️ The UK parliamentary delegation in Hebron's old city, parts of which are barred to Palestinians © AI/Tom Guha

## APARTHEID AS A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

Our campaign to end Israel's systematic oppression and domination of Palestinians is based on years of rigorous research, published in a comprehensive report in 2022. It details how massive seizures of Palestinian land and property, unlawful killings, the forcible transfer of Palestinian people from their land, drastic restrictions on movement and the denial of nationality and citizenship are components of a system amounting to apartheid under international law. Israel enforces this system against Palestinians wherever it has control over their rights: in Israel, in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), and in countries where Palestinian refugees reside.

In international criminal law, specific acts committed within and intended to maintain an apartheid system constitute the crime against humanity of apartheid. These include unlawful killing, torture, forcible transfer and the denial of basic rights and freedoms.

Before the October 2023 attacks, our work focused on boosting awareness, among UK politicians and the wider public, that Israel's violations of the human rights of Palestinians amount to apartheid.

In May 2023 we organised a UK parliamentary delegation to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories with participants from the Labour, Conservative and Scottish Nationalist parties. The delegation visited Palestinian communities, including some of those affected by the surge in state-backed violence from Israeli settlers,

and met Palestinian and Israeli civil society organisations and the British consulate. Back in the UK, the delegation met Lord Ahmad, Middle East and North Africa minister, urging him to hold the Israeli authorities to account.

Amnesty International published *Automated Apartheid* in May – a report showing how Israel uses facial recognition technology to reinforce segregation and control of Palestinians in the OPT. It received significant media coverage.

To reach new audiences, we launched a series of videos, *Palestine at Home*, which combined celebration of Palestinian culture with education about Palestinians' human rights. Each video featured a Palestinian chef paired with a British comedian, cooking Palestinian dishes and discussing experiences of apartheid. They proved extremely popular: one video was viewed 1.5 million times.

We also continued efforts to end UK support for Israel's apartheid system. Goods produced in illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank continued to enter UK markets, even though these settlements have displaced thousands of Palestinians from their homes, land and livelihoods. Amid a spate of violent attacks by settlers on Palestinian communities in 2023, we renewed our call to MPs to press for a ban on settlement goods. Amnesty activists also highlighted the role of British company JCB in supplying diggers and other machinery used by the Israeli authorities to unlawfully demolish Palestinian homes.

Since October 2023 the crisis in Israel and Gaza has dominated our work (see pages 4-5).

# Investigating crises around the world

Amnesty International's Be There programme conducts in-depth field research and verifies digital evidence arising from human rights crises across the globe. In 2023 our research, reports and briefings helped persuade international decision-makers to take some significant steps in defence of human rights.



👁️ A lumber warehouse catches fire amid fighting in Khartoum, Sudan, 7 June 2023 © AFP/Getty Images

Impunity in Sudan became a focus for our work in 2023 as the resurgent conflict killed thousands of people and displaced millions. Our report, *Death Came to Our Home*, based on interviews with displaced people and analysis of audio-visual and satellite data, offered evidence of war crimes on all sides. We used it to make the case for an international mission to monitor human rights in Sudan. In October UN Human Rights Council member states voted for a monitoring mechanism for the country. Our aim now is to ensure this decision is implemented and that an international monitoring mission is set up. The country's future depends on ending the impunity that lies at the heart of the current human rights crisis.

Among our thematic campaigns, our global effort to protect the right to protest was strengthened by research into the use of kinetic impact projectiles (rubber bullets) in over 30 countries. Five universities analysed more than 400 videos and 75 incidents where kinetic impact projectiles were used in protests. The findings fed into media work and the report *My Eye Exploded: The Global Abuse of Kinetic Impact Projectiles*. In the wake of the campaign, the European Union adopted the negotiating framework for a torture-free trade treaty (see page 17).

## IMPACT

Some of the changes our donors enabled the Be There programme to achieve in 2023:

- A draft resolution on Ukraine adopted by the UN HRC in March included key language we had pushed for regarding older people, people with disabilities and Russia's forcible transfer of civilians from Ukraine.
- Our work contributed to significant policy shifts by the US administration: it tightened targeting rules for drone strikes, revised one of its war manuals to strengthen protection of civilians, and said it will track the possible use by foreign forces of US-made weapons against civilians.
- Lithuania adopted reforms broadly in line with our recommendations to ensure refugees and migrants who were illegally detained in 2021-22 can access redress for unlawful detention. By the end of 2023, the number of people detained in immigration facilities had fallen from over 2,700 in 2021 to 38.
- A refugee community sponsorship programme has been established in the USA, with support from Be There and Amnesty International USA.

## In 2023, the Be There programme

Published

**15**  
**REPORTS**  
**AND MAJOR**  
**BRIEFINGS**



Carried out

**29**  
**FIELD**  
**INVESTIGATIONS**



Worked on  
human  
rights  
issues in

**35**  
**COUNTRIES**



Published a report **The Taliban's War on Women** which received **1,600+** media mentions globally, reaching an estimated

**4.3 BILLION PEOPLE**

worldwide in over 17 languages



Reached an  
estimated

**198,000**

**PEOPLE** with our video of an Israeli attack on journalists in Lebanon



# DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF OLDER PEOPLE




We have stepped up our efforts to see greater protection for the rights of older people in conflict situations, focusing on Ukraine but with a UN convention in our sights.

Our December 2022 report *I used to have a home* had revealed the disproportionate impact that Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine is having on older people. Many are unable to flee and so remain in housing that is badly damaged, or in overstretched state institutions that cannot provide the care they need.

So we welcomed a breakthrough early in 2023 when a UN Human Rights Council resolution on Ukraine featured strong language on older people. Within months, the EU-Ukraine human rights dialogue had also included strong calls from the EU related to older people and people with disabilities, again echoing recommendations in our 2022 report. We followed up by completing our investigation and publishing a report and film detailing older people's isolation and inadequate access to housing amid the invasion of Ukraine.

We are determined that the evidence we have gathered in Ukraine not only helps improve the situation for older people caught up in that conflict, but supports our wider work to secure a UN convention on the rights of older people. To this end, we brought together all of Amnesty's evidence and analysis of older people's rights in one briefing for the UN, and equipped our advocacy teams to engage with national governments. This included a new video, *The Forgotten Convention*, which explains why a UN convention specific to the rights of older people is needed to help safeguard their dignity and security.

 Hanna Selivon in her destroyed home in Chernihiv, Ukraine © Amnesty International

# TACKLING INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

In 2023 Amnesty International UK strengthened its efforts to confront racial injustice in the UK. We launched an online anti-racism course and published a groundbreaking report on the UK government's discriminatory counter-terrorism strategy, Prevent.

**“No tools have been developed that can reliably identify people who have been radicalised, who are at risk of radicalisation or who are likely to carry out a terrorist act”**

Royal College of Psychiatrists, cited in Amnesty International UK's report on the Prevent counter-terrorism strategy



## PREVENT IS RACIST

In November 2023, Amnesty International launched a hard-hitting 92-page report on Prevent, the UK government's controversial counter-terrorism strategy. *This is the Thought Police* was the result of rigorous research and 4,500 survey responses from people affected by Prevent. We interviewed people who had been referred to Prevent, or whose children had been referred, who told us of the devastating effect the referral had on their lives. We also interviewed people tasked with implementing the strategy.

## How Prevent works

Prevent is supposed to identify and stop people at risk of radicalisation into terrorism. It obliges people working in schools, universities, hospitals, social services, prisons and similar institutions to refer to the police people who they think might be drawn into terrorism. They are to look out for signs of radicalisation, based on Extremism Risk Guidelines which include vague and widespread criteria such as 'a need to redress injustice' and 'the need for excitement, comradeship or adventure'.

Prevent training advises those implementing the strategy to trust their instincts and 'gut feeling'. In a society where media and politicians routinely portray some groups of people as dangerous, that degree of discretion carries a high risk of discrimination. We found that Muslims and neurodiverse people were referred to Prevent in disproportionate numbers, as were growing numbers of children and young people.

## Our findings

Our report exposed the Prevent strategy as discriminatory, undermining human rights for Muslims, neurodiverse people, and children. It also showed that Prevent has a chilling effect on freedom of expression and activism. Armed with this strong evidence base, we will follow up in 2024 with a campaign to pressure the government to scrap the strategy.

## IMPACT

The Prevent report generated more than 170 pieces of media coverage. Politicians from various parties were keen to discuss the findings with us. The University College Union shared our report on Twitter, and we were invited to speak at a National Education Union and UCU conference. The report's findings were submitted to two UN rapporteurs, on counter-terror and human rights and on youth human rights defenders. We also discussed our findings with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance. Our focus on neurodiversity was welcomed by disability rights activists and politicians – this area will be a priority in 2024.

## ANTI-RACISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

In October 2023, Amnesty UK's major new online course, *Anti-Racism and Human Rights*, launched to positive feedback. This free short course is a first step to exploring the history and legacy of racism, what constitutes a human rights violation, and how to become an effective anti-racist.



# Defending the rights of people under threat

Working with people enduring human rights abuses is at the heart of Amnesty International's work. Through urgent appeals, long-term pressure and our annual Write for Rights campaign, we support individuals and communities to challenge the forces that repress them. Your support is making a difference.



## MORAD TAHBAZ RELEASED

In September 2023, British-Iranian Morad Tahbaz was freed after spending nearly six years unjustly imprisoned in Iran. The wildlife conservationist left the country along with his wife Vida as part of a prisoner swap arranged by the US authorities.

Amnesty UK had called for Morad's release since 2019, while supporting his family in their campaign. Nearly 28,000 supporters signed the petition for his freedom, wrote to MPs and raised awareness of his case on social media. Our work continues for other UK nationals wrongly imprisoned abroad, such as Mehran Raof in Iran and Alaa Abd el-Fattah in Egypt.

👏 I... learned that even in the darkest places and worst conditions there are still good people in this world and that gave me hope 🙏

Morad Tahbaz



Joanah Mamombe (L) and Cecillia Chimbiri

© Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi/AI

## ACTIVISTS ACQUITTED

In July 2023 the High Court of Zimbabwe cleared Joanah Mamombe and Cecillia Chimbiri of communicating falsehoods and obstructing justice. The two had been abducted and tortured after leading an anti-government protest in 2020. When they reported the abuse, the authorities accused them of faking their ordeal. The two activists featured in Write for Rights 2022: half a million appeals and solidarity messages were sent on their behalf.

## WRITE FOR RIGHTS

In Write for Rights 2023 nearly 54,000 people in the UK sent messages of support and appeals to authorities for people whose rights are being abused. To support Ahmed Mansoor, imprisoned in the UAE since 2017 for calling for human rights reform, we flew a 'Free Ahmed' banner over the football ground of UAE-owned Manchester City during a game: this stunt reached an audience of about 6.6 million and gained wide media attention. Meanwhile, Amnesty activists made the point at ground level too (picture above).

## FREED BY THE TALIBAN

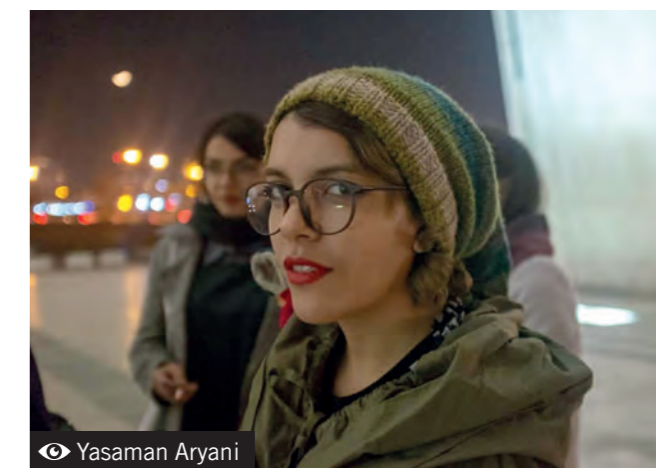
Education activist Matiullah Wesa was released in October 2023, after nearly seven months in prison in Afghanistan for promoting girls' right to education. Amnesty International issued an urgent action and campaigned until his release. Without this sustained pressure, he would still be in jail, his family said.

👏 We are grateful to Amnesty International and its 10 million members who stood by our side. The solidarity, support and advocacy from Amnesty and its members motivated us to fight for Wesa's release and we are so thankful for their support 🙏

Attaullah Wesa, Matiullah's brother

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS DEFENDERS FREED

Yasaman Aryani and Monireh Arabshahi (pictures below) were released from prison in Iran in February 2023. They had been sentenced to 16 years in 2019 for handing out flowers on a train, in a peaceful protest against forced veiling laws. Around 235,000 Amnesty supporters signed the petition demanding their freedom and affirming women's rights to choose what they wear.



Yasaman Aryani

© Private



Monireh Arabshahi

© Private

# Protecting freedom of expression

In 2023 Amnesty International UK continued to defend freedom of expression, which is under attack around the world. We opposed draconian legislation in England and Wales, championed an international anti-torture treaty, provided a platform for Hong Kong creatives, and supported Northern Irish journalists threatened by unlawful police surveillance.



👁 Riot police shoot tear gas at protesters in Arequipa, Peru, January 2023 © Diego Ramos/AFP/Getty Images



👁 London, November 2023. In the UK government ministers have sought to deter protests calling for a ceasefire in Gaza © Marie-Anne Ventoura/AI

## PROTECT THE PROTEST

Suppression of peaceful protest violates human rights. We campaigned against the excessive powers given to police in England and Wales under the Public Order Act, and the House of Lords removed some extreme elements from the legislation before it became law in April. However, the government sought to reinstate them through new regulations.

Since then, Amnesty International UK has worked for repeal of the Public Order Act and the anti-protest measures in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022. We monitor how the police use their new powers and press them to refrain from excessive interference in protest. We also look to the courts to set safeguards and prevent the misuse of police powers.

This attack on the right to protest is a global problem. In 2023, Amnesty research revealed how law enforcement agencies misuse crowd-control equipment against peaceful protesters, sometimes with deadly consequences. Our report *The Repression Trade* identified 23 major producers of 'less-lethal' equipment and hunting ammunition whose products have been used unlawfully in protests in 25 countries. The weapons – including tear gas, rubber bullets, batons and stun grenades – have been regularly used in human rights violations, including torture. The research laid the basis for our campaign – as part of a network of 30 NGOs – for a robust Torture-Free Trade Treaty. This would prohibit inherently abusive law-enforcement equipment and strictly control the trade in equipment that is often used for torture or other ill-treatment.

## DEFENDING FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN HONG KONG

Amnesty UK's Hong Kong programme was formed after Amnesty was forced to close its offices in Hong Kong in 2021 because of the Chinese government's intensifying crackdown on human rights. In 2023, the programme forged a partnership with the Hong Kong Film Festival UK. More than 250 people attended two film screenings and panel discussions.

We also collaborated with activist art platform Artvocate.co on *A Canvas of Courage*, an exhibition in London showcasing work by activist artists from Hong Kong, China, Myanmar, Thailand, Iran and Pakistan. About 500 people visited the exhibition. The film screenings and exhibition provided a platform for film-makers and artists whose work has been censored and repressed.

## PROTESTERS IN IRAN

In 2023 Amnesty International investigated the fate of people arrested in the Woman Life Freedom uprising that shook Iran at the end of the previous year. We published a harrowing report on the use of sexual violence against protesters by the Iranian intelligence and security forces. There is no prospect of justice in Iran: judges and prosecutors ignored the survivors' complaints and used torture-tainted 'confessions' to sentence survivors to imprisonment or death. The report includes recommendations for international action to hold the Iranian authorities to account.

# Our human rights manifesto

Globally, governments' respect for human rights and the rule of law has deteriorated in the past decade. In the UK we have seen a huge rollback in human rights protection, with a climate of hostility, structured inequality and scapegoating of minorities. These are the commitments we call on UK political parties to adopt and deliver.

This is a summary of our 2023 Human Rights Manifesto. To read the full version (updated June 2024), scan the QR code



## PROMOTE AND PROTECT ALL OUR RIGHTS

- Respect the Human Rights Act and champion the European Convention on Human Rights
- Uphold and apply all fundamental principles of human rights, including economic and social rights. Any existing or planned legislation undermining these must be scrapped. The rights to protest, citizenship, access to legal aid, human rights education, must be protected.
- Introduce a Racial Equality Bill to address institutional racism
- Offer human rights education in the school curriculum and other educational settings
- Incorporate the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights into domestic law
- Prioritise the right to housing: build at least 90,000 social homes a year.



## ENSURE RIGHTS, SAFETY AND CHOICE FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

The UK government must:

- Make women's human rights central in international relations
- Prioritise protection for women and girls fleeing conflict, persecution and domestic violence
- Ratify all of the Istanbul Convention on violence against women
- Ensure continuing access to safe abortions to all women in the UK and decriminalise abortion in England, Scotland and Wales.



## PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE RIGHTS OF ALL LGBTI+ PEOPLE

- Reform the Gender Recognition Act and move to self-identification
- Ban 'conversion therapy' that targets LGBTI+ people
- Tackle the narrative that pits women's rights against trans rights
- Resist attempts to redefine 'sex' in the Equality Act.



## OUR IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM SYSTEM MUST PROMOTE EQUALITY, JUSTICE AND HUMAN DIGNITY

- Make safe, fair, timely, and adequately supported decisions on all asylum claims, providing access to adequate legal, housing and financial support
- Create safe routes, avoiding dangerous journeys
- Scrap laws that contravene international human rights law
- Recognise and remedy the harmful and unequal impacts of immigration processes, rules and fees.



## IMPROVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN POLICE AND COMMUNITIES

- End disproportionate use of force against Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities
- End strip searches of children
- No police presence in schools: roll out safety campaigns instead
- Ensure meaningful consultation with over-policed communities and create opportunities for public engagement
- Root out institutional misogyny and racism in police forces.



## STRENGTHEN RIGHTS PROTECTION ACROSS THE UK

- Repeal the Northern Ireland Troubles Act and legislate for independent, human rights-compliant mechanisms to ensure victims' rights to justice
- Support the incorporation of economic, social and cultural rights into law in Wales and Scotland
- Support the passage at Westminster of the Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland



## CHAMPION HUMAN RIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD

- Adopt a principled foreign policy that acknowledges and responds to human rights violations in a consistent manner, wherever they take place
- Consistently support justice and accountability mechanisms for crimes under international law
- Ban imports produced from activities that breach international law
- Promote civil society space worldwide
- Ensure UK arms and security equipment exports are more responsible
- Work to abolish the death penalty worldwide
- Regulate companies to prevent human rights violations across global supply chains
- Scrap the Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill
- Grant British nationals arbitrarily detained abroad a legal right to consular access, with regular cabinet-level meetings with UK family members, and work to secure their release.



[amnesty.org.uk/resources/human-rights-manifesto](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/resources/human-rights-manifesto)

# Defending rights in UK law

Amnesty International UK continued to challenge the Westminster government's repeated attacks on human rights. We also set out our recommendations to the UK government in a wide-ranging Human Rights Manifesto.

“The likes of Amnesty coming to stand beside me, saying “We’ll help you on the road”, gives me strength”

**Martina Dillon**, who has launched a legal challenge against the Troubles Act with the support of Amnesty UK. Her husband Seamus was killed in Northern Ireland in 1997.



In a momentous victory for our campaign, the UK government gave up its attempts to scrap the Human Rights Act (HRA) and introduce a Bill of Rights. The bill was the latest stage in over a decade of wholesale attacks on the HRA. A coalition of 270 organisations, which Amnesty co-founded, worked together on publicity and advocacy with media and politicians, and to galvanise public support for the Act.

We were less successful in our effort to stop the Public Order Act (see page 17) which restricted the freedom to protest in England and Wales.

We were disappointed, too, that the Northern Ireland Troubles Act passed, introducing a de facto amnesty for serious crimes committed during the conflict. We moved immediately to support a joint legal challenge to the Act by three people who had inquests, investigations or civil claims blocked by the legislation.

In February 2024 the Belfast High Court ruled that provisions for immunity from prosecution are indeed incompatible with human rights. But the UK government will appeal, and the case is expected to continue through the domestic courts to the UK Supreme Court and possibly onwards to the European Court of Human Rights. In December the Irish government launched a separate legal challenge against the Troubles Act at the European Court of Human Rights.

The UK government continued its attack on the right to asylum with the Illegal Migration Act, which became law in July. It largely closes the UK to people seeking safe refuge from war and persecution, without considering their claims to asylum. We are urging all political parties to commit to repealing this Act.

We continue to advocate for a fair and humane asylum system, and to call for the government to drop the legislation that aims to send people asking for asylum in the UK to Rwanda. In November, the Supreme Court ruled Rwanda was unsafe and the policy could not lawfully be implemented.

Over the past few years, we have seen a rollback of rights in the UK. The 2024 general election provides an opportunity for a fundamental change of direction. If the UK is to be seen again as a champion of human rights, the next government must be elected on a mandate that is ambitious and progressive about protecting human rights. To encourage political parties across the spectrum to think in these terms, Amnesty International UK issued a Human Rights Manifesto (overleaf) – a bold and positive vision that puts human rights at the centre of people's lives, for all individuals and communities. It contains a range of commitments that we call on political parties to adopt and deliver should they form the next UK government.

👁️ Public protest at Westminster, March 2023. Government legislation aimed to dismantle the UK asylum system. © Andrew Aitchison/In pictures/Getty Images

# Economic, social and cultural rights

In 2023 Amnesty International UK expanded its work on economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) in the UK. We worked in partnership with organisations who take a rights-based approach to ending poverty.

“The wider GRIPP partners, namely Amnesty UK, Essex University Human Rights Centre ... and Just Fair, have provided us space and support to reflect on our lived experience, to generate and collate this knowledge”

From submission to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights from the Growing Rights Instead of Poverty Partnership (GRIPP)



## FROM THE GRASSROOTS TO THE UN

Amnesty International UK supported the work of the Growing Rights Instead of Poverty Partnership (GRIPP), a coalition led by four grassroots organisations. We helped GRIPP to secure funding to produce a hard-hitting report, written and researched by people with lived experience of poverty. It was submitted to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which monitors governments' compliance with the international treaty governing these rights. GRIPP revealed how the UK has a system that keeps people in poverty, ill and isolated – and thus fails to respect fundamental human rights. The submission was a response to the UK government's own report to the UN committee, which GRIPP members found grossly inadequate.

## LISTENING TO COMMUNITIES

This year we also made progress on developing a new, comprehensive economic, social and cultural rights strategy. We held consultations across England, Scotland and Wales to listen to people who face poverty and inequality. We learned that their primary concerns were the rights to an adequate standard of living, to health, and to social security. Similar consultations will be held in Northern Ireland. The findings will be used to inform our work in this area in coming years.

## THE SCOTTISH HUMAN RIGHTS BILL

In Scotland, plans advanced to incorporate the International Covenant on ESCR, among other international human rights treaties, into Scottish law through the Human Rights Bill. We had campaigned for this for five years. In 2023, we responded to the Scottish government consultation on the bill: it has the potential to make tangible changes in people's lives, and we want to make sure it does that.

## ABORTION: RIGHTS INTO REALITY

Four years ago, abortion was decriminalised in Northern Ireland – but access to abortion is not readily available to those who need it. We produced a comprehensive 159-page report, *Legal but not local*, which laid bare the failures and wide-ranging obstacles to this vital healthcare. We are using the report in our advocacy to ensure access to abortion care is respected and protected not only in law, but in practice.

## THE RIGHT TO HOUSING

We also continued our work in partnership with the homelessness charity Groundswell. Together, we laid the basis for a campaign in 2024 to make access to safe and affordable housing a human right protected in law in the UK.

👁️ A protester in London makes a point about accountability, June 2022 © Vuk Valcic/SOPA/LightRocket/Getty Images

# Human rights education

Education is a vital tool for change. It helps foster better understanding of human rights and how to promote them. It gives activists the knowledge and skills that benefit their campaigning activities and, in turn, this helps to strengthen the Amnesty movement.

## LEARNING ONLINE

Amnesty's ever-expanding range of online courses plays a vital role in helping learners bring human rights into their communities. In 2023, Amnesty UK launched a new course on anti-racism (see page 13) on FutureLearn, a platform set up by the Open University.

As a global movement, Amnesty has its own learning platform, the Human Rights Academy: it offers dozens of courses – often in different languages – ranging in length from 15 minutes to 15 hours. It makes learning freely available worldwide to people of all ages. Around 160,000 people use the academy every year. New courses added to the Academy in 2023 highlighted how



👁️ **New in 2023:** Online course for adult learners, available at [futurelearn.com/partners/amnesty](https://futurelearn.com/partners/amnesty)

The Human Rights Academy offers courses in

**32 LANGUAGES**



human rights violations affect different groups of people in different ways. They included courses on gender-based violence, discrimination against LGBTI+ people, and the rights of refugees. Also new in 2023 was an Introduction to Human Rights Advocacy, which encourages learners to take action to influence public policy.

## TEACHER TRAINING AND YOUTH ACTIVISM COACHES

We continued our long-standing work with teachers and schools to bring human rights into the classroom. In September, we completed the pilot of the Youth Coaches programme: students at further education colleges were trained to deliver coaching sessions to Amnesty youth groups in schools, engaging an estimated 21,480 students. There was positive feedback from all the youth coaches on the impact of this training, and they shared a commitment to future activism.

## RESOURCES

For the first time, Amnesty UK conducted a marketing campaign to increase the use of the wide-ranging teaching resources we've created such as lesson plans and activities on topics from freedom of expression to children's rights. More

**“ I am currently a student at the Human Rights Academy... I have obtained valuable knowledge that I am seeking to use in order to serve the whole humanity ”**

A learner from Yemen on the Refugee Rights course

than 5,000 teaching resources were ordered as a result.

At the start of the year we issued a pack of six lessons on women's rights and gender equality, for different age groups. We also updated and added to our LGBTI+ activity pack, exploring the rights of sexual and gender minority groups.



👁️ **New in 2023:** An activity pack for teachers to explore the human rights of sexual and gender minority groups with children and young people

## Our education work in the UK

Teachers on the Amnesty Teacher Programme 2023 taught human rights to

**9,361 STUDENTS**

and trained

**645 COLLEAGUES**



**33,881**

**PEOPLE**

accessed our Human Rights Education resources



**29 STUDENTS**

from

**12 COLLEGES**



on the first Amnesty Youth Coaches programme developed and delivered four campaigns to an estimated

**21,480 STUDENTS**



# Building a movement

Amnesty International UK is helping to build a diverse and powerful human rights movement worldwide. We support activists to work on the human rights issues that affect their communities. A powerful movement can change attitudes and boost pressure for change.



Participants in the Amnesty student conference take to the streets with a human rights message, January 2023 © Quetzal Maucci

It unifies people, especially young people, coming into our city who may not know anyone or feel particularly welcome

**Sarah Jones**, on the Football Welcomes project she delivers in partnership with Amnesty at Leicester City in the Community, the Premier League club's charitable arm

## FOOTBALL WELCOMES

Our Football Welcomes programme aims to help refugees feel part of the community by encouraging clubs of all sorts and sizes to include refugees in their activities. In May, our annual Football Welcomes month took place for the sixth year running, with 120 clubs taking part. The number of women's clubs who joined in increased to 68 – up from 41 last year. As part of the Football Welcomes Community projects, we provided a Women's Football Leadership Programme, supported by the English Football Association (FA), for women with a refugee background. Twelve women graduated from the programme in 2023 and seven of them were then accepted into the FA's Level 1 Coaching Programme.

## DISABLED PEOPLE'S HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK

In September 2023, Amnesty International UK launched a network to campaign for disabled people's rights in the UK and beyond. The network is led by disabled people, but anyone can join. The initial focus on campaigning will be to get the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities enshrined in UK law. The UK signed the Convention in 2007 but today it is guilty of grave and systematic violations of the treaty.

## AMNESTY'S GLOBAL MOVEMENT

Support for building Amnesty's global movement comes through grants from the AIUK Charitable Trust. Amnesty UK is one of the largest funders of all Amnesty International's work on human rights around the world. For example, in 2023 grants from the Trust made it possible for the Amnesty International Kenya section to support community struggles for justice and human rights education in schools. We also supported a significant piece of research highlighting homophobic hate crimes and discrimination against LGBTI+ refugees in Kenya.

## People power

**8,582 PEOPLE**  
defend the human rights of women and girls through the Amnesty Feminists network



**581 PEOPLE**  
combat racism through our Anti-Racism network



**6,838 PEOPLE**  
defend children's rights through our Children's Human Rights network



**5,788 PEOPLE**  
campaign to end the death penalty worldwide through our Anti-Death-Penalty Project



**18 PEOPLE**  
have signed up for our new Disabled People's Human Rights Network



**6,074 PEOPLE**  
campaign for LGBTI+ rights through our Rainbow network



**5,807 PEOPLE**  
defend workers' human rights through our Trade Union Network



# Changing attitudes

The progress we work for can only be sustained if human rights are valued by the public at large, in the media, and in political debate. That means we need change in public attitudes to human rights.

Clear facts, relevant issues, highlights that UK also requires help achieving human rights for all

One viewer on our Human Rights Day digital ad



In the UK in recent years, public support for human rights has often been drowned out by censure from pundits and politicians. These include direct attacks on the very concept of rights, as well as claims that they should not apply to particular minoritised groups, such as refugees or trans people. Audience research, however, reveals that hard-core opposition to human rights is limited.

A considerable proportion of the UK public remains supportive of human rights and these are the people we aim to reach. We want more people to understand, value and defend human rights.

## BUILDING UNDERSTANDING

On 10 December – the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – we launched an innovative digital advertising project that aimed to raise awareness of the full range of human rights, how they affect the UK, and why people should value them. We created two advertisements and analysed their impact with an audience survey targeting three parts of the country: Tyneside; Berkshire; and Bournemouth. We will use the results to inform our future work. We chose these areas because our research shows they have a high concentration of people who are generally supportive of human rights. This is what we learned:

- Most people have a narrow perception of human rights: it is limited to discrimination, war crimes, poverty, and housing.

- The news agenda drives people's perceptions of human rights, so we need to align our communications with it.
- The campaign showed some potential to shift attitudes.
- To increase our impact, we need a more nuanced understanding of different audiences.
- Our messages need to arouse emotions that will turn passive appreciation of human rights into active involvement.
- Many in our audience grasp the principle that human rights affects people in the UK – but they don't necessarily connect key social issues with human rights. More human rights education is needed!

## THE AMNESTY MEDIA AWARDS

Journalists and media organisations have a huge influence on people's understanding of human rights issues. Collaboration with media is a key part of our work to convey the importance of human rights and its relevance to people's lives.

Amnesty International UK's annual Media Awards bring together influential media figures to recognise and celebrate human rights journalism. It is a way to encourage increased coverage of human rights, as well as to reward the courage, persistence and skill of reporters, photographers and broadcasters. The 2023 Amnesty Media Awards were held in London and livestreamed to a global audience, with people joining from the USA, Canada, Lebanon, Tunisia and beyond.

👁 Opening frame of AIUK video ad celebrating human rights defenders



# GOVERNANCE

## Amnesty International UK Funding our human rights work

Amnesty International UK 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 no. 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 support the rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and various international treaties. It does this primarily through grant making to the UK Section, the International Secretariat of Amnesty International and other Amnesty International Sections in countries around the world.

The UK Section delivers the bulk of Amnesty International's human rights activity in the UK. It is primarily funded by grants from the Charitable Trust, with further income from membership subscriptions, and from sources such as our online and high street shops.

The work featured in this review was carried out by the UK Section, or by the International Secretariat supported by grants from the Charitable Trust.

For full audited accounts of both entities for the year ended 31 December 2023, 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 of June 2024.

## The Board of Amnesty International United Kingdom Section

Dr Senthorun (Sen) Raj, Chair  
Ciara Garcha, Vice-Chair  
Helen Horton, Vice-Chair  
Andy Townend, Treasurer  
Abdul Abid  
Sophia Adams Bhatti  
Sarah Bond  
Owen Collins  
Emma Haddad  
Ramazan Jumazada  
Richard Kotter  
Julia Pata  
Charlie Waring  
Richard Wild

## The Trustees of Amnesty International UK Section Charitable Trust

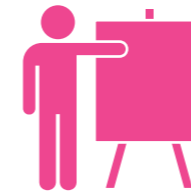
Andrew Lines, Chair  
Awmaima Amrayaf  
Shirah Z Mansaray, Vice-Chair  
Helen Moulinos, Vice-Chair  
Nisha De Silva  
Dr Senthorun (Sen) Raj  
Helen Horton  
Ian Adams  
David Keen

## Senior Management Team

Sacha Deshmukh, Chief Executive  
Dallan Cunniffe, Director of Data, Finance and Infrastructure  
Marion O'Donnell, Director of Major Funding Partnerships  
David Prince, Director of People and Culture  
Kerry Moscogiuri, Director of Supporter Campaigning and Communications

# We need your help

to protect human rights in 2024 and beyond



**£400**

will pay for a poet to deliver a full-day workshop at a school in the UK through our Words That Burn project.



**£2,100**

will pay for one Be There field worker to complete Hostile Environment and Emergency First Aid training.



**£18,000**

could fund a one-person investigation for two weeks in a crisis zone.



**£30,000**

could help us obtain crucial data (such as satellite imagery) to gather key evidence for our investigations for 12 months.



**£70,000**

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

## THANK YOU

In a time of conflict and crisis, with people's human rights under threat, the generosity of our close community of activists and supporters is 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. That means our work is only possible thanks to the solidarity and commitment of people like you. Thank you for being part of our movement.

# Where the money went

## Amnesty International UK Section Charitable Trust

Total 2023 expenditure **£23,096,000**



**£8,518,000**

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



**£6,083,000**

Raising funds and other trading activities



**£5,668,000**

Grants to the UK Section for human rights work



**£1,885,000**

Investment into activist recruitment



**£943,000**

Production and distribution of human rights publications and campaigning materials

## Amnesty International United Kingdom Section

Total 2023 expenditure **£14,264,000**

### CAMPAIGNS AND ACTION

**£1,255,000**

Campaigns and activism support

**£1,142,000**

Production and distribution of human rights publications and campaigning materials

**£1,035,000**

Advocacy and policy

**£667,000**

Media costs

**£535,000**

Campaigning in Northern Ireland and Scotland

**£526,000**

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

**£442,000**

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

**£338,000**

Economic, social and cultural rights

**£299,000**

Crisis response campaigning

**£122,000**

Women's human rights

**£119,000**

Security and human rights

**£110,000**

Business and human rights

**£86,000**

Right to protest

**£24,000**

Campaigning to save the Human Rights Act

### HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AND TRAINING



**£693,000**

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

**£236,000**

Youth Activism and the Rise Up programme

### BUILDING A POWERFUL MOVEMENT



**£4,493,000**

Raising funds and trading activities

**£1,149,000**

Investment into activist recruitment

**£744,000**

Activism in the community

**£250,000**

Contributions to the global movement

[www.amnesty.org.uk](http://www.amnesty.org.uk)

**Amnesty International UK Section Charitable Trust**

The Human Rights Action Centre

17-25 New Inn Yard

London EC2A 3EA

**Contact** [sct@amnesty.org.uk](mailto:sct@amnesty.org.uk)



Charity registered in England & Wales no.1051681.  
Charity registered in Scotland no.SC039534.  
Company limited by guarantee, registered in England no.03139939.  
Registered office as shown above.

