



Minutes of [Amnesty International Reading Group](#) Meeting

Thursday 8th May 2025

Chair: Anne

This meeting was held on Zoom

Welcome and introduction

13 people joined the meeting tonight: Vicky, Paula, Blanca, Ruth, Helen, Angus, Liz, Hilary, Ian, Gueth, Iona

Apologies - Ilaria

Speaker for tonight's meeting - Ilyas Nagdee, Amnesty UK's lead on the Racial Justice Campaign

Ilyas visited us in November 2023, so this was an update on the campaign, which we are following with great interest.

Ilyas spoke in depth about Amnesty's report - [Automated Racism](#) - which was published in February 2025. The executive summary is 7 pages, the contents page indicates where to find the details for Thames Valley Police,

Ilyas explained that the new policy targeted policing resources after risk profiles had been undertaken using predictive systems. There were 2 systems, individual and geographic. A huge amount of data is being kept by police forces which people aren't aware of. This is being shared with a large number of organisations, including the CPS, DWP and probation.

Amnesty feels this policy is working against the presumption of guilt and the right to privacy and mass surveillance.

Please sign Amnesty's petition to ban crime predictive technologies used by the police - [link here](#).

AUTOMATED RACISM

How police data and algorithms code discrimination into policing

UK police are using data and algorithms to 'predict' who they believe will go on to commit crimes and where. The data they use is biased, particularly against Black and racialised communities in deprived areas. It is no surprise what this leads to.

Through primary research and freedom of information requests, analysis of public sources, first-hand accounts from people in affected areas, and interviews with academics, experts and community organisers, this report investigates the harmful impact of predictive policing.

The research finds that this increasingly widespread data-based policing is leading to the criminalisation, punishment and violent policing of Black and racialised people, and people from deprived areas, based on who they are, their backgrounds, where they live, who they associate with. This is the new face of racial profiling.

In the words of one interviewee: 'Rather than "predictive" policing, it's simply, "predictable" policing. It will always drive against those who are already marginalised.'

Amnesty International finds the use of these data-based systems to predict, profile and assess people's 'risk' of being involved in crime breaches the UK's human rights obligations and should be prohibited.

Amnesty's Prevent report was published in November 2023. [The Prevent duty and its chilling effect on human rights](#) Lots of useful links on this page that breaks the full report down and advice on how to take action

Ilyas gave an update on the work Amnesty are doing on the **Prevent Strategy** which included

- a joint submission with the Runnymede Trust to the UN
- a succession of meeting with UK parliamentarians to show the impact of Prevent on disabled people and those already marginalised

Amnesty's online Scrap "Prevent" petition - [please sign it here](#)

Ilyas talked about encouraging local groups to engage with our local councillors on the subject of **Prevent**.

There is a template letter - as with all templates, please feel free to amend it to suit your position.

The template

- asks councillors to explain their position on Prevent
- expresses concern on the impact on our communities of the strategy
- says we feel it should be scrapped
- It requests a meeting with our local councillors and the anti-racism network

[Letter to local councillors](#)

Has your MP signed up to the Early Day Motions that Ilyas referred to?

You can check here. If they haven't signed, you could write to them requesting that they do so.

- [Transparency of data-based and data-drive policing systems](#)
- [Prevent strategy](#)

Further reading

- [Predictive Policing from the Colonies to the Contemporary](#)

- an article by Written by Dr Adam Elliott-Cooper hosted on the Amnesty Uk website

Group business

Our 7th Chance2dance4charity!!

A message from Sue - Huge thanks to everyone who came or made a donation to the chance2dance4charity event on Friday 25th April evening. The Peppard Memorial Hall was once again filled with smiley, happy people who made the most of this precious chance to dance in a relaxed and friendly space. Thank you again to our wonderful local dance teacher, Kayeigh Rixon, who led two different fun routines in between the general dancing to keep us on our toes. We raised £255 which is split between our two chosen charities: Amnesty International, for whom I've been campaigning and raising money for over 30 years, and the Henley-based charity chosen for this event, Headway Thames Valley. It was lovely to see Qudsia & Philippa from Headway dancing the night away with us.

Many thanks to the Unicorn pub, Bijan Restaurant and Dancia Caversham for donating very generous and much appreciated raffle prizes.

Glad so many of you took the time at the end to tell me how much you enjoyed it, and hope to see you all for our 8th event in autumn. Watch this space!

Afghan Women campaign

Helen gave an update on where we are. Whilst lots of work is going on, little progress has been made as we're not getting responses from people.

However, we do have a meeting next week to discuss the webinar, so hopefully we'll get that moving!

Upcoming dates

Amnesty Central England Network

Refugee/Asylum Seeker Campaign Group

Webinar

Immigration Detention in the UK: What's going on?



Join us to be updated on this key current human rights issue; to hear first-hand from experts in the sector and those with lived experience; and to explore action that can be taken.

This webinar is open to everyone; you don't have to be an AI member to attend.

Thursday, 5 June 2025, 7.00 – 8.30 pm (online)
To attend, register [here](#)



Panel Chair
Steve Valdez-Symonds
Refugee and Migrant Rights
Programme Director,
Amnesty International UK



Jonathan Ellis
Project Director, Detention Forum



Emma Jones
Communication Coordinator,
Asylum Welcome, Keep Campsfield
Closed Coalition

Additional Panelist
An additional panelist will be talking about their lived experience of the immigration detention system



Webinar Chair
Tony Samuel
Co-Chair, Asylum Welcome



[book here](#)

- National Conference and AGM - 5th/6th July at Warwick Uni . [More details here.](#)
- Regional Conference - 11th October

Group campaign updates

- **Pride campaigns for 2025**
 - 3 key campaigns
 - trans discourse in the media - the repeat of last year's petition
 - My body, My rights - petition to ban conversion therapy in the UK
 - Russia - petition against against the ban on association with LGBT+ communities
- **Anti-death penalty, South East Asia, Hong Kong, Türkiye, UAE - our prisoners of conscience, Ahmed Mansoor & Dr Mohammed al-Roken - no updates this month**

Our Group's confirmed Upcoming Events:

Event	Dates	Venue
Immigration Detention webinar	Thursday 5th June 7.00-8.30pm	online - booking https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3zGn8PKTUW1QaZH1uNr7Q#?from=addon_people_viewer&addon_people_viewer_embedded_tutorial=1
Waterfest	Saturday 28th June, daytime	Forbury Gardens/Abbey Ruins please let Helen know your availability
Reading Pride	Saturday 30th August, daytime	Kings Meadow
Sponsored Human Rights Trail	Sunday 14th September at 2.30pm	City of London - booking details to follow
Barn Dance with the Scamping Rogues	Saturday 15th November, 7.30pm	St Michael's church - booking details to follow
Write for Rights	Thursday 11th December, 7.30-9.00pm	Reading Biscuit Factory

Other events likely to be planned in

- International Festival - October/November

Other Amnesty or local upcoming events:

Event	Dates	Venue
National Conference and AGM	5th/6th July	Warwick uni
Regional Conference	11th October	TBC

Next meeting: Thursday 12th June 2025

Zoom at 8pm

Discussions about National AGM motions.

(Group AGM will now be in July, after our speaker)

ZOOM Link

Please note - for this month only, there is a different zoom link. Next month we will return to the normal link. For June, the meeting will be in 2 parts as the Zoom link will only last for 40 minutes. To re-join the second half of the meeting, just use the same link again.

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