**Amnesty Kent Network newsletter July 2025**

Dear Kent Network members and supporters

**HIGHLIGHTS**

Welcome to our July newsletter.  June was a busy month. July is shaping up the same. This month you can

* **Join our speaker meeting** to hear about the work of **Care4Calais** and how we can support each other
* **Ask your MP** to support Amnesty’s call for a **ban on goods produced in illegal Israeli settlements**
* **Urge the Israeli Government** to end the **forced eviction of Palestinians from East Jerusalem**
* **Sign up** to Amnesty’s **Disabled People HR Network** newsletter or follow them on Instagram
* **Volunteer to join us** at one of Kent’s forthcoming **Pride** events
* **Call on the US Government** to return those who were **illegally removed to El Salvador**
* **Organise** the showing of the **Surviving Evin exhibition** in your local area
* **Register** for the online training session on **working with schools**
* **Apply** to be a **Country Coordinator**
* **Apply** to join the committee of the **Rainbow Network**

and much more

**SPEAKER MEETING THIS TUESDAY: CARE4CALAIS**

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**Join us this Tuesday 17 July at 7:30pm** when Lilly Trapp, Kent and Medway Lead Volunteer for Care4Calais, will talk about their work and how we can support each other. Care4Calais deliver emergency aid to refugees in Calais and beyond. **Email** [**ariana.pisetti@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:ariana.pisetti@amnesty.org.uk) **for a link**.

**REFUGEE WEEK**

**A group of people standing under a tent

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At Faversham Market At Dover Multicultural Fair

We opened Refugee Week with a stall at **Faversham Market** (reported in last month’s letter), organised by the Maidstone, Medway and Swale Group, and closed it with a stall at the **Dover Together Multicultural Festival**. At Dover, we had conversations with lots of visitors to the stall, including the **Bishop of Dover** who was the first (of 25) to sign our letter to the **Dover MP** calling on him to support Amnesty’s campaign for a ban on **Israeli Settlement Goods.**

**MEDWAY WALK FOR PEACE**

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On **12 July** a group of us joined the **Medway Walk for Peace**, organised by our friends at **Medway Inter Faith Action**. The walk began at the Buddhist Centre and ended at Rochester Baptist Church, visiting the Turkish Dialogue Society Centre, Chatham Memorial Synagogue, Rochester Library and the War Memorial at Rochester Cathedral en route. At the end, I gave a short speech about Amnesty’s work and encouraged others to join us.

**ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES: BAN ISRAELI SETTLEMENT GOODS**

A sign with a fork and watermelon

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Thank you to those who have already reached out to local MPs to call, among other things, for the UK to [**ban Israeli Settlement Goods**](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/resources/ban-israeli-settlement-goods-campaign-pack?utm_content=163544&utm_campaign=MCFR1429S_LG_MM_June_25&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk). We are calling on the UK Government to end its trade and business complicity in illegal Israeli settlements, and to hold Israel accountable for its flagrant violations of international law in Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. With Israel's genocide in Gaza escalating, and the UK Government continuing to engage in arms transfers and settlement trade, **we must keep campaigning for change**.

Recently, Ireland has taken a stand against settlement trade with the proposed Occupied Territories Bill, showing that a ban is not only possible but governments' legal and moral obligation - [read more about this here](https://www.trocaire.org/news/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-occupied-territories-bill/). Also, just last week, [8 EU member states joined Ireland](https://www.rte.ie/news/2025/0619/1519280-eu-israel/) in citing the ICJ's advisory opinion and calling for international law to be upheld in relation to trade with settlement goods.

There are still **some local MPs whom we have not reached** and we shall be approaching individual Network members to help us with that.

**Please forward any responses to Mark at** [**mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk)**.**

**ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES: HALT THE EVICTION OF SALEH DIAB AND HIS FAMILY**

**Saleh Diab and his family are at risk of unlawful transfer** from occupied East Jerusalem after the Israeli District Court rejected their appeal against eviction from their home in the neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah in February 2025. These **forced evictions**, led by settler group Nachalat Shimon, are part of a continuing pattern of dispossession in Sheikh Jarrah. Saleh Diab has been at the forefront of the struggle to protect Palestinian families in Sheikh Jarrah against forced eviction, exposing him to extreme violence by both settlers and the police, without protection. In May, the Israeli Supreme Court granted the family leave to appeal this decision, marking their final legal lifeline against displacement. [**Please urge the authorities to immediately halt the forced eviction of the Diab family**](https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/9518/2025/en/) in the neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah and end the ongoing forced displacement of Palestinians from East Jerusalem. We would also appreciate it if you could **share this Urgent Action more widely**.

**GAZA**

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[Amnesty has gathered evidence](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/gaza-israel-turns-seeking-aid-deadly-trap-starving-palestinians-further-evidence) showing that, more than a month after introducing its militarised aid distribution system, **Israel continues to use the starvation of civilians as a weapon of war** against Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip - deliberately imposing conditions intended to destroy Palestinian life, as part of its ongoing genocide. Testimonies from medical staff, parents of malnourished children, and displaced Palestinians struggling to survive reveal a **horrifying picture of acute starvation and desperation in Gaza**.

**SOCIAL INSECURITY AND DISABLED PEOPLE**

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Another issue on which we are seeking to reach local MPs is the harmful impact of proposed spending cuts on some of the poorest in our communities, including disabled people, an issue raised in Amnesty’s report, [Social Insecurity: The Devastating Human Rights Impact of Social Security Failures in the UK](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/resources/social-insecurity-report?utm_content=161515&utm_campaign=MCFR1427S_LG_MM_April_25&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk). After the Government offered some concessions to potential rebels, the Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment Bill passed its Second Reading in the House of Commons on 1 July. **Amnesty has called this “a huge disappointment”**, saying that the cuts to Universal Credit will create a two-tier system, where new claimants or those with illnesses that vary day to day, such as mental health conditions and multiple sclerosis, are left at serious risk of being pushed into poverty. It has called for a complete overhaul of the benefits system, so that it treats people with dignity and protects the human rights to food, housing and security. The bill will now move to the Committee Stage for detailed scrutiny.

If you would like **advice on raising this issue with your local MP**, please email me.

**The UN has found ‘grave and systematic’ violations of disabled people’s human rights here in the UK**. Globally, over 1 billion people are disabled and governments across the world marginalise them far too often. Amnesty’s Disabled People’s Human Rights Network brings together activists from all over the UK to fight for disabled people’s everywhere. You can [sign up for the Disabled People HR Network's newsletter here](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/join-disabled-peoples-hr-network?utm_content=163544&utm_campaign=MCFR1429S_LG_MM_June_25&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk#:~:text=Our%20Disabled%20People's%20Human%20Rights,fight%20for%20disabled%20people%20everywhere.). You can [follow them on Instagram here](https://www.instagram.com/disabledpeopleshumanrights/?igsh=Mjl1eDJ4MDB0emNs).

**BUILDING LINKS WITH LOCAL MPs**

A large building with towers and a body of water

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The above issues provide useful material for **strengthening links with our local MPs**, including those who were elected to the office for the first time. On 6 June, I accompanied Network member Rose to a meeting with her local MP, Lauren Edwards (Rochester and Strood). We had a very positive 30-minute discussion about the government’s policy on refugees and people seeking asylum and established a good basis for further meetings, which we hope will take place twice a year. **If you would like advice on approaching your MP, please email me**.

**PRIDE**

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We are participating in **Margate Pride on 9 August and we hope also to participate in** the Pride events in **Folkestone (26 July), Tunbridge Wells (16 August)** and **Dover (23 August),** subject to cost and enough volunteers being available. **If you would like to support us in any of these events, please email Mark at** [**mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk)**.**

**ANTI-RACISM AND THE PREVENT DUTY**

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We held our fourth roundtable conversation in Medway on 4 June. This series of conversations has been a useful means of **raising awareness of Amnesty’s concerns about the Prevent Duty** and **learning of the experiences of local people** who have encountered it in various ways. One thing we discussed was the concerns raised by the NGO Rights & Security International about **the treatment of autistic people who are referred to the scheme**.

We intend to pause these conversations pending the government’s anti-terrorism review, which will include a review of the Prevent Duty, with a view to resuming them after that. Meanwhile, **if you have an interest in raising awareness of Amnesty’s concerns about the Prevent Duty in your area, please get in touch.**

**USA**

**A person standing in front of a cart full of pumpkins

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Mahmoud Khalil Andry José Hernández Romero

**Mahmoud Khalil**, a student activist at Columbia University and lead negotiator in pro-Palestinian protests and campus occupations during the Gaza war, was taken from his Columbia residential apartment building in New York City by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents on 8 March 8. The agents did not have a warrant and were acting on orders from the State Department to revoke Khalil's student visa. When the agents were informed that Khalil is a lawful permanent resident, they said this status would be revoked instead. He was transported to LaSalle Detention Center in Louisiana where he was held until his release on 20 June, after more than three months of unjust detention. Amnesty has called his detention unnecessary and **emblematic of a broader effort by the Trump administration to suppress solidarity with Palestinian people and weaponise the immigration system**. [You can read Amnesty’s full response here](https://www.amnestyusa.org/press-releases/amnesty-international-welcomes-ruling-for-mahmoud-khalils-long-overdue-release/).

**Andry José Hernández Romero** is a 31-year-old makeup artist who fled Venezuela because he feared for his life — targeted for being gay and for his political beliefs. He travelled to the U.S. seeking safety last year and his asylum hearing was scheduled for 17 March. But two days before his hearing, the U.S. unlawfully detained and expelled him overnight to CECOT in El Salvador, one of the most dangerous prisons in the Americas. There was no court order authorising Andry’s removal, no notification of his attorney and no hearing to contest allegations against him. Andry’s case is emblematic of the US not following due process and expelling people to El Salvador. [At this link](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/urgent-actions/stop-illegal-expulsions-el-salvador?utm_content=163544&utm_campaign=MCFR1429S_LG_MM_June_25&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk), you can call on the US Secretary of Homeland Security and the US ambassador to the UK to allow the **return of those who were illegally removed to El Salvador**.

**In case you missed it,** [**Amnesty’s briefing from April on the Trump administration’s first hundred days in office is here**](https://www.amnestyusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Chaos-Cruelty-10-Compounding-Assaults-on-Human-Rights-A-Review-of-President-Trumps-First-100-Days-in-Office.pdf)**.**

**NIGER DELTA**

**A person standing in mud

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Person stands next to unremediated oil spill in Niger Delta.

*Copyright: Michael Uwemedimo/ cmapping.net*

**Good news – and we need some**. In June, the High Court’s preliminary issues trial ruling stated that **Shell can be held responsible for its historic oil spills in the Niger Delta**, meaning that that the process can move into the next stage in the communities’ fight for justice. More than 13,500 Ogale and Bille residents in the Niger Delta have [filed claims](https://www.leighday.co.uk/news/news/2024-news/court-of-appeal-ruling-clears-the-way-for-full-trial-of-nigerian-communities-oil-pollution-claims-against-shell-to-finally-go-ahead-in-2025/) against Shell over the past decade demanding the company clean up oil spills that they say have wrecked their livelihoods and caused widespread devastation to the local environment. They can’t fish anymore because their water sources, including their wells for drinking water, are poisoned and the land is contaminated which has killed plant life, meaning communities can no longer farm. For nearly 70 years, Shell's oil spills and leaks due to poorly maintained pipelines, wells and inadequate clean-up attempts have ravaged the health and livelihoods of many of the 30 million people living in the Niger Delta – most of whom live in poverty. [You can read more here](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/niger-delta?utm_content=163544&utm_campaign=MCFR1429S_LG_MM_June_25&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk).

Amnesty continues its campaign for justice for the communities of the Niger Delta, so watch this space for how you can support it.

**IRAN: SUVIVING EVIN EXHIBITION**

**A person with a beard

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There is still time to propose local venues to display the Surviving Evin exhibition, developed in partnership with Anoosheh Ashoori, the British Iranian businessman formerly detained in Evin jail in Iran, after being arrested when he was in the country to visit his mother. Amnesty is currently working on making this happen in the next two months. The exhibition will be made of 15 to 20 A3 sized boards. We will also include guidance on how to set up an exhibition including a template press release and guidance on inviting your MP. This will be an exhibition entirely led by local activists in terms of organisation. We will provide the materials and logistical help. You can [access the Exhibition Activist Guide here](https://amnestyuk-my.sharepoint.com/personal/philippa_griesbach_amnesty_org_uk/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fphilippa%5Fgriesbach%5Famnesty%5Forg%5Fuk%2FDocuments%2F%5FLocal%20Groups%2FEvents%2FSurviving%20Evin%2FSurviving%20Evin%20Activist%20Guide%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fphilippa%5Fgriesbach%5Famnesty%5Forg%5Fuk%2FDocuments%2F%5FLocal%20Groups%2FEvents%2FSurviving%20Evin&ga=1). For more detail please also [see the FAQ document](https://amnestyuk-my.sharepoint.com/personal/philippa_griesbach_amnesty_org_uk/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fphilippa%5Fgriesbach%5Famnesty%5Forg%5Fuk%2FDocuments%2F%5FLocal%20Groups%2FEvents%2FSurviving%20Evin%2FSurviving%20Evin%20FAQs%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fphilippa%5Fgriesbach%5Famnesty%5Forg%5Fuk%2FDocuments%2F%5FLocal%20Groups%2FEvents%2FSurviving%20Evin&ga=1). If your group is interested in hosting the exhibition, [please sign up using this form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdYLaEo2J4vZRCjdtP8pTjlC9sAntugEWXFsW4r-9B0ueSuyw/viewform?pli=1).

**AGM / NATIONAL CONFERENCE (OR THE AMPLIFY SUMMIT)**

** A person and person standing together

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Arianna and Graham at the Amplify Summit

Along with Arianna, South East Region Activism Rep, I represented the Kent Network and the Maidstone, Medway and Swale Group at AIUK’s National Conference and AGM (the Amplify Summit) on 5 & 6 July at the University of Warwick. The meeting was full of energy, highly motivating and included a keynote speech, delivered in person, by Agnes Callamard, Amnesty’s Executive Director, and one by Amnesty UK’s Chief Executive, Sacha Desmukh, a programme of inspiring workshops, as well as usual AGM business. [**See here**](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/annual-general-meeting) **for details of decisions taken at the AGM**. **To see a full gallery of event photos,** [**click here**](https://marieanne.smugmug.com/Amplify-Summit-AIUK-National-Conference-and-AGM). You will need to enter a password - Activism2025.

**LEARNING**

On **26 August**, the Human Right's Education team is presenting an **online training session on working with schools**. The session will help activists to plan how they can work in schools, including discussing some key human rights case studies, covering issues such as refugee rights and LGBTQ+ rights, and to understand key duties around safeguarding and inclusive practice. You can [register here](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-guide-to-working-with-schools-tickets-1319806088539?aff=oddtdtcreator).

Amnesty has produced an [introductory guide to social media](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2025-03/Technology%20and%20Social%20media%20guides.pdf?VersionId=I.HrEnM.o1ICqNXzCDt1vONSPKBYi1z0&utm_content=163544&utm_campaign=MCFR1429S_LG_MM_June_25&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk) and other key pieces of technology with links to other more in-depth guides and a glossary of tech terms.

**RECRUITMENT**

**COUNTRY COORDINATORS**

Amnesty UK’s Country Coordinators are volunteer activists who specialise in Human Rights campaigning for specific countries around the world. Together, these activists make up the Country Coordinator Forum, and lead our country-focused campaign and advocacy work in the UK, supported by research and further expertise from the International Secretariat. Mark and I are part of the Country Coordinator Forum and can provide advice on the role if you are interested in applying. Current vacancies:

• Colombia and Brazil

• Cuba

• Russia (Gender, Sexuality, Identity focus)

• Laos, Thailand

• South Africa, Lesotho, Eswatini

• Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan

• Afghanistan

• Ethiopia and Kenya

• Hong Kong

• Myanmar

[**Click here to apply**](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/jobs/activism?utm_content=163544&utm_campaign=MCFR1429S_LG_MM_June_25&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk)**.**

**RAINBOW NETWORK COMMITTEE MEMBER**

The Rainbow Network are recruiting new committee members.

Current vacancies:

• Rainbow Network Committee member

• Rainbow Network Committee member = Social Media Officer (x2)

[**Click here to apply**](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/jobs/activism?utm_content=163544&utm_campaign=MCFR1429S_LG_MM_June_25&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk)**.**

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**Tuesday 17 July at 7:30pm to 8:30pm.  Kent Network online speaker meeting: Lilly Trapp of Care4Calais. Email**[**mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk)**for a link.**

**Saturday 26 July. Folkestone Pride. Email** [**mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk) **for details.**

**Wednesday 6 August at 1:00pm to 3:00pm. Monthly Guantanamo vigil outside Houses of Parliament. Email** [**mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk**](mailto:mark.clixby@amnesty.org.uk) **for details.**

**Monday 1 September at 7:30pm to 9:00pm.  Maidstone, Medway and Swale Group meeting at Maidstone Community Support Centre, 39-48 Marsham Street, Maidstone, ME14 1HH, and online.  Email**[**mmands.amnestygroup@gmail.com**](mailto:mmands.amnestygroup@gmail.com)**for details or for a link.**

**Saturday 16 August. Tunbridge Wells Pride. Email** [**dominique.oneil@outlook.com**](mailto:dominique.oneil@outlook.com) **for details.**

**Saturday 23 August. Dover Pride. Email** [**martin3769@hotmail.com**](mailto:martin3769@hotmail.com) **for details.**

**Tuesday 26 August at 6:00pm to 7:30pm. Online training session on working with schools.** [**Register here**](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-guide-to-working-with-schools-tickets-1319806088539?aff=oddtdtcreator)**.**

All the best

Graham