

Dates for your diary	Saturday 09/08/2025: Pumble (pub + ramble), Cocking Saturday 18/10/2025: South East regional gathering
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Dear writers

Local events

We were delighted to host **Aria & Song for Amnesty**, at Christchurch Chichester, as part of the 2025 Festival of Chichester.

Sopranos Stephanie Peat and Rebecca Grove (pictured), ably accompanied by pianist Anthony Groves, delighted and entertained the audience with a midsummer's evening of classical, operatic and musical song, in a performance space filled with garden flowers. The audience very generously raised donations of £607.00 and, during the interval, we gained plenty of signatures for the petition to urge the UK government to sign and ratify the UN Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, as well as demolishing some delicious home-made cakes.



Our grateful thanks to the performers and to the volunteers who helped on the night, to make this such a successful event.

We were sorry to hear of the recent death of **Dave Box**, who was the first chair of the Bognor Group in 1976, with wife Judy. This was prior to the 1981 merger of the Bognor, Selsey and Chichester groups of Amnesty, to become the current group. Chair Kath Shakespeare stores much of the Group archive and has provided the press cutting from December 1978 (page 2)

Saturday 09/08/2025: Group Pumble, Cocking: meet at 11:00. Our annual group Pumble (pub + ramble) is taking place in Cocking this year. We start and finish at the Blue Bell in Cocking. There is a large car park for those driving. Those coming by bus: meet me at the Cathedral bus stop in Chichester to catch the 60 bus north at 10:31 (arrives in Cocking at 10:56). If you would like to eat after the Pumble at the [Blue Bell](#) (around 13:30) please let me know by Saturday 02/08/2025 by email (rdewick2@gmail.com) or phone (07377 343 306) so a suitable table can be booked.

Other events

Saturday 18/10/2025: date for your diaries. This is the provisional date for the South East regional gathering. Amnesty groups in the south east are starting to plan for the regional gathering (used to be a 'conference') with Arianna Pisetti, our Amnesty Activism Representative – South East (Surrey, Sussex, Kent). The venue is still being decided but is likely to be on the Surrey or Kent borders. If you are interested in getting involved with the planning or interested in attending, please let us know. Planning is currently taking place online.

Carry on writing!

Bob Dewick, Amnesty

From *The Post*, Saturday 16/12/1978

Husband and wife run local branch from their home

IT was two years ago that David and Judith Box read an article on Amnesty International, and decided that they wanted to become a part of the growing organisation.

"We found that the nearest branch to us was at Selsey," said David. "We joined the group which comprised of about 30 members.

So in January of this year Mr and Mrs Box formed a Bognor Regis branch of Amnesty International, with the headquarters at their home in Shelley Road, Bognor Regis.

"We now have a membership of 50 and have already been involved in the release of prisoners," he continued.

"When we become more established we will then be able to adopt a prisoner and work solely for his release."

With Mrs Eileen Thomas, of Fernhurst Gardens, Rose Green, as chairman, and a committee of eight, the group has held many organised events to raise money to help them carry out its work.

The group has already been campaigning for prisoners in such countries as Argentina, El Salvador and Guinea.

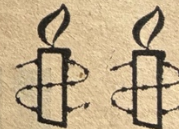
"We do however need more members if we want to fight for more prisoners," emphasised David. "Even if they only have time to write one campaigning letter, it all helps."



"But as communication grew rather hard during the winter months my wife and I decided to start a group in Bognor," added David.



The founders of the Bognor Regis Branch of Amnesty International — Judith and David Box.



Further information of the Bognor branch of Amnesty International can be obtained from David or Judith Box (Bognor 5326).

At present the Bognor group is joining together with groups all over the world in sending Christmas cards to prisoners of conscience, who live in the hope of help and a chance in life.

At least they have not been totally forgotten.

Amnesty action: campaigns & letter-writing

Egypt update from Margaret, our Campaign Co-ordinator

Laila Souief. After last month's very worrying reports, I am sure you will all be very relieved to hear that Alaa's mother, Laila, has been persuaded to end her hunger strike in protest at her son's continued detention. In a recent update from Amnesty this week we received the news that: *Laila has now begun a re-feeding plan in the hospital, and they are monitoring all her vital indicators moment by moment to make sure that her body has reached a stable enough point for her to be discharged. Alaa remains imprisoned as a prisoner of conscience, targeted solely for his peaceful expression and political beliefs.*

We wish her a return to health and continue to campaign for Alaa's release.



Petition to call on the U.K. Government to ratify the UN Convention on Enforced Disappearance

Thanks to all of you who attended the recent concert by Rebecca Grove and friends, which not only raised an amazing amount of money in donations to our Amnesty Group but also gathered 42 signatures in support of this important petition. These were duly sent to the petition organizer, to strengthen the call upon our government to ratify the convention which aims to:

- introduce measures to prevent the use of enforced disappearance in the U.K. and in other countries throughout the world where it is widely used to suppress opposition to the state. Mexico alone admits there have been more than 100,000 enforced disappearances.
- enable the U.K. to address the issue of enforced disappearance elsewhere and give protection to UK citizens throughout the world and access to justice and reparation to victims.
- demonstrate commitment to human rights and the rule of law

Action

If you would like to support two urgent action cases of **victims of Enforced Disappearance**, you can write on behalf of by following the links to their cases below.

- These links take you to template letters to be posted: we do not have an option for these two actions to send an email.

Ibrahim al-Dersi (Libya) Member of the House of Representatives (Libya's parliament)

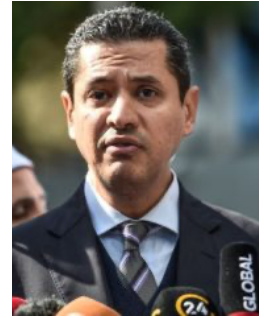
Ibrahim al-Dersi went missing on 16 May 2024 after he attended a parade held by the self-proclaimed Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LAAF) in Benghazi. His fate and whereabouts remain unknown. In early May 2025, disturbing videos emerged on social media, showing Ibrahim al-Dersi shirtless in a dimly lit, confined space with concrete walls, bearing visible signs of torture. A heavy metal chain and large padlock were tied around his neck. The LAAF authorities must ensure that information about Ibrahim al-Dersi's fate and whereabouts is disclosed immediately. All those suspected of involvement in his enforced disappearance and torture, including high-ranking officers and commanders, must be brought to trial in fair proceedings.

[LIBYAN MP DISAPPEARED FOR OVER A YEAR](#)

Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi (United Arab Emirates)

Egyptian-Turkish poet Abdul Rahman Al-Qaradawi has been subjected to enforced disappearance since his extradition from Lebanon to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 8 January 2025. He was arrested by Lebanese security forces on 28 December at the border crossing between Lebanon and Syria. The Lebanese authorities accepted the extradition request by the Emirati authorities on charges of spreading “fake news” and “disturbing public security”, in a video he posted on his social media platform while in Syria. This criticised Egyptian, Emirati and Saudi Arabian authorities. There are concerns for his safety, as his family has been unable to obtain any information about his fate, exact whereabouts or legal status; and he has been denied consular visits by Turkish authorities

[EGYPTIAN-TURKISH POET FORCIBLY DISAPPEARED](#)



Action: end human rights backsliding in Tunisia

25 July 2025 marked the fourth anniversary of President Saied's power grab.

Act now and sign the petition, asking the Tunisian authorities to immediately release all those arbitrarily detained, to end the escalating crackdown on human rights including the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, refrain from compromising judicial independence and uphold the rule of law and the rights of migrants and refugees.

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/petition/end-human-rights-backsliding-in-tunisia/>

Action: Stop the executions of Pakhshan Aziz and Verisheh Moradi

Pakhshan Azizi and **Verisheh Moradi**, both from Iran's oppressed Kurdish minority, are at imminent risk of execution in Iran. Pakhshan, a humanitarian aid worker, is being punished just for helping women and children displaced by ISIS. Verisheh, a member of the group East Kurdistan Free Woman Society, faces the death penalty following a grossly unfair trial.

Since their arrests in separate cases in August 2023, both have revealed being tortured and otherwise ill-treated, including gender-based violence, and held in solitary confinement. Their trials were deeply unjust, and they are at grave risk of execution.



In the aftermath of the #WomanLifeFreedom uprising, Iran's authorities have intensified the use of the death penalty as a tool of repression and fear, including against women detained on politically-motivated charges. **In 2023 alone, the Iranian authorities executed at least 853 people—the highest number in eight years.**

What you can do

Please add your name to the online petition, here: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/actions/stop-executions-pakhshan-azizi-verisheh-moradi>

Want to do more? The Urgent Action Network

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