

## Activism Subcommittee Meeting

11 May 2019

### Human Rights Action Centre

#### Minutes

##### In attendance:

Tom Chigbo (Chair)  
Daren Nair (Section Board Representative)  
Alexis Hatto (Regional Representative)  
Holly Shorey (Thematic Network Committees Representative)  
Julia Pato (StAN Representative)  
Rhiannon Griffiths (Country Coordinator Representative)  
Rona Hardie (Country Coordinator Representative)  
Bob Barron (Trade Union Network Representative)

##### Staff Attending:

Andy Hackman (Head of Community Organising, HRE and Events)  
Jeni Dixon (Community Organising Manager)  
Ranna McArdle (PA Supporter Campaigning and Communication, Minutes)  
Shoomi Chowdhury (Education Officer (Adults)) - **Agenda item 2**  
Claire Postles (Planning and Evaluation Manager) **Agenda item 8**

Item No	Agenda Item	Action
1	<p><b>Minutes and Matters arising – Deferred?</b></p> <p><b>Apologies</b> were received from Kerry Moscogiuri, Maddy Stanford and Dave Beynon.</p>	
2	<p><b>The Activist Education Model –</b></p> <p>Shoomi delivered a talk with a presentation on the Activist Education Model.</p> <p>In response to Rhiannon's comment that country coordinators are spread out geographically, Shoomi responded that she hopes Nationbuilder will be able to source trainers locally, and the platform work in a way that is usable for all. AIUK will cover travel expenses</p> <p>Bob said the TUC education national network might be an organisation Shoomi could learn from. There might be a space for Amnesty on the TUC programme, perhaps on the application of the Human Rights act.</p> <p>Shoomi outlined the development timetable to the end of 2019.</p> <p>Holly asked how the plan fits with HRE to encourage children to become teen activists. Shoomi explained that the teacher is the gatekeeper in the schools programme and the child rights trainer</p>	

	<p>toolkit and we don't yet have an effective way of knowing the child's journey or the impact. The next strategy is to map a journey via end user analysis. Shoomi said that HRE at the IS use a progress and impact evaluation which is a useful tool.</p> <p>Andy outlined the capabilities he hoped Nationbuilder would eventually deliver such as a map of lead activists with profiles, roles, and interests where activists could connect. Shoomi confirmed that this work sits separately to the Activist Model.</p> <p>Shoomi wants the lead activist page with the modules to be ready. Then she will consult with activists to determine which learning needs should be fulfilled by offers on that page.</p> <p>Shoomi confirmed she would like <b><u>Country Coordinators to contribute to the activist needs analysis</u></b> by saying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what they feel is missing,</li> <li>• confirm what training they have had,</li> <li>• state what they are delivering and</li> <li>• which network they are from;</li> </ul> <p>by 12 June 2019.</p> <p>Shoomi confirmed certificates of attendance would be available as Uni groups like these. Some Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) offer free accreditation. Taster sessions open to the public and advertised on Facebook would be a good way to interest other people.</p> <p>Tom recapped that ASC members have a month to <b><u>send in ideas and feedback. Share questions with people and focus on Skills</u></b>. A piece of work is needed to clearly define core skills, what does an ideal activist look like. There will be follow up at future ASCs.</p>	<p>Country Coordinators</p> <p>All</p>
3	<p><b>Global Assembly Meeting 2019</b></p> <p><b>Update</b> – Tom told ASC that the Board had looked at the proposed text on divestment from fossil fuels and campaigning on climate change. There are implications for pensions. AIUK generally supports the proposal to have ethical investments but changes to pension schemes and reserves are complicated.</p> <p><b>Questions about IS</b> – Tom update ASC members on recent events at the IS. In response to Konterra and Laddie reports Kumi has reviewed the leadership at IS and announced a new leadership structure. Be clear with your activists that this is the IS, not AIUK.</p> <p>Tom informed ASC that there is a budget deficit at the IS. Redundancies will be necessary. Kumi has spoken to IS staff but this situation will take time to resolve and will be tough for staff at</p>	

	<p>the IS. We need to bear that in mind when working with IS, asking for materials.</p> <p><b>The AGM emergency resolution</b> speaks directly to the IS culture and is relevant to staff at AIUK. Following Konterra and Laddie reviews, AIUK has drawn up a clear strategy that will be reported against and evaluated. The Board member with responsibility for wellbeing and safeguarding will be nominated in June. There is a commitment to consult with the Union. Tom felt the responsibility for monitoring this item sits with another subcommittee and does not need to be a standing item. This item would be raised on a regular basis.</p> <p>Andy reported that the Head of Safeguarding has been appointed and will start in September. Donella Williams the Safeguarding Project Manager started 2 weeks ago.</p> <p>ASC members discussed the incident at the IS when protesters supporting Kurdish organisations occupied the building and IS staff Twitter comments. Tom advised ASC members if they needed support or to clarify any issues to contact himself, Andy, or Jeni.</p>	
4	<p><b>AIUK Campaigns Roundup 2018 –</b></p> <p>Andy reported that <b><u>Kerry will speak with Felix about a quarterly report.</u></b> Tom asked staff to progress this matter.</p>	Kerry
5	<p><b>Impact of the Movement</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Update</b> – Andy reported fruitful discussions with Alex and a workshop run by Che Ramsden, Innovations Manager on Piloting Regional Teams. A similar event will take place later in May. <b><u>Andy will clarify workshop plans and let ASC members know.</u></b></p> <p>There will be a conference call in July on regional teams. Stuart is doing an update.</p> <p>Andy reported that there are 13 nations and regions rep positions – (2 in nations). The future infrastructure will enable regional teams to work more effectively. Andy reported existing regional reps felt overwhelmed. He wants to create some pilots. Tom said there may be governance issues to resolve and get approved at AGM.</p> <p>Jeni informed ASC that there are 3 Reps elections now. All the terms have been reviewed.</p> <p>The new Community Organising staffing structure should be agreed by the end of June. The aim is to connect more effectively.</p>	<p>Andy</p> <p>Andy</p>

	<p><b><u>Tom asked for a table with progress on the 3 areas of strategy clearly set out for the next meeting.</u></b> Andy asked Che for an implementation plan by year. He will report status against that.</p> <p>ASC discussed the resolution passed on Activist Led Campaigns.. PCS had given examples that could inform a process for Amnesty.</p> <p>Since the AGM Andy has been looped into conversations with Mike Quinn and activists to scope, build and enable networks, including the proposed Disability Network. <b><u>Andy will agree a process with Mike which will be reported to ASC.</u></b> Tom suggested a pilot in the North West and told <b><u>all ASC members to get in touch with Andy and Mike if they had ideas.</u></b> Tom confirmed that AIUK's approach to building networks is in line with Kumi's vision of a decentralised Amnesty, and how Sections and IS work together.</p> <p>Andy confirmed an animation had been commissioned on "Transforming your activism" for local groups and will be available soon. ASC discussed specific network leads. Andy reported he is trying to put resource into priority areas. He wants to do regional pilots and accommodate networks. This will be included in the restructure.</p>	<p><b>Andy</b></p> <p><b>ALL</b></p>
6	<p><b>National Conference &amp; AGM Evaluation</b></p> <p>Tom asked ASC members to pick an adjective describing the AGM experience keeping themselves and their activism community in mind.</p> <p><b>Below are some of the words used / points made:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusive, empowering (but disappointing as the drivers of culture change we're aiming for were not there – Holly would send Tom specific examples).</li> <li>• surrounded by energy</li> <li>• Country Coordinators and Activist led workshops were great but got cut down because of talks overrunning</li> <li>• Timetabling properly to allow attendance by those signed up</li> <li>• Safeguarding and training (Daren / Jeni discuss outside of meeting)</li> </ul> <p><b>Logistics –Venue and rooms – Audiovisual, paperwork, accommodation , emails</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good menu for all (too much meat – greening the conference – go for less meat)</li> <li>• wheelchair access to the stage –</li> <li>• trouble carrying food to the table for some members –</li> <li>• Some workshop rooms were tiny</li> </ul>	<p><b>Holly</b></p> <p><b>Daren/ Jeni</b></p>

- People turn up who have not signed up and you cannot turn them away
- Venue is better than Swansea
- Hotel as hub was really good
- Mixing lead activists – –
- halls are basic but within easy walking distance –
- hung out with staff which felt more collaborative –
- Voting system going down – how would electronic voting over the internet work?
- Congrats to Chair and returning officer
- Paperwork and packs were better, different bag, different colour, HRD comic was a nice surprise, emails were good – informative and exciting -
- Board members seemed removed -mostly at meetings and eating - connecting –
- overwhelming inspiring, hectic, social, exhausting –
- Tom asked what can we do about leaving people exhausted?

#### **Highlights / more of this –**

- Football – make it better
- Youth led events – 3 workshops co- led –
- Networking space in Action Centre – reintroduce but not to conflict with workshops –
- Awards – lots of people there –
- Hope based communications – Kumi's speech focused on what we can do and was full of energy
- Get the director and chair to speak with similar energy/message – ASC speech was great (Stewart – described as Welsh country coordinator)
- People new to AGM, younger people on the stage – staff members new to AGM

#### **Lowlights / less of this –**

- Little face to face informal conversations
- No opportunity to sit / discuss with a Board member / with Kumi – panellists/ after the discussion
- Board to use less bureaucratic language, keep it clear and simple – More regional conferences to decondense AGM
- Divert resources and not put all eggs in one basket
- Focus on the big picture
- As we're moving in a regional direction give more resources Regional conferences

- Handsets not working
- Process to submit questions, who had oversight, Felix filtered submissions
- Challenging behaviour from activists in workshops,
- Dealing with aggression and snide remarks while leading a workshop
- Trying to confront unacceptable behaviour
- Activist led workshops properly briefed about childrens rights as rights holders / under 18s were participants
- Have a staff member or 2 in the workshop to intervene
- In the plenary have the Chair remind everyone to be respectful and considerate in workshops
- Put workshop management / control in training needs analysis
- Tom suggested the Board spend much less time in working parties
- Whole thing feels rushed
- Delegates over critical
- Staff and Board participating and keeping an eye on proceedings
- Debriefing after workshop
- Keynote panel where the theme was young activists – only one panel member was under 25
- A few instances of patronising responses when giving speeches with comments that undermined young people  
Inadequate wellbeing processes; 2 members of staff only. AIUK are looking at external provision for next AGM;
- More and clearer medical and first aid info;
- Clarity that you don't and you're not expected to attend everything / anything. Clear instruction to take a break and signpost quiet and calm spaces. Say that in the email / intro session/ and again from the stage?

### **Highpoints:**

#### ASC members said things listed below were their highpoints:

- Youth events and promoting positive messages
- Inspired connected interactions,
- Kumi's speech and climate action
- Board response to young activists and youth turnout – commitment to that

#### ASC members discussed:

- Iranian activists at the AGM and the Board Q&A;
- Recording of response and posting on Twitter;
- Activist right to respond to tweets.

	There will be a process for planning the next AGM. ASC will feed into that.	
7	<p><b>Student and Youth Reports</b></p> <p><b>Maddy Stanford/ submitted a written report to the group (Annex 1)</b></p> <p><b>Report from StAN – Julia Pata</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brave campaign - actions on campus + Parliament day lobbying in June</li> <li>• Agm quiz + stall</li> <li>• Stunt at the agm w/ the youth groups</li> <li>• Student oriented campaign in progress</li> <li>• New university groups</li> </ul>	
8	<p><b>Amnesty International Global Strategy</b></p> <p>Claire Postles introduced a Planning workshop and discussion. Claire explained the 18 month process for the next IS strategy.</p> <p>Claire explained the process for gathering input. There will be an online consultation that closes on 20 May. The important thing is to engage members across the country. Jeni confirmed that everyone received the survey which is <b><u>onTwitter #nextstrategy</u></b>. Tom explained there had been a prior discussion about how we consult and what needs to go out to whom. It was felt that this was not a thing that should go do everyone and the Section response was most important. Claire explained that we are going into this on the back of consultations on IOM strategy, Comms strategy etc and trying to collect even more information.</p> <p><b><u>ASC members were asked to share this link with your activists.</u></b> Tom said the priority is for activists to influence Sections responses and contribute to the AIUK response. Claire is trying to leverage as many different ways as possible to respond. The public platform allows anyone to contribute as an individual.</p> <p>Claire said Kumi's vision set out in a paper he's written sees activists being enabled to deliver the vision, and support people to drive their own campaigns. From September there will be a framework and structure to create campaigns.</p> <p>ASC were reminded of media comment on broader questions about how we operate and speculation that we are cutting back on key issues to become involved in new areas. Claire said Amnesty will focus on becoming a bigger, bolder, more inclusive movement globally.</p> <p><b><u>ASC members raised the following points:</u></b></p>	

- Amnesty can be distrusted because it's seen as an international institution. In Syria, Assad attempted to make Amnesty be seen as an institution rather than a voluntary organisation
- It needs to be relevant and effect peoples' lives in their communities
- The paradoxical nature of social media which should create accessibility, but in fact makes groups keep to themselves. We see the rise of nationalism and populism. We must ensure Amnesty is seen as an inclusive and accessible community where people are supportive of each other;
- Identity politics is growing as is identity campaigning, related to individuals and issues like women's rights. Should we reframe everything within intersectionality. Don't be insular as in "this is my campaign!"
- Changes in our political and democratic structures, votes at 16, democracy becoming more accessible, the emergence of strong right wing leaders, no majority government in the UK, civil rights and human rights globally were mentioned.
- Right wingers use the importance of cultural change, cultural identity, and immigration as issues. Campaigning organisations need to take account of these issues.
- We need to make Human Rights Education more accessible.

#### **UK focused discussion:**

- Mindful of the UK's colonial heritage, Amnesty has the ability to feed into international working groups on economic, legal and business such as UN work, shifting the locus of power.
- Post Konterra, Amnesty has a legal duty to staff globally, aside from issues of equal pay. A candidate in the US presidential election has proposed a universal basic income to enable equal pay and opportunities. Amnesty campaigns for pay equality and sustainable development goals (SDGs) to transform our world.
- In an age of nation states, populism, mass migration, mistrust of elites (when Amnesty can be seen as one) how would we be viewed when the political is the social and traditional identities erode.
- Grass roots activism in civil society should be encouraged. We need to remember the importance of being a good citizen. In the US more people are becoming involved



	<p>(because of Trump's presidency people realise the importance of democracy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The positive reaction of New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern to the horrific event in Christchurch gives hope and led the way against hate. Amnesty should be a nice place to be, and not feel like part of the old school.</li> <li>• Online network groups have protected HRDs by keeping in contact and tracking each other's movements. However, AI and robotics can take the narrative on sex and gender backwards. Online abuses in sex and porn, betting and gaming are often little understood by adults.</li> <li>• Amnesty needs to keep our legal and ethical frameworks up to date and in tune with tech developments. Design can be dominated by men even though products are for women too. There is an education opportunity for Amnesty with this fundamental issue. ASC members discussed designing a game, setting up a gamers network to reach a new audience.</li> </ul> <p>Claire asked ASC members what would be your focus, what would you do if you were to start at Amnesty today? ASC members suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• build coalitions;</li> <li>• invest in training and education;</li> <li>• looking at social media influencers;</li> <li>• integrate celebrities.</li> </ul> <p>Tom told ASC members that someone (like Claire) will visit activist groups to collect their ideas. Members considered post submission of thoughts, what will Amnesty drop from its activities and how will we ensure we don't lose people.</p> <p><b><u>Ranna will provide notes of points raised and feedback from ASC to Claire.</u></b></p>	Ranna
9	<p><b>Regional Reps and Country Coordinators Reports –</b></p> <p><b>Report from Regional Reps – Alexis Hatto (Annex 2) delivered his report.</b></p> <p><b>Report from Country Coordinators – Rona Hardie (Annex 3) delivered her report and read a letter from Jerry Allen.</b></p> <p>Rona asked members to share details of a meeting on 26th June at the HRAC from 7.30-9.30 with Aminatou Haidar a Saharawi human rights activist..</p>	ALL

	<p><u>ASC then discussed:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the recruitment of recent graduates to Amnesty activism;</li> <li>• expenses;</li> <li>• training for activists involved in recruitment;</li> <li>• why people are leaving the movement after a short time;</li> <li>• concerns about International regional support officers and limit to how we can legislate for how an office works;</li> <li>• clear indications from an office about how they want to do their activism – we’ve got to listen to them – be led by the workers in the country</li> <li>• AGM space for CCs is too small –</li> <li>• Look at designing the next AGM using this feedback;</li> <li>• be mindful IS is in a state of flux;</li> <li>• <b><u>Rona will put Julia in touch with Ulrika</u></b></li> <li>• Update website and social media website –</li> <li>• Relate Trump visit to climate change impact on HR</li> </ul>	Rona
10	<p><b>Thematic Networks and Trade Union Network Reports –</b></p> <p><b>Trade Union Network Report</b></p> <p>Bob reported the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the TU network and the success of getting the emergency motion through at AGM.</p> <p><b>Holly Shorey delivered her Thematic Networks report (Annex 4)</b></p>	
11	<p><b>AOB –</b></p> <p><b>Campaigns and Impact Sub Committee recruitment / CISC roles</b></p> <p>ASC members asked RM to <b><u>send them the role description for CISC activist role.</u></b> Tom thought this was for a lead activist only, to add the activist voice to CISC;</p> <p>Daren asked for <b><u>an IOM progress report: implementation plan, something similar to the Board report but slimmed down.</u></b></p> <p>ASC thanked Rhiannon for her contribution, guidance and support over the past year as she is standing down.</p>	<p>RM</p> <p>Andy. / Kerry</p>
12	<p><b>Supporter Feedback Q1 2019 – Item for information - distributed by email 25 April 2019 14:19</b></p>	

## **Student and Youth Reports – (Annex 1)**

### **Report from Maddy Stanford/Youth**

#### **Challenges faced and solutions**

Exam season – less involvement/harder to engage people.

No clear possible solution, however many groups have reported taking a different approach during exam season that involves less group meetings and more sharing of petitions/ campaigns etc through social media (group twitter pages/ fb pages).

#### **AGM Feedback**

Overall I'm happy to report that there has been an overwhelming response of positive feedback from youth activists about the recent AGM. Youth members felt inspired and able to connect and network with other members of the organization – there was an atmosphere of 'feeling part of something bigger' that I think is a great first step towards implementing Impact Of The Movement. Kumi's speech was definitely the highlight for many. I would also like to highlight the success of the completely youth led action during Kumi's speech, as well as the youth involvement during the debates around resolutions. I think it portrayed the absolute importance of youth involvement within the organization and was a credit to the organization. While the majority of feedback I received was positive, unfortunately I was made aware of some constructive criticism that I think it would be helpful to take on board for future AGMs. Firstly, there was a slight feeling of disappointment with regards to the Key Note Panel – who while were all incredibly inspiring, were felt not to fit the "Young Activists" theme. As only one member of the panel was under the age of 25, several youth members reported feeling underrepresented and that their work within the organization was not necessarily valued to the same extent as with older activists. In addition, there were a couple of instances where older activists appeared quite patronizing – referring to a youth activist as 'clearly illiterate' and 'unintelligent' simply because they had opposing views on a motion. I won't go into detail now as I believe each circumstance was made aware to safeguarding (although if further information is needed, I can happily provide more details). However, overall the AGM was incredibly successful and I am incredibly excited about the Board's agreement to double the amount of youth representation at next years AGM.

## **Report from Regional Reps – Alexis Hatto (Annex 2)**

Regional Reps last met at the AGM in Nottingham where we held our last Regional Forum and thanked Farshid Talaghani and Liesbeth ten Ham again for all their hard work and support. We are also grateful for a new chair in Malcolm Dingwall-Smith, who was elected unopposed and developed the emergency resolution on Amnesty staff well-being, which received similarly unanimous support.

We were joined at the meeting by Andy Hackman and Ché Ramsden for a session on the Impact of the Movement Strategy led by Stuart Penny and Alexis Hatto. We agreed to support the development of a comms plan for groups and networks; plans for running pilots in regions to be determined, and continue to review the regional rep role in the context of developing a series of more easily definable and manageable roles that constitute a regional team. We hope these reviews can also support wider reflection on roles in other groups, forums and networks, given that workloads and expectations are often too high and pose great challenges for recruitment and retention of volunteer activists.

Our discussions informed a pair of workshops on Transforming our Activism attended by over 80 people on Saturday 12 April. The outputs of these workshops will be compiled and complimented by a pair of Innovation Sprint events taking place on Friday 24 and Saturday 25 May at the Human Rights Action Centre. All of these activities will feed into further development of the strategy implementation plan, which Regional Reps will discuss on a conference call in July.

Since the AGM, Alexis Hatto has been in contact with Giacomo Manca, Amnesty member and part of the international solidarity team at Extinction Rebellion, to organise actions in support of the new climate change policy currently being developed at the International Secretariat. IS Policy Advisor Chiara Liguori has been leading this work, and she is keen to liaise more directly with AIUK to identify further opportunities for action and engagement. Alexis has produced a draft survey to gauge support from groups and networks interested in campaigning on these issues.

The South West Regional Conference is taking place in Exeter also on 11 May with just over 70 people booked to attend. Keynote speakers include Turkish Human Rights Defender Emel Kurma, one of the current visiting fellows at York University HR centre and a Human Rights Observer recently returned from the West Bank.

Regional Reps are also in the process of reviewing our regional webpages on the Amnesty UK website, and Jeni Dixon is updating the group finder tool ahead of forthcoming elections for new Reps across four Regions: London, South East, South Midlands and West Midlands.

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### Items for discussion:

#### **Jerry Allen asks for concerns about Regional Offices to be passed onto the Board**

Jerry Allen reports a concern around the inconsistency with how regional offices conduct their campaigns, and their understanding of their role in campaigning outside of their region. He also identified a lack of knowledge around the purpose of, and a communication with, Country Coordinators (or Country Specialists). He has asked that the following statement be read out: *"The issue is the lack of consistency in the way that Regional Offices engage with activists outside their region and the need for a standard 'One Amnesty' terms of reference for their work. Some Regional Offices see their main (and almost sole) priority as campaigning within their region. They do not see the need to create cases for activists in the global north, which is our main method of campaigning. They do not see the need to notify CCs of important urgent actions. Instead they put their resources into campaigning events within their region and supporting activists within countries that have no sections. Other Regional Offices are over stepping their bounds in terms of campaigning within the UK. For example the former USSR Regional Office office presented a petition to Russian embassy in London, without engaging the UK section. There is confusion over who owns the relationship with Embassies and High Commissions with the UK. The Regional Offices see Embassies and High Commissions as the authorities of the country that they are responsible for and want to control that relationship. This can make CC advocacy difficult. It would appear that the new staff in Regional Offices do not understand what CCs do and do understand how campaigning in sections happened. This makes the work of CCs difficult as the relationship with IS Regional Offices is essential for Country Coordinators. Fundamentally, there does not appear to be a Terms of Reference that defines the work of Regional Offices, particularly when it comes to engagement with sections. The boundaries and communication channels don't appear to be defined. Please can the Board raise this issue?"* It could be resolved by helping the new Regional Offices to be more aware of Country Coordinators (or Specialists as they are called in some sections) and the role we play in campaigning." Jerry also added that the India and Brazil offices, which are sections which have the role of the IS as well are not operating in the way that would be expected of them.

#### **CC Space in the AGM Action Centre**

Jerry Allen also expressed concerns about the CC space at the action centre: the space is too small and in a corner, which results in a messy area and means CCs are unable to present their stands as well as if the space was more appropriate. Jerry says that the CC area is a key part of the action centre, and that a better space is required if we are to do the best job of presenting our campaigns and working with activists.

#### **Lack of information and cases from the IS Bangkok Office**

James Lovatt highlighted that there is currently a lack of information and cases from the IS office in Bangkok for South East Asia, but he hopes that due to their change in leadership we will see some clarity here soon. This problem has also been identified in other teams but we will keep an eye on it over next few months to see if change in

leadership has an impact.

### **Sharing news and successes:**

**North Africa team reports increased collaborative action on the situation of the death penalty in Egypt, an event with human rights defender Aminatou Haider to be circulated by the ASC members, and successful local group meetings improving activist collaboration.**

- Work on the death penalty in Egypt led by Hugh Sandeman: Following a discussion with the London representative of the human rights NGO Egyptian Coordination for Rights and Freedom, a meeting was organised mid-February with ECRF, a number of Egyptian diaspora individuals, and AIUK activists (including the Anti-Death Penalty Project), to discuss the sudden rise in executions in Egypt and the threat of many more to come. The meeting decided to try to work through UK parliamentarians and government to put pressure on the Egyptian government to stop executions, and to stop adding to the large and rising number of defendants receiving death sentences in military and civilian courts. AIUK advocacy staff immediately organised two meetings: first with the Death Penalty lead at the Foreign Office, then with the Chair of the APPG for Egypt Stephen Timms MP. Both meetings produced positive (but indirect) results: the FCO informed us they are looking now for input from NGOs in updating the FCO's work on the death penalty, in particular, re-defining which countries should be priority countries for the UK's official work against the death penalty. A further meeting has been organised between AIUK, the IS and the FCO to discuss this. One consequence may be that Egypt is given more emphasis in FCO work on abolition of the death penalty. The meeting with Stephen Timms met with push-back on our ask for immediate pressure from parliamentarians on their Egyptian counterparts to end executions. However, Timms was not aware of the Universal Periodic Review process (Egypt comes up for review in November 2019), and asked for details. He was also sceptical that UK government pressure could have any impact on reducing abuses of human rights in Egypt - so AIUK will be sending over examples of where this pressure has worked. Next step on the campaign to stop executions will be focused on public activism to raise awareness and send messages to Egypt that not only are death sentences and executions a fundamental assault on rights, but also that Egypt's prolific use of the death penalty (more than a quarter of all known death sentences worldwide were passed in 2018 in Egypt) is really bad for the country's image.
- Bev is arranging a meeting on 26th June at the HRAC from 7.30-9.30 with Aminatou Haidar a Saharawi human rights activist. She is often called the "Saharawi Gandhi" for her non-violent protests. She is the president of the [Collective of Sahrawi Human Rights Defenders](#) (CODESA). She was imprisoned from 1987 to 1991 and from 2005 to 2006 on charges related to her calling for independence. In 2009, she attracted international attention when she went on hunger strike in Lanzarote Airport when Morocco denied her re-entry into Western Sahara. Haidar has won several international human rights awards for her work, including the 2008 [Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights](#)

Award and the 2009 Civil Courage Prize. There will be an introduction giving background and the legal and political situation regarding Western Sahara by a committee member from the Western Sahara Campaign and then Aminatou will talk about her personal experiences and hopes for the future. This will be followed by a question and answer session. People can let me know if they would like to attend by emailing me on [beverley.foulkes-jones@amnesty.org.uk](mailto:beverley.foulkes-jones@amnesty.org.uk) and copying in Hugh Sandeman on [hugh.sandeman@amnesty.org.uk](mailto:hugh.sandeman@amnesty.org.uk). **Bev asked if members of the ASC could share this event with their various networks**

- Bev also recently travelled to Church Stretton to speak to the group there about their adopted prisoner Ali Aaraass, work we are doing generally on North Africa and my work as a CC. The group were so grateful that I made the trip. They said that they feel detached from London and it is so good when people make the effort to go and see them. It was a learning experience for me too - connecting with group members, learning about the group and community and what they do as a group which will help me engage them in future work.

### **NAMCAR team reports successful examples of working group collaboration and working with IS staff**

In the North America and Caribbean team, Rona Hardie highlighted a successful working group collaboration between CCs, staff members and networks on the campaign targeting violence against sex workers in the Dominican Republic. The working group project is half way through its 2 month plan, and has already had successful actions at the AGM, and is planning an internal event next week and a wider action on the international day of solidarity on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June. The working group is a great example of different parts of Amnesty working together to achieve success through collaboration. Also from the NAMCAR team, Sue Bingham shared the success of a meeting in February with Cuban artist Tania Bruguera at Tate Modern (where her exhibition in the Turbine Hall on refugees was just coming to an end), to discuss and promote the new campaign against Decree 349 which will restrict the freedom of artists, musicians etc. Two members of the video/photography team at the IS in London came, and interviewed her about the campaign. She had had some placards made (by Farshid) and took them for the photos. The footage and photos will be used by the IS Caribbean team in the campaign. It was a great example of the IS teams in Mexico & London working together with AIUK to pull off a feat of organisation across time zones and at very short notice!

### **The release of Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe OO**

James Lovatt highlighted the release of Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo as part of a presidential pardon of 6,520 prisoners in Myanmar. Both men were journalists, and had recently been awarded Amnesty Media Awards, and Amnesty was also a part of the campaign to free them.



## **Thematic Networks report from Holly Shorey (Annex 4)**

### **Rainbow network**

- The network suggested pronouns on AGM name badges for next year's conference
- Good collaboration between campaigns staff and networks on the GRA campaign.
- Having network leads within the new regional team pilot could be a good idea, especially for local prides

### **Feminist network**

- Festival of النسوية on 16th June
- Concerns raised re safeguarding and wellbeing after AGM. Being followed up directly

### **Children's Network**

- Make Rights Real campaign launched at AGM
- 'Use your voice to demand your rights' advocacy project launched
- Concerns re safeguarding and wellbeing raised after AGM. Being followed up directly. One of the products being re-establishing the networks' forum