



**Amnesty International UK
National Conference and AGM 2009**

DECISIONS

RESOLUTIONS CARRIED BY THE 2009 AGM

A1 ADOPTION RENEWAL

Amnesty International's pioneering concept of continuous work on behalf of individual victims of human rights abuse has been uniquely effective. Formerly, there was an expectation that each group would "adopt" at least one such individual case. This proved beneficial for groups as well as for victims. The readily explained work on behalf of an individual helped to draw in new members; it kept them coming to group meetings so as to hear news and undertake work; it served as introduction to the other kinds of work; indeed by thus keeping groups flourishing it made the other kinds of work happen.

This AGM decides that:

AIUK must reintroduce a strong expectation that groups will undertake continuous work on at least one case of an individual human-rights victim, or very small set of victims such as a family, in another country. This work would be alongside other work that the group undertakes, such as regional and thematic campaigns and Urgent Actions.

A clear recommendation to adopt such a case, together with a description of the advantages of doing so and the steps toward doing so, should be included by AIUK in the initial package sent to newly forming groups, and should be communicated regularly (at least once a year) to existing groups.

Such cases may be freely selected, by agreement of the AIUK Individuals at Risk team and the group, from the Individuals at Risk database.

Each group (except for student groups) undertaking such a case would commit to continue working on it for a length of time (a minimum of one year) agreed with AIUK's Individuals at Risk team, or until the case is resolved or is closed by the International Secretariat after consultation with the adopting group or groups and, if feasible, the case's subject and the subject's associates such as family and lawyers.

In their work on such cases, groups should be able to rely on support from country coordinators liaising with the International Secretariat.

PROPOSER: Guy Vernon Ottewell, Individual member
SECONDER: Chris Boothroyd, Individual member

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

A2 INDIVIDUALS AT RISK

THIS AGM DECIDES THAT:

AIUK should more effectively inform, encourage and support groups and other activist constituencies to develop a long-term engagement with individual cases. AI will provide the necessary information and guidance to groups, and will coordinate within AI.

AIUK to urge the International Secretariat to allocate more resources to researchers to uncover and support a larger number of individuals at risk (IAR) cases for groups worldwide to adopt and support long-term.

PROPOSER – Blackheath & Greenwich Local Group

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

A3 BURMA

The Bournville Amnesty Group calls upon the Board of AIUK to commit to the following actions:-

- 1) That AIUK prioritise lobbying the United Nations to do far more of Amnesty's core work to secure the release of prisoners of conscience in Burma, in preparation for the proposed general election in 2010.
- 2) That AIUK organise a specific Burma Campaign 2009-2010 to include raising awareness of the situation in Eastern Burma including working with the TUC and the UK trade union movement and lobbying for a UN arms embargo, and to ensure that adequate staff and financial support are given to this Campaign
- 3) That AIUK pressurise the UN Secretary General to remain personally involved in the Burmese crisis, given that 37 visits by envoys have taken place over the last 20 years without meaningful reforms being achieved.

PROPOSER: Bournville Local Group

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

A4 ISRAEL

In the summary of its submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review, December 2008, Amnesty International raises its concerns about human rights violations against Palestinian people. More recent events in Gaza make this even more of a concern, for example see "Goals and Calls..." for the week of action from 13 January 2009. However, the very serious issues raised over a very long period have not yet been made into a major campaign.

We call upon AIUK therefore urgently to urge the International Secretariat to set in motion a major campaign to call for observance of human rights and humanitarian laws by Israel and all parties to the conflict, and full accountability for human rights abuses against the civilians of both nations.

PROPOSER: St Mark's Local Group, Edinburgh

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

A5 ABUSES OF ANTI-TERRORISM LAWS

This AGM notes with grave concern the increasing abuse of the anti-terrorist legislation, across the EU and in the UK, and its effect on the right of media to freely report without pressure or threat of arrest and/or violence.

This AGM therefore calls on Amnesty UK to work with the NUJ to strengthen the campaign against abuses of the anti-terrorist legislation and to add pressure on the UK government to apply a system of checks and balances to halt this abuse and threat to press freedom. AGM further calls on the International Secretariat to work together with the European Federation of Journalists to campaign against these abuses across the EU.

PROPOSER: National Union of Journalists

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

A6 ISRAEL BOYCOTT

Israeli settlements on the West Bank are illegal under international law and have a devastating impact on Palestinians' lives and on their ability to exercise their most fundamental rights. At the same time, products from these settlements are freely sold in the UK and other countries. In view of the continuing failure of the international community to persuade the Israeli government to dismantle the settlements, and given the importance of export revenue to their economic sustainability,

This AGM calls on the UK section to:-

1. ask the International Secretariat to explore the idea of adopting as policy the promotion of a boycott of West Bank settlement products.
2. press for a full EU-wide investigation of West Bank settlement products' evasion of import duties and for clearer labelling of West Bank products for retail so that a distinction can more easily be made between settlement and Palestinian products.

PROPOSER - Westminster & Bayswater Local Group

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED NARROWLY

B1 INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

This AGM instructs the Board to request the IEC as matters of highest priority, to initiate research with the aim of enabling AI to address the following in future campaigning:

- the reform of the UN with the intention of addressing the power of veto of the permanent members of the Security Council, in particular where this veto affects the ICC and/or international intervention in human rights violations and humanitarian disasters
- a system that enables the ICC to deal with non-compliant states
- and draw up a position on the benefits of restorative justice and truth commissions and whether they might be of value if run in parallel with criminal tribunals on the basis that prosecution alone cannot restore peace and reconciliation to a divided community in a post-conflict situation.

PROPOSER: Gitti Dunham, Individual Member

SECONDER: Barrie Hay, Individual Member

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

B5 PROSTITUTION & HUMAN RIGHTS

This AGM DECIDES that AIUK will table a resolution to the 2009 International Council Meeting calling for a policy study on the issue of prostitution and human rights.

PROPOSER: AIUK BOARD

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

C1 RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

This AGM instructs the AIUK delegation to the 2009 ICM to urge for greater priority within the 2011-2016 ISP to be given to campaigning for the effective implementation of children's rights, especially those that are stated within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and lie within the mandate of Amnesty International; and that a commitment to greater priority is reflected in resources allocated to the issue of children's human rights at the IS and in national sections.

PROPOSER: David Maidment, Individual Member
SECONDER: Helle Abelvik-Lawson, Individual Member

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

C2 HUMAN RIGHTS & THE ENVIRONMENT

This AGM

- recognises that a sound and stable ecosystem is required to provide the basis for life.
- Notes the devastating impact large-scale pollution and undermining biodiversity can have on human rights and, further, that resource scarcity is leading extractive industries to explore increasingly contested areas.
- Notes that the evidence of climate change is now considered to be incontrovertible and that this will have significant consequences for human rights, particularly under articles 22 and 25, due particularly to the impact changes in water supply, food systems and diseases vectors can have on communities.

This AGM consequently calls on the board to ensure that

- Cases of human rights abuse of environmental activists are given consideration in the same way as other classifications of abuses when producing campaign materials.
- Resource materials are available to support campaigning in defence of the human rights of individuals and communities working on environmental issues (in the form of a booklet, DVD, and/or a dedicated area on the AIUK website), and that relevant keywords are installed in the Mascot database.
- Such resource materials and news of Amnesty cases relating to human rights abuses arising in connection with defence of the environment are communicated to organisations campaigning for the defence of the environment.
- Environmental protests (including activities of the climate camp movement) are monitored for human rights abuses, and that abuses are loudly and publicly condemned by AIUK where they occur.
- The AIUK delegation to the 2009 International Council Meeting considers the effect environmental changes can have on human rights in the Integrated Strategic Plan to run from 2010-2016, currently being debated.

PROPOSER: Benjamin McCarron, Individual Member
SECONDER: Hugh Sandeman, Individual Member

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

C3 TRADES UNION RIGHTS

This Conference calls on AIUK to:

- continue to highlight and campaign against the denial of workers' and trade union rights around the world, especially in those countries where trade unionists are systematically targeted for imprisonment or murder;
- work with international trade union organisations and others to campaign against any restriction on public services workers' rights to organise and bargain collectively;
- Promote ILO core standards and continue to support the right of all public sector workers to organise and bargain collectively in accordance with Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- work with the TUC to support challenges to anti-trade union measures taken by governments and public service employers at the ILO;
- continue to support and promote the work of Amnesty's trade union network and to build on the Memorandum of Understanding signed by Amnesty International and the TUC

PROPOSER: UNISON

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

C4 SCOTTISH GYPSY TRAVELLERS

This AGM instructs AIUK to

- Focus more on UK human rights abuses and in particular in relation to Gypsy Travellers
- Note the landmark judgement on ethnic status of Scottish Gypsy Travellers
- Note the grave abuses of human rights that are taking place in relation to Gypsy Travellers and in particular Scottish Gypsy Travellers daily
- Bring more pressure to bear on UK government and devolved parliaments to comply with Human Rights legislation
- Lobby the current Scottish Government to implement recommendations of the Scottish Parliament Equal Opportunities Committee on Gypsy Travellers (2001) and Council of Europe resolutions
- Lobby the Scottish Human Rights Commission to investigate human rights violations in relation to Scottish Gypsy Travellers
- Seek an inquiry in to the work of the Equality & Human Rights Commission in relation to Gypsy Travellers

PROPOSER: Aberdeen Local Group

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED NARROWLY

C5 RIGHT TO EDUCATION

This AGM notes that AIUK and the global Amnesty International movement are poised to devote significant resources to campaigning on poverty and human rights, in particular to 'empowering those who live in poverty to actively participate in claiming their rights'. This AGM further notes that literacy and general education can greatly improve an individual's chances of escaping from poverty and ending rights violations perpetrated against them, and that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states explicitly (Article 26) that 'Everyone has the right to education'.

This AGM therefore calls for the right to education to be prioritized in AI campaigning on economic, cultural and social rights.

PROPOSER: Bristol Local Group

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

D1 CORPORATE FUNDRAISING

This AGM notes resolution D4 (2008) which called for transparency on fundraising, and raised concerns about the impact on the reputation of AI, and particularly on our ability to campaign effectively to change the behaviour of companies.

This AGM notes that both the French section and the USA section have proposed motions on corporate funding to their AGMs

This AGM instructs the AIUK board to publish within three months after the end of the financial year what they have received from companies during the financial year 2008/9, and in every subsequent year, what the companies were and what staff time was allocated to this.

This AGM instructs the board to call on the IS to publish within three months of the end of the financial year what they have received from companies during the financial year 2008/9. What the companies were, and what staff time was allocated to this?

This AGM instructs the board to support any section in their call for an assessment of the risk to our reputation and of our ability to campaign effectively to change the behaviour of companies, caused by the acceptance of funding from corporations.

PROPOSER: Susanne Walley, Individual member

SECONDER: David Plumb, Individual member

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED COMFORTABLY

D2 INTEGRATED STRATEGIC PLAN

This AGM

Notes the work of the Integrated Strategic Plan Committee, convened by the International Executive Committee;

Welcomes the emphasis on strengthening the perspectives of "rights holders" as we develop our plans;

Notes attempts to simplify and clarify the movement's vision, mission and values

Calls on AIUK's Board to use its influence before and during the 2009 ICM to

- Strike an appropriate balance between 'new' and 'traditional' areas of AI's work;
- Ensure that 'democracy' and 'impartiality' remain clearly expressed as the movement's values
- Attain a clear indication of human rights priorities during the next ISP period, whilst retaining strategic flexibility to change direction in the light of world developments.

PROPOSER: AIUK BOARD

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

D3 DEMOCRACY IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

This AGM

Notes the work of the International Committee on Strengthening Democracy

Welcomes initiatives to facilitate broader discussion and participation in the movement's debates and decision-making;

Welcomes the decision of the IEC not to propose voting participation of non-Amnesty members in the ICM but, whilst welcoming external contributions, is concerned to find the right balance between section/structure delegates and non-members.

Calls on AIUK's Board to use its influence before and during the 2009 ICM to ensure that

- Membership democracy and leadership remain fundamental to Amnesty International;
- Proposals for enhancing the movement's democracy are fully assessed for impact and risk before being agreed.
- An enhanced Preparatory Committee and Nominations Committee are elected by the ICM
- Support measures to enhance IEC continuity of membership through successive ICM cycles
- Support measures to ensure IEC members have appropriate skills and experience, whilst ensuring that a significant majority of the IEC remain elected by the ICM.
- Any change in vote distribution is clearly explained and debated.

PROPOSER: AIUK BOARD

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

D4 AMNESTY'S FINANCIAL STRATEGY

This AGM

Notes that the Assessment to Distribution Task Force has sought to share more efficiently the resources of the international movement and has therefore recommended that the Movement:

- anticipates continued financial growth throughout the period of the next Integrated Strategic Plan
- develops contingency plans at the international level in the event of static or declining resources
- makes use of some of the existing funds held by Sections to invest in countries which offer substantial opportunity for growth
- contribute more of the money raised by Sections for distribution at the international level

Notes also that work requires to be started immediately to improve financial reporting and to harmonise accounting policies and definitions across the Movement to assist integrated planning and greater transparency in reporting.

Welcomes the general direction of these recommendations.

Calls on AIUK's Board to use its influence to ensure;

- that financial growth targets are realistic in light of the current economic climate
- that the pace of any agreed change is manageable at both Section and international level
- that appropriate mechanisms are developed at governance and operational level to manage the new processes
- that nothing in these arrangements threatens the viability of Sections
- the ambition of moving up to 50% of section gross income to the international movement by the end of the next ISP is not agreed at the 2009 ICM.

PROPOSER: AIUK BOARD

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED OVERWHELMINGLY

D5 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT (YOUTH GROUPS)

SPECIAL RESOLUTION

of

**Amnesty International United Kingdom Section
("the Company")**

THAT

1.new sub-Articles 1.1.39, 3.2.6 and 23.1.6 be inserted in accordance with the draft wording below:

"1.1.39 "Youth Group" groups of young people which are recognised by the Company as Youth Groups and which are organised within schools, youth clubs or otherwise"

"3.2.6 Youth Groups"

"23.1.6 Youth Group Ten Votes"

2.all instances in the Articles of the phrase "Local or Student Group" be replaced with the phrase "Local, Student or Youth Group".

3.all instances in the Articles of the phrase "Local and Student Group" be replaced with the phrase "Local, Student and Youth Group".

PROPOSER: AIUK BOARD

THE RESOLUTION WAS CARRIED WITH THE REQUISITE 75% MAJORITY OF THOSE VOTING