



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL Bromley & Orpington Group October 2014 Newsletter



Our thanks to Barbara Mills of Orpington for sponsoring this month's Newsletter

COME TO OUR NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 14 October

Tuesday 11 November

Tuesday 9 December

Speaker: Croydon Community against Trafficking (CCAT)

Film Night

Greetings Card Campaign – 'Send a Message of Hope'

Croydon Community Against Trafficking
"Trafficking: The Reality Next To Us"
Tuesday 14th October at 7.30 pm
All Welcome.



The upward march of postage costs continues, and sadly Amnesty is not immune. Letters weighing up to 10 grams (Europe and Rest of World) now cost 97p and not 88p as reported last month.

Monthly Letter: Uzbekistan

18 years in prison for protesting. **Dilorom Abdukadirova** is a farmer and mother of four from Andizhan, south-eastern Uzbekistan. On 13 May 2005, she went to a public protest in the city centre. Speakers called for justice and an end to poverty. The resulting crackdown saw hundreds killed: Dilorom fled across the border into neighbouring Kyrgyzstan, and was eventually granted refugee status in Australia. However, she was guaranteed 'no reprisals' if she returned, but was then detained for four days on her arrival back. She wasn't allowed to speak to a lawyer or see her family for two weeks. In April 2010, Dilorom was sentenced to 10 years in prison for "attempting to overthrow the constitutional order" and exiting Uzbekistan without a travel permit. She had apparently been tortured under arrest, and her sentence was extended by eight years for "deliberately breaking prison rules" in 2012. AI believes she was punished for taking part in the Andizhan demonstration, and that she is a prisoner of conscience. Please sign, address and post the attached letter. **This will cost 97p to post.**



Street Collection

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We are more or less fully allocated for our two street collections on 11th and 18th October. If you see our collectors at Tesco, Orpington, or Sainsbury, Chislehurst on 11th October and Sainsbury, West Wickham on 18th October, please do come and support us!

Bromley & Orpington Amnesty present
"Film Night" Tuesday 11th November at 7.30pm
Film to be advised: All welcome. Film at 8pm following a short business meeting

Group Finance

Balance brought forward	£527.79
Income	£645.00
Expenditure	£88.21
Balance at 9 th September	£1,084.58
CHANGE	+ £556.79

Income included Bromley Little Theatre ticket receipts (£590) and private donations of £55. Our application to be considered for a 'community donation' in Waitrose's community scheme was turned down on grounds that Amnesty is a 'political organisation' a misconception that has dogged various fundraising attempts.

Monthly Action: Mexico – Torture out of Control

The military and police force in Mexico routinely torture people in their care - sometimes to death. Torturers are rarely held to account. Police and soldiers, often deployed in public security operations, are routinely torturing people as a way to extract 'confessions' or 'information' from criminal suspects or from people who are arrested for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. In the last ten years, reports of torture by Mexican forces rose by 600% - yet the Mexican government is still not taking torture seriously. The few investigations that have been launched are slow and inadequate. Between 2006 and the end of 2013, 1,219 investigations into torture by Mexican forces were opened by the Federal Attorney General's Office; they filed charges for just 12 cases. That means that 98% of investigations go nowhere. The majority of those tortured are people least likely to file complaints and seek redress. People like **Claudia Medina Tamariz**, who we featured last month as our 'monthly letter'. She was accused of being a member of a violent gang and taken by marines to a naval base where she was beaten, sexually assaulted and given electric shocks. To this day no one has been held to account for her torture. We signed a Group letter to the President calling for an end to torture and impunity for those who carry it out.

A Message from Claudia

"I have seen that many people know about my case now, and this is formidable news. It allows me to share my story, to be seen and heard. I would like to thank Amnesty International for all the support you are giving me. God bless you all."

Group Campaigning Actions

We wrote a Group letter to the Tajikistan Prosecutor General regarding the case of PhD student **Alexander Sodikov**. Alexander (right), a Tajiki student at the University of Toronto had been conducting research and was detained earlier this year. The criminal investigation into 'high treason' under Article 305 of the Criminal Code continues, but



Amnesty believes he has been targeted for exercising his right to freedom of expression, and Amnesty regards him to be a Prisoner of Conscience. We wrote to the Honduran authorities regarding the intimidation, harassment and death threats suffered by the indigenous **Garifuna community** as they seek to protect their land rights from development. In **Iran** we signed a Group letter to the President over the case of **Arzhang Davoodi**, (left) already in prison for nearly 11 years, and now sentenced to death on a charge of "enmity against God", in relation to his peaceful political activism and writings. Arzhang Davoodi is a poet and writer and was arrested in 2003 during which time he has been tortured and ill-treated. Amnesty views him to be a Prisoner of Conscience who is now under imminent sentence of death.

Present on 9th September: Neville White, David Howkins, Vivien Glanz, Gladys Edmonds, Patsy Paine, Eleanor Ivens, Ted Burke, Wendy Simmons, Waltraut Gilchrist (and friend!), Patrick McDonell, Mariela Quaranta, Peter Martin, Rindy Baaker was welcomed to the meeting. **Apologies:** Rene Eastwood, Chris Purnell, Simon Nash, Shirley Henderson, Joan Williams, Vivienne Andrews and Margaret Coppard. We wish Simon and Rene very speedy recoveries from their recent indispositions!

Meetings are held in the Wesley Room, Orpington Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington commencing at 7.30pm. **E-mail** amnestybromley@gmail.com **Website:** www.amnesty.org.uk/bromley

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