



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Bromley & Orpington Group

December 2015 Newsletter



Our thanks to Vivienne Andrews of Bromley for sponsoring this month's Newsletter

COME TO OUR NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 8th December
Tuesday 12th January
Tuesday 9th February

'Send a Message of Hope' – Annual Greetings Card Campaign
Campaign Meeting
Campaign Meeting

'Send A Message of Hope'
Amnesty Greetings Card Campaign
Tuesday 8th December at 7.30 pm - Mince Pies. All Welcome.

Supporting Young Refugees: Refugee Support Network



We were delighted to welcome **Bryony Norman** from **Refugee Support Network** to the meeting. RSN is a charity that supports young people affected by crisis and displacement, helping them to access and progress their education. Over half of the world's out-of-school children are affected by conflict and those that arrive in the UK have often endured violence, separation from family and trauma. RSN prioritises helping them achieve their educational potential. By offering one-to-one mentoring and practical support, some of the most vulnerable refugees and trafficked young people can access education. Bryony gave many inspiring and heart-breaking examples of young people that have arrived on RSN's door, and been offered an educational lifeline. Based predominately in North London, the charity is now expanding and has just commenced an inspiring case worker programme based in Kabul, Afghanistan to offer help to young people deported from the UK. Although small, this is a charity with big ambitions to help every young refugee aged 14-21 achieve academic success and normality. We were inspired. For more information please go to www.refugeesupportnetwork.org

Monthly Action: Iran



Atena Farghadani, a 29-year-old artist, is in prison for her peaceful activism. She was found guilty of charges including 'insulting members of parliament through paintings'. Since being arrested she has faced further charges: her male lawyer visited her in prison and she shook his hand. Guards arrested him and she is now facing charges of 'illicit sexual relations falling short of adultery'. Recently, as a result of this charge, the Iranian authorities have forced her to undergo a 'virginity and pregnancy test', an internationally recognized form of violence and discrimination against women. We wrote to the Iranian authorities calling for her immediate release and for all charges to be dropped.

Amnesty AGM & National Conference 2016

Next year's AGM & National Conference will take place over the weekend of 9-10th April in Nottingham. The Group can secure discounts on the cost of the Conference, whilst delegates meet their own travel costs and are asked to give a report on the Conference to the Group. Expressions of interest in going, to Neville please.

Good News!

On 27th October the **European Parliament** voted overwhelmingly to close loopholes in the EU regulation that bans the export of torture equipment. The move has been supported by the UK Government and is a tribute to Amnesty's strong campaigning to have these loopholes closed.

The Nick Beston Quartet

With special guest vocalist

Sue Rivers

Present a concert of popular jazz standards in aid of
Amnesty International Bromley & Orpington Group

Friday 12th February 2016 at 7.30pm

Orpington Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington

Tickets £10 in advance; £11 on the door

From David Howkins 01689823793 or davidhowkins@virginmedia.com

Bromley & Orpington Amnesty Takes Action



Ali Aarrass has been on hunger strike since 25th August, and his health is said to be deteriorating seriously. His action is in order to put pressure on the **Moroccan** authorities to release him after the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention concluded he had been convicted on the basis of forced confessions. He has been held since 2010 when he was forcibly returned to Morocco from Spain. Amnesty believes him to be a Prisoner of Conscience and

we wrote to both the Minister of Justice and the Director of Prison Administration to secure his release and urge medical intervention. The trial against 15 student activists is about to start in **Angola** having been detained in June in connection with their attending a peaceful political meeting. They have been formally charged with inciting a rebellion for which there is no evidence. Amnesty considers all 15 to be

POCs and we wrote to the Minister of Justice calling for their immediate release. One of the detainees, **Luaty Beirao** (above right) has been on hunger strike, and his health is said to be breaking down.



Monthly Letter: Pakistan

This month's letter draws attention to the plight of two men, **Masood Janjua** and **Faisal Faraz** who went missing over a decade ago. They have not been seen since they boarded a bus in Peshawar in July 2005. There is evidence they were seen whilst in custody and are believed to have been held in secret detention centres as part of a programme of disappearances. Please sign, address and send the enclosed letter, which will cost £1.00 to post.

Group Finance

Balance brought forward	£545.84
Income	£66.00
Expenditure	£71.47
Balance at 10 th November	£540.37
CHANGE	-£5.47

Present on 10th November 2015: Neville White, David Howkins, Vivien Glanz, Waltraut Gilchrist, Ted Burke, Wendy Simmons, Peter Martin, Eleanor Ivens, Gladys Edmonds, Joan Williams, Shirley Henderson, Chris Purnell and Margaret Coppard. **Apologies:** Patsy Paine, Patrick McDonnell, Vivienne Andrews.

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

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