



# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## Bromley & Orpington Group

### July 2016 Newsletter



In fond memory of Eleanor Ivens, a good friend of Amnesty

#### COME TO OUR NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July

**Speaker: Andy Moody, Amnesty China Co-ordinator**

**Please note – no meeting in August**

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September

**Speaker – to be confirmed**

**Speaker: Andy Moody**

**Former Amnesty International China Co-ordinator**

**HUMAN RIGHTS & CHINA**

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2016 at 7.30pm**

**All Welcome!**

#### **Monthly Action: Tunisia**

The Tunisian Penal Code criminalises same-sex relations between consenting adults. It also includes articles that criminalise acts and expressions that are “offensive or undermine public morals and decency” and which are used to prosecute people based on the expression of their gender identity. These laws put LGBTI people at risk of arrest and prosecution on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity and create a climate of abuse from State and non-State actors with little accountability. LGBTI people face violence and intimidation twice over, as if they report acts of violence to the authorities they stand to be arrested and prosecuted because of their perceived orientation. This in turn creates a permissive environment for homophobic hate crimes and provides little protection from harassment and intimidation by family members and others in the community. Because of the associated stigma, many LGBTI people prefer to hide their gender identity and sexual orientation from their families and communities. We wrote to the Tunisian authorities calling on them to condemn all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, and to unconditionally release anyone detained because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.

#### **Stop Press: Speaker Announced**



*We are delighted to announce that a speaker from anti-trafficking charity Stop the Traffik will speak at our meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> November. Stop the Traffik is perhaps the most well-known organisation working on modern slavery and trafficking in the UK today as part of a global movement dedicated to ending the pernicious trade in people.*

#### **Advance Notice:**

## **Amnesty at Cudham Fair**

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2016 from Noon**

**Cudham Recreation Ground, Cudham Lane**

**Come and say hello and buy one of our home made cakes!**

## Group Finance

<b>Balance brought forward</b>	£475.25
<b>Income</b>	£58.00
<b>Expenditure</b>	£93.37
<b>Balance at 14<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>£439.88</b>
<b>CHANGE</b>	-£35.37

### Monthly Letter: United Arab Emirates

Our monthly letter concerns Mohammad al-Roken a human rights lawyer and reform activist who was given a 10 year prison sentence having been charged with "attempting to overthrow the government". He was one of 94 individuals persecuted for criticising publicly the UAE government. Following an unfair trial, 69 people received sentences of between seven and 15 years. All are viewed to be Prisoners of Conscience. Dr al-Rokem had long been harassed and intimidated as a result of his exercising his right to peaceful freedom of expression and he has now been placed in solitary confinement without access to legal representation or his family. Please sign, address and send the enclosed letter, which will cost £1.05 to post.



We received good news relating to two recent cases we featured in our Newsletter. Azerbaijani journalist and human rights activist **Khadija Ismayilova** (June Newsletter) was released following a Supreme Court ruling; she had been in prison for 18 months for her investigative reporting. We are also delighted that student activist **Pyhoe Phyoe Aung** has been released (May newsletter) as part of the reforms being introduced by the new civilian government in Burma. She was previously Secretary General of the All Burma Federation Student Union (ABFSU), and was detained alongside 50 students for peacefully protesting against the recent National Education Law.

### Urgent Action: Bahrain

We responded to an urgent appeal on behalf of three individuals who had their sentences of death upheld by the Bahraini High Court and face imminent execution: Ali Abdulshaheed al-Sankis, Sami Mirza Mshaima' and Abbas Jamil Taher Mhammad al-Samea. The court also upheld the revocation of the nationality of eight men. The 10 men had been convicted of terrorist charges however they were subjected to torture resulting in forced confessions. They had no access to lawyers, were deprived of sleep, tortured and sexually assaulted. We wrote demanding a re-trial in accordance with international standards and calling on all death sentences to be commuted. The last execution in Bahrain was carried out in 2010 although there has been a gradual increase in the number of death sentences being passed.



**In memoriam:** We were saddened to learn of the passing of Eleanor Ivens on 14<sup>th</sup> June. Eleanor was among our most dedicated members, attending meetings and taking part in Amnesty campaign actions well into her 10<sup>th</sup> decade. She joined the Group in February 2000 and quickly made many friends with her lively wit and strong dedication to human rights. We last saw her at a Group meeting in December, after which ill health prevented her attendance. We will miss her greatly.

**Present on 14<sup>th</sup> June:** Neville White, Vivien Glanz, Waltraut Gilchrist, Margaret Coppard, Wendy Simmons, Joan Williams, Shirley Henderson, Vivienne Andrews and Rindi Bakker. **Apologies:** David Howkins, Gladys Edmonds, Patsy Paine, Peter Martin.

Meetings are held in the Wesley Room, Orpington Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington commencing at 7.30pm. E-mail [amnestybromley@gmail.com](mailto:amnestybromley@gmail.com) website: [www.amnesty.org.uk/bromley](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/bromley)

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