



# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## Bromley & Orpington Group

### July 2013 Newsletter



Our thanks to Patsy Paine of Petts Wood for sponsoring this month's Newsletter

#### COME TO OUR NEXT MEETINGS

*Tuesday 9 July*

*Tuesday 13 August*

*Tuesday 10 September*

*General Meeting*

*Planning Meeting*

*Speaker: Mary Hla, Burma Campaign (postponed from April)*

#### Florida Death Penalty

The Governor of Florida, Rick Scott, has until the middle of June to decide whether to sign into state law a Bill passed by the Florida legislature to speed up the pace of executions. House Bill 7083 known as the 'Timely Justice Act' would effectively mandate the Governor to issue instructions to proceed to execution as soon as ordinary appeals have completed. Upon denial of clemency, the Governor would be forced to issue a warrant to execute within 30 days, with the execution taking place no more than 180 days later.

We wrote forcefully to the Governor showing that it can take 10 years or more to prove innocence and that 17% of all capital miscarriages of justice since 1973 have been Florida cases. This law would represent a stark regression in the use of the death penalty in the US. However there has been good news, with **Maryland** becoming the 18<sup>th</sup> state to abolish the death penalty.



#### Monthly Letter: Kyrgyzstan

**Dilmurat Khaidarov** is an ethnic Uzbek lawyer who has been held without trial since June 2010, and allegedly tortured for three days to extract a confession. He was charged with organising and participating in mass disorder and implicated in the murder of a Kyrgyz tax inspector. Medical personnel have reported signs of torture on his body and there are fears for his health. Independent eye witnesses have stated he was not in the area when the supposed events took place. Please address, sign and post the attached letter calling for a full and impartial investigation into the allegations of torture. This will cost 87p to post.



**Come and visit the Amnesty Stall at  
Cudham Fair  
Recreation Ground, Cudham Lane  
Bank Holiday Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> August from Noon**

#### Group Finance

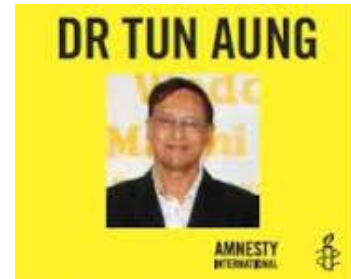
|                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Balance brought forward          | £529.19        |
| Income                           | £20.00         |
| Expenditure                      | £24.00         |
| Balance at 11 <sup>th</sup> June | <b>£525.19</b> |
| CHANGE                           | - £4.00        |

### 2013 AGM Update

As we reported last month, the AGM was a challenging one with wide ranging discussion on the strategic changes taking place within Amnesty. The Board has now met to reflect on the outcomes, and a specific Board Director has been assigned to take forward each resolution; there will be campaigns on ethnic human rights violence in Bangladesh and Ethiopia for instance. As far as the AIUK restructuring is concerned, the Board has decided to halt any further change until after the ICM (International Council Meeting) in August, and there will be renewed discussions with the unions around voluntary severance. A Governance Task Force will look at some of the pressing management issues raised at the AGM. We will keep you posted!

### Monthly Action: Burma

We are looking forward to Mary Hla joining us in September to provide an informed update of all the reforms that have taken place in Burma, and whether these are irreversible. We fear the worse. This month we sent a greetings card to the family of **Dr Tun Aung**, a Muslim community leader arrested for trying to calm an agitated crowd. Dr Aung has now been in prison for a year; he had been asked by the Burmese authorities to act as a peace-maker in the tense ethnic north of Burma, and he was doing just that when he was arrested for 'inciting violence'. He was not given a fair trial, and his punitive sentence of 11 years was extended on appeal to 17 years after the prosecutor argued it was not severe enough. This is an appalling miscarriage of justice against a peaceful community leader. We sent a card offering solidarity.



**Good News SMS Text Appeal:** some of us are more comfortable sending a letter, but modern methods of communication are equally effective. An SMS text appeal under Amnesty's 'Pocket Protest' campaign has been able to help protect a woman and her daughters in Papua New Guinea at risk from the death penalty for sorcery. It led to the Prime Minister promising to repeal the notorious 'sorcery act'.



We now have **19 members** who have found us on Facebook; if you use and enjoy social media why not join us for news updates and campaign information. You can also find us online (details below). We are not on

Twitter.

### Activist and Journalist Faces Jail

One year on from his arrest **Mehman Huseynov**, a 23 year old activist and journalist still faces five years in jail on fabricated charges of 'hooliganism'. He was part of a group of activists who met with the Swedish singer Loreen at the time Azerbaijan hosted the Eurovision Song Contest, prompting her to speak out about human rights abuses. The charges allege he was violent at the time of a public protest, which he was covering as a journalist. Amnesty believes he is a prisoner of conscience and faces charges linked to his securing a spotlight on Azerbaijan's murky human rights record. Please send an appeal asking the Prosecutor to immediately and unconditionally drop the charges because of his work as a journalist and human rights activist. More online at: [action.amnesty.org.uk/](http://action.amnesty.org.uk/)



**We regret that our July speaker, Paul Eagle from the AI Business Group has been postponed until February.**

**Present on 11<sup>th</sup> June:** Neville White, David Howkins, Joan Williams, Ted Burke, Eleanor Ivens, Wendy Simmons, Patrick McDonnell, Eve Fisher, Waltraut Gilchrist, Gladys Edmonds, Margaret Coppard, Clare Ellis. Apologies: Patsy Paine, Rene Eastwood, Chris Purnell, Simon Nash, Vivien Glanz, Peter Martin, Shirley Henderson.

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

**Neville White (Chairman) 01689 896368**  
[Neville.white@waitrose.com](mailto:Neville.white@waitrose.com)

**Shirley Henderson (Secretary) 01689 855632**  
[shirleyhenderson399@btinternet.com](mailto:shirleyhenderson399@btinternet.com)