



# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## Bromley & Orpington Group

### June 2015 Newsletter



Our thanks to Janice Davis (now of Switzerland) for sponsoring this month's Newsletter

#### COME TO OUR NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 9 June

Tuesday 14 July

Tuesday 8 September

Speaker: AI North Korea Country Co-ordinator

Campaign Meeting

Campaign Meeting

Please Note No Meeting in August

## North Korea: A Human Rights Catastrophe

We are delighted to welcome Kenny Laytunde-Dada  
Amnesty Country Co-ordinator for North Korea

**TUESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2015 AT 7.30PM**

**ALL WELCOME**

#### Silencing Dissent: The Gulf States

Our monthly action focused on the growing suppression of freedom of expression across the Gulf. Amnesty is working on two cases, **Mahdi Abu Dheeb**, a jailed teachers' union leader in Bahrain, and **Dr Mohammed Al Roken**, a prominent human rights lawyer, jailed in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Mahdi Abu Dheeb called a strike of his members as part of the spring uprising in Bahrain. He was



calling for peaceful reforms and quality education for all. On 6 April 2011 he was abducted by security forces, held incommunicado and tortured. Following a military tribunal and a civilian appeal, he was sentenced to five years in prison, where he is being denied medical care and his health is deteriorating. Dr Mohammed is a well-known and respected human rights lawyer serving a ten-year jail sentence for doing his job in defending human rights. Prior to his imprisonment, Dr Mohammed had defended countless activists and political

prisoners over the years; now he has spent over 1000 days in prison. We signed letters and a petition calling for the immediate & unconditional release of both prisoners of Conscience

#### Executions in Indonesia

The execution of eight individuals in Indonesia for drug smuggling caused widespread condemnation including the withdrawal of the Australian Ambassador to Indonesia in protest. Two individuals remain at risk. **Mary Jane Veloso** and French national **Serge Atlaoui** remain under sentence of death, but were not included among those executed in April. We wrote to the President of Indonesia deploring the executions and calling for the other sentences to be commuted. Moreover, we urged a moratorium of all death sentences and emphasised that under international law, sentences of death cannot be carried out whilst appeals are pending.



## Group Finance

Balance brought forward	£505.35
Income	£20.00
Expenditure	NIL
Balance at 12 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>£525.35</b>
CHANGE	£20.00

### Monthly Letter: Saudi Arabia

This month's appeal is on behalf of prominent lawyer and human rights defender **Waleed Abu al-Khair**. In 2008 he founded the Monitor of Human Rights in Saudi Arabia, one of the few local NGOs documenting human rights violations in the country, providing legal representation to many victims of human rights violations, including Raif Badawi, the Saudi Arabian online activist who was sentenced to 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes. Because of his work Waleed was harassed, monitored, banned from travelling abroad, arrested and interrogated on numerous occasions by the Saudi Arabian authorities. He has been detained since he was arrested in April 2014 and is currently serving a 15-year sentence (5 suspended) in al-Malaz prison in Riyadh. He was also fined 200,000 Saudi Arabian riyals (about US\$53,000), and given a 15-year travel ban. He is the first human rights defender being tried and sentenced under the new counter-terror law that was brought into effect in February 2014. Please sign, address and post the attached letter. **This will cost £1.00 to post**



**An MP writes....** "I wish there was more we could do to protect women in Afghanistan but I fear, honestly, that there will be little once our soldiers leave the place. We are already applying pressure via the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, but I am not sure how much effect that will have – sadly". **Colonel Bob Stewart, MP, Beckenham.**

### Valediction: Farewell to the London-wide Street Collection

It seems extraordinary, but we were still called the Petts Wood Group when we first opted into the London-wide Street Collection 28 years ago in 1987. Back in those days, we mustered a small army of supporters to 'rattle a tin' all over the borough. At the start, the street collection took place in early November, the weather was always grim and as well as being offered the odd coin, we attracted sympathy and quite often mints. The way charities collect money has changed hugely over the years and for the past decade or more we have collected exclusively at supermarkets rather than randomly on the streets of Bromley and Orpington. Sadly this year all our requests to collect at our borough supermarkets have been refused; Sainsbury in particular has clamped down on collectors. After 28 years we are therefore putting up the shutters and calling it a day. However, we thought we would take our leave with some fascinating facts! In 28 years we have raised **£21,684.90** from the collection for Amnesty with an average **£774.46** collected. Our best year was **1995 (£1,147.31)** and our worst **2002 (£472.07)**. In 16 of those 28 years we raised over £500, and in seven of those years over £1,000. We thank our four co-ordinators over the years (Neville 1987-1994 & 1997; Ian Henderson 1995-1996; Stuart Sweeney 1998-2002, and since 2003 Margaret). We also thank our many 'tin rattlers' for their support over many years.



**Present on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015:** Neville White, David Howkins, Vivien Glanz, Waltraut Gilchrist, Patsy Paine, Ted Burke, Wendy Simmons, Gladys Edmonds, Margaret Coppard, Eleanor Ivens, Patrick McDonnell, Claire Ellis, Rene Eastwood and Chris Purnell. **Apologies:** Shirley Henderson (whom we wish a speedy recovery), Joan Williams, Peter Martin and Dr Vivienne Andrews.

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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