



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Bromley & Orpington Group

March 2016 Newsletter



Our thanks to Sue Riley of Beckenham for sponsoring this month's Newsletter

COME TO OUR NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 8th March

Tuesday 12th April

Tuesday 10th May

Bromley & Orpington Amnesty Group 20th AGM

Film: Kandahar (2001)

Campaign Meeting

**Bromley & Orpington Amnesty International
20th AGM
Tuesday 8th March 2016 at 7.30pm
Please see enclosed AGM Notice for Resolutions**

Our 20th AGM will be held on 8th March at 7.30pm. This is an opportunity to really get involved with your local Amnesty Group. We need fresh ideas for fundraising, and more members to get involved in campaigning and decision making. Do come along and volunteer!

Monthly Action: Arms to Saudi Arabia

A devastating conflict has been ongoing in Yemen since 2014, with a coalition led by Saudi Arabia carrying out airstrikes against an armed rebel group, the Huthis, who took over the capital of Yemen, Sanaa, in September 2014. Hundreds of ordinary people have been killed or injured as a result. During this time the UK Government has been supplying arms to the Saudi Government. Amnesty believes that the UK Government has been breaking international and national laws. We signed a petition calling for a halt to all arms exports to Saudi Arabia and its partners. The petition will be handed to the Government in March.



Monthly Letter: Indonesia

This month's letter draws attention to the deaths of four students during a peaceful demonstration in December 2014 when crowds gathered to protest the beating of children by soldiers in Paniai. At the demonstration security personnel opened fire on the crowds. During the ensuing chaos four students were later found dead and at least 17 others were wounded. The four students were aged 16, 17 and 18. Despite various investigations no-one has been brought to justice. Please sign, address and send the enclosed letter, which will cost £1.00 to post.



We will be showing the movie 'Kandahar' at our April 12th meeting. The Iranian movie was acclaimed on release and is set in Afghanistan at the time the Taliban were in control. Based in part on real events, it tells the story of an Afghan-Canadian woman who travels perilously across Afghanistan to the city of Kandahar to be reunited with her sister. All welcome to the screening. Donations. There will be light refreshments available. Film: 85 mins.

St Olave's Grammar School Human Rights Society



We were delighted to welcome Jeevan Ravindran to the meeting as the Chair of the St Olave's Grammar School Human Rights Society. Jeevan told us about the various campaigning and fundraising activities of the student group, and we decided we would explore opportunities to work together where possible. Hopefully Al Bromley will speak at a Human Rights Society meeting and we will seek ways to work on behalf of Amnesty together. The St Olave's Human Rights Society can be found on Facebook and Twitter and we invite our members to connect with St Olave's to keep in touch. Find them at www.facebook.com/stogshumanrightssociety and also on Twitter at: <https://twitter.com/STOGSHumanRight> please note Bromley & Orpington Amnesty is not on Twitter.

Finance

There will be a full Finance Report at the AGM in March. However, David noted that the balance stands at £1,318.00 with income arising in the main from jazz concert tickets. David will make a recommendation for a donation to Amnesty next month.

Write for Rights: Campaign Roundup

The annual Greetings Card Campaign 'Write for Rights' has had some great successes: so far Amnesty notes



that over 73,400 actions had been taken in the UK whilst globally more than 3.1 million individual actions will have been taken, breaking 2014's record. **Israa Al-Taweel** was released from prison in Egypt on health grounds in December. All security restrictions have been lifted and she is now free. Burmese prisoner **Phyoe Phyoe Aung** has called all the cards and letters 'big presents and give great strength for the future'. Perhaps the final word should be given to the incomparable **Zunar** who sent Amnesty a special cartoon of thanks.

Stop Torture Petition

We signed a petition calling for an independent judge-led inquiry into UK complicity in torture. The UN Convention Against Torture states that 'no exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture'. It also states there should be a prompt and impartial investigation where there are reasonable grounds to believe an act of torture has been committed. Amnesty International believes that there is credible evidence that the UK has been involved in human rights violations perpetrated against people held overseas since the attacks in the USA on 11 September 2001 to warrant the establishment of an independent, impartial and thorough judge-led inquiry. The Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) has a poor record in holding the UK to account. In 2007, three years after the rendition of Libyan families, the ISC produced a report which said that there as "no evidence that the UK Agencies were complicit in any "Extraordinary Rendition" operations."



Present on 9th February 2016: Neville White, David Howkins, Waltraut Gilchrist, Ted Burke, Wendy Simmons, Peter Martin, Margaret Coppard, Patsy Paine, Rindi Bakker, Claire Ellis, Vivienne Andrews and Jeevan Ravindran who was welcomed to the meeting, **Apologies:** Eleanor Ivens, Joan Williams, Shirley Henderson, Vivien Glanz, Gladys Edmonds.

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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