

Amnesty International UK Section Board Meeting

**10 May 2014
Seminar Room
Human Rights Action Centre**

Present:

Sarah O'Grady, Chair
Hannah Perry, Vice Chair
Cris Burson-Thomas
Ruth Breddal
Tom Hedley
Harrison Littler
Rona Keen
Brian Gilda
Hugh Whitby
Katie McSherry
Sarah Ward
Eilidh Douglas
Tom Sparks

Attending:

Kate Allen, Director
Tim Hancock, Director of the Chief Executive's Office
Kerry Moscogiuri, Director of Supporter Campaigning and Communications
Tony Farnfield, Director of Corporate Services
Rosie Chinchin, Director of Fundraising
Ruth Dawson, Staff Representative
Asha Verma, PA to the Director of Fundraising

Apologies:

Richard Cryer, Treasurer

1. INTRODUCTIONS

1.1 Apologies

The Board received apologies from Richard Cryer, Treasurer and Caroline Bowen, PA to the Director.

1.2 Welcome & Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. The Chair introduced Eilidh Douglas and Tom Sparks, new Board members to the meeting.

1.3 Announcements

The Chair informed the Board of the election results from the Board meeting on 9 May 2014. The terms for Board members are as follows:

Brian Gilda – 2 years
Harrison Littler – 3 years
Cris Burson-Thomas – 3 years
Hannah Perry – 3 years
Tom Sparks – 3 years
Eilidh Douglas – 2 years

The Chair, on behalf of the Board thanked Cris Burson-Thomas for his great work during his time as acting Treasurer.

For those not present at the Board meeting on Friday 9 May, the Chair informed the Board that Sarah Ward was co-opted for another year. In addition Richard Cryer was co-opted as Treasurer. Sarah O'Grady had been elected Chair of the Board and Hannah Perry as Vice-Chair.

The Director updated the Board on the Amnesty International exclusive that the Nigerian authorities had advance warning of the Boko Haram attack. Lots of media coverage on this issue, including the Director being interviewed on Newsnight, and a front page article on The Guardian. This was also included in a communication to all members.

The Board recorded their congratulations to all involved in this work.

2. PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 Draft Minutes of 15 March 2014; Accuracy

The minutes were APPROVED

2.2 Draft Rolling Matters Arising

The rolling matters were noted with the following addition:

AIUK's Treasurer reported a phone conversation with the International Treasurer about AI Australia's assessment. AIUK's Treasurer will provide a summary of this conversation in writing to the Staff Rep for the purpose of updating staff on this issue.

3. REPORT FROM SUB-COMMITTEES, NETWORKS, GOVERNANCE TASK FORCE AND INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT

Sub-Committee Chairs had no matters of urgency to report.

4. STOP TORTURE CAMPAIGN

Kerry Moscogiuri, Director of Supporter Campaigning and Communications updated the Board on the global priority campaign that launches next week.

Key points noted:

- This is a two year global campaign, which will be a priority for the movement and AIUK. It will be a highly coordinated campaign- all national Amnesty sections working on campaign, with the same targets, actions, timings etc
- 5 Countries of focus: Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Philippines, Uzbekistan
- This is Amnesty International's 4th torture campaign. Amnesty International received the Nobel Peace prize in 1977 for the first torture campaign. The second campaign was successful with creation of a global ban on torture through the UN Convention against Torture in 1984. This year is the 30th anniversary of that convention.

- All governments now accept the absolute prohibition of torture however, torture is still happening and according to our research, it is on the rise.
- No government admits to torture yet states are continuing to torture and they are continuing to deny it.

The campaign has two primary objectives:

- To focus international attention on the continued prevalence of torture and other ill-treatment worldwide and to bring it to an end.
- To achieve particular success in five countries that we have selected because we believe we can influence by focusing the full weight of our movement's efforts on them. We aim to achieve tangible improvement in the struggle against torture in those countries during the two year period of the campaign – in terms of legislation, policy and practice.

The movement is campaigning for the implementation of new or improved safeguards to protect from and punish torture. These include independent checks on detention centres, monitoring of interrogations, prompt access to lawyers, courts and family members, thorough, effective investigations into torture allegations leading to prosecutions, and full redress to victims.

Kerry Moscoiuri reminded the Board of the stop torture event at the Human Rights Action Centre on 14 May and that Board members were welcome to attend if their diaries allowed.

The Board were also informed of a Train the Trainers event on 14 June. Kerry Moscoiuri extended an invite to Board members if they wanted to attend. It was suggested that the invite for the event on 14 June could be opened up to sub-committee members.

The Board were informed that there will be a global day of action on 26 June, and whilst it is currently still at planning stage, the Board were asked to keep the day, or part of the day free to take part in the action if their work commitments allowed.

ACTION: Kerry Moscoiuri, Director of Supporter Campaigning and Communications to extend the Train the Trainers event (14 June) invite to the sub-committees

5. AGM/NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2014

5.1 Board feedback to the AGM evaluation.

Kerry Moscoiuri, Director of Supporter Campaigning and Communications

The Board were asked to work in small groups to think about the questions set out in paper B2770. The groups then fed back to the Director of Supporter Campaigning and Communications and the other Board members.

Recommendations from the Board for the Evaluation

- There is an appetite to look at change in approach to AGM business – it would be good to look at how other bodies and organisations handle debate; could working parties be less formal and allow for easier debate?
- Balance between AGM and National Conference tends to be dictated by the themes of the resolutions, so may not be appropriate to have a 'one size fits all' approach to this
- Location: important for conference venue and accommodation to be in one place

- Need to find out from members about the ‘hidden costs’ of attending, before making assumptions/ decisions about location
- Look at standing orders to try to avoid inconclusive outcomes
- Logistics: important to consider ease of access by public transport from different locations across UK
- Once decisions have been made in plenary, these should simply be recorded as having passed or failed, not ‘narrowly’, ‘comfortably’, ‘overwhelmingly’
- An international guest suggested an alternative approach: the proposer stands in the foyer with a big board with their resolution written on it, anyone can come and discuss it with them, then put a sticker on the resolution differently coloured to show whether they agree or disagree – this board is what is then taken into the plenary to be discussed/ voted on

The Board asked for their thanks to be formally recorded to the team involved in organising the AGM and National Conference

5.2 AGM Resolutions 2014 & Board Background Notes

The Board noted paper B/2771

Tim Hancock, Director of the Chief Executive’s Office presented his paper to the Board and asked for Board allocations for updates to members. Individual Board members were identified to take responsibility for oversight of implementation of each of the 2014 AGM decisions, and a number of decisions from previous AGMs.

On 10 May 2014, the Board allocated responsibility for oversight of the implementation of 2014’s AGM decisions as follows.

Dec No	Title of Decision	Board member
A1	Sex work – decriminalisation	Harrison Littler
A3	Sex work – no position	
B1	Human Rights Act	Ruth Breddal
B2	Garment Workers in Asian countries	Rona Keen
B3	Guantanamo	Hugh Whitby
B4	Guatemala	Tom Sparks
B5	Sri Lanka Human Rights	Hugh Whitby
B6	Sri Lanka and the UN	
C1	Special Resolution – Nomination Committee Co-option	Ruth Breddal
C2	Nominations Committee Terms of Reference	
C3	Governance Training Budget	Sarah Ward
C4	Governance Task Force Extension	Hannah Perry
C5	Location of AIUK Annual General Meetings	Ruth Breddal
D1	Secret Policeman’s Ball	Cris Burson-Thomas

D2	Secretary General's Global Council	Hannah Perry
D3	Linking Members with Local Groups	Ruth Breddal
D4	Scottish Independence	Eilidh Douglas
D5	Strategic Goals Consultation	Hannah Perry
D6	Global Transition Program	Richard Cryer

A Board member queried what is in place for members without internet access. Kerry Mosconi informed the Board that members are always welcome to contact the Supporter Care Team for further information. It was suggested that there could be an article in the magazine regarding the AGM and an update on resolutions.

It was decided that default Amnesty email addresses for the Board would be noted on the website unless the Board members requested otherwise.

ACTION: Kerry Mosconi, Director of Supporter Campaigning and Communications to put note in the magazine about updates on resolutions/decisions (directing members to website or the Supporter Care Team)

ACTION: Board email addresses to go on 'meet the board' section on website

ACTION: Tim Hancock, Director of the Chief Executive's Office will update the implementation update report and circulate to AIUK Board on Wednesday 14 May

ACTION: Asha Verma to ensure new Board members have amnesty email addresses.

ACTION: An updated implementation report would come to July's Board meeting, this is to be added to the July Board agenda.

6. STRATEGIC GOALS CONSULTATION

Shoomi Chowdhury (Education Officer – Adults) facilitated a workshop for the Board to feed into the Strategic Goals Consultation. **Annex A** lists the discussion.

7. CHAIRS ASSEMBLY AND DIRECTORS FORUM

7.1 AIUK input to Sex Work Policy Consultation

The Board noted paper B/2775

The Director ran through agenda with the Board and informed the Board that papers are to follow. The Board will meet by teleconference to discuss further when papers are available. Key issues at the Chairs Assembly and Directors Forum will include the Sex Work Consultation and whether decision should be taken at International Board meeting in October 2014, or at International Council Meeting in 2015.

The Board was asked if they had any further thoughts on the AIUK input that the Chair will be putting forward at the Chairs Assembly.

The Board fed back their thoughts of how the Sex Work Policy Consultation has been handled to date

The Director informed the Board that she had previously fed back to the GMT that sections should be involved in planning consultations of this magnitude. The Director will pursue this at the GMT

meeting prior to the CA/DF and would be picking this up with the Chair at the Chairs Assembly and Directors Forum.

A Board member mentioned it would be good to get a sense from the other Chairs around planning.

There was a substantial discussion on where it was felt decisions like the Sex Work Policy should be made. One view was that major policy decisions should sit with the ICM. The Board discussed the pros and cons of taking it to the ICM. It was felt that, at the AGM, members did not feel ready to make a decision and it would have been useful to get a steer from others sections following CA/DF.

The Board overwhelmingly recommended that the Chair should advocate for the decision on the global policy to be taken to the ICM. It was noted that if the decision does go to the ICM in 2015 then our members would be asked again at the 2015 AGM on how AIUK's ICM delegation should vote on this

ACTION: AIUK Board requested to see the final version of the AIUK input to sex work policy consultation. Tim Hancock, Director of the Chief Executive's Office to circulate to the Board but Harrison Littler, Board member and IISC Chair to sign off final version.

7.2 Planning

The Board noted paper B/2278

Tim Hancock, Director of the Chief Executive's Office presented the draft project plan and asked the Board for approval on the structure. The plan will be presented at July's meeting but any feedback discussed at the May meeting will be noted for the paper in July.

The Board felt it was positive that the document is being shared with the Board at such an early stage. The Board were informed that it is the first draft and there is still work that needs to be done. The next steps would be for the Leadership Team to work further on this document.

One of the suggestions fed back was that it would be helpful to have the plan in priority order.

ACTION: Comments on the planning paper to go to Rona Keen, Board Member and she can collate and feedback to Tim Hancock, Director of the Chief Executive's Office.

7.3 FMT

The Board noted paper B/2779

Rosie Chinchin, Director Fundraising presented the FMT Annual Plan Review.

The Director of Fundraising informed the Board that the FMT is made up of Fundraising Directors from 12 sections, including AIUK. The FMT have been asked to share the Annual Plan Review with their Board members. The Board were informed that the Annual Plan Review is a paper evaluating fundraising annual plans and budgets of the 35 fundraising sections, including the UK. The Review identifies fundraising trends of concern and potential opportunities for growth. The paper provides a useful context for a 2014 UK fundraising plan and budget refresh (by July) and 2015 fundraising plan and budget (by Sept/Oct) as many of the key observations are relevant to the UK.

Some key observations are:

- Lack of growth in large sections
- Under-investment in individual giving and particular, in acquisition
- Correlation between high ROI and low growth rates (revealing lack of investment)
- Legacy income is rising; used to fill performance gaps but could enable investment in growth

- Growth in major gift income – realised and potential; restricted giving pilot as potential solution to assessment system obstacle to overseas restricted funding
- Movement is struggling to generate compelling content for fundraising; is a key objective in Global FR strategy
- Integration and big picture goals work (AI Australia)
- Characteristics of growing sections: long-term strategy, leadership, ambition, investment in / focus on proven channels

UK Fundraising plan – 2014-15: key planning milestones:

End of July: 2014 plan and budget refresh. Key strategic goals:

1. To stabilise the supporter base (end 2014 with no fewer supporters than at start of year).
2. To deliver budgeted income. To deliver budgeted net income or make case for additional investment in acquisition to achieve 1.

End of Sept – 2015 fundraising plan and budget to FSC for approval. Key strategic goals:

1. To grow the supporter base volume
2. To deliver growth in income / net income.

There was further discussion on the Annual Plan Review and its findings, in particular the fundraising differences between the sections.

The Director of Fundraising informed the Board that she is working on a draft proposal to expand the bookshops.

The Director informed the Board that the Secretary General is restructuring his team and fundraising director is being recruited.

8. TREASURER'S REPORT

Cris Burson-Thomas informed the Board that AIUK started the year with a forecast deficit of £700k. First quarter numbers are much better than that and now reforecasting for full year projected to break even or possibly reach £800k. Legacies income is £1m up, largely driven by the sale of a property bequeathed to AIUK. This property was sold at auction for £1.5m. Salary costs are being forecast down, due to the number of vacancies which we carried into the new year.

Cris Burson-Thomas updated the Board on his telephone conversation with the International Treasurer regarding the concerns on AI Australia's 2014 assessment payment being waived.

ACTION: Cris Burson-Thomas will provide a summary of his conversation with the International Treasurer (re AI Australia assessment payment) in writing to the Staff Rep for the purpose of updating staff on this issue.

Co-op Bank

The Board sought assurances from Tony Farnfield that AIUK's relationship with the Co-op Bank is being reviewed and managed on an ongoing basis, in particular to ensure that our risk is minimised should there be any further deterioration in the Co-op's financial and reputational standing, given recent high profile developments. Tony Farnfield responded that this was actively ongoing, and that FSC were also fully informed and involved with developments.

Tony Farnfield further advised that the advice received is that groups' bank accounts would 'very probably' be protected up to the £80k limit.

9. GOVERNANCE TASK FORCE

The Board noted paper B/2781 and agreed to exchange any further thoughts by email after the meeting. The staf Rep noted that colleagues in the Supporter Care Team had raised a number of points. She undertook to email these to the Board following the meeting.

ACTION: Sarah O'Grady, AIUK Chair to respond to the email sent by Sheila Banks, Governance Task Force Chair

10. AIUK CONSTITUTION

The Board noted paper B/2781

Due to time constraints, it was not possible to fully discuss this item. The Staff Representative to the Board shared that she had received comments from Staff and would share these with the Board via email following the Board meeting.

A Board member queried whether the AIUK constitution available on the website was the current version?

ACTION: Board members to let Tim Hancock, Hannah Perry, Tom Hedley and Eilidh Douglas (copying Kerry Moscogiuri) have comments on the AIUK constitution by the end of Wednesday 14 May, for feedback to the GTF.

ACTION: Staff Representative to share with the Board via email the comments received by staff.

ACTION: Tim Hancock, Director of Chief Executive's Office to check whether the current version on the AIUK constitution is available on the Amnesty website.

11. ATT EVALUATION

The Board noted paper B/2782

Due to time constraints, this item was not discussed.

ACTION: It was decided to bring this back to next Board meeting in July.

12. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director informed the Board that any comments or questions on her report were welcomed via email to her.

13. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair noted that due to time constraints, she was not able to present her report to the Board

ACTION: Chairs report to be circulated to the Board via email by Sarah O'Grady, AIUK Chair.

The Chair thanked the Board and Senior Management Team, and Ruth Dawson, Staff Representative for attending the meeting. The chair thanked Asha Verma, PA to the Fundraising Director for taking the Minutes and for her support to the Board in her time as PA to the Director.

The Chair thanked Board members for their attendance and the demand on their time as Board member.

Emerging trends were identified as:

- Increasing xenophobia
- People on the move
- Women's rights
- Erosion of workers' rights
- Technological surveillance and digital opportunities
- Non-governmental entities, eg Boko Haram, militias
- Corporates
- Governance of financial institutions
- MENA political turmoil
- Increased Islamophobia
- Scarcity of resources, climate change
- Technology and interaction, socially and with the wider world – people want to know more, and more about the provenance of things
- Shift in power to global East
- Growing sense of conflict between major religions
- Growing middle class across the world
- Less of an acceptance across the world (post- Arab Spring) of single rule
- Impact of climate change, decreasing availability of natural resources, eg oil – some predictions say that the first island nations to be submerged could happen in 2019, ie within the period of these strategic goals
- Less authority given to western voices
- Think about entering new areas of work – how we should interact with/ support other groups working on these issues
- Also discussed which of these issues represented familiar work to AI (eg where there is an international law framework), and which represented unfamiliar work or work which could be more challenging for AI (eg where there is no or only weak regulatory framework)

What should we prioritise as AI?

Participants in this discussion chose to focus on what the strategic goals should do, rather than on the specific issue areas

- Respond to human rights challenges as they occur: respond faster; mobilise more people; crisis response driver
- Concentrate on the human rights challenge of each development
- Maintain the ambition of big goals
- Purity of ideals in a changing world
- Need to finance expertise in new areas

What should we deprioritise as AI?

Participants in this group discussed several 'candidates' for deprioritisation, but in discussing each one concluded that we do need to work on it:

- Technological surveillance: can see this could be the issue with the most direct impact on AI, as an organisation being at risk of surveillance ourselves

- Islamophobia: HRE work important role to play in tackling this
- Scarcity of resources: potentially the issue most of relevance in the global South, where we are moving and will need to work on issues of local relevance; potential to collaborate with other organisations rather than do it all ourselves; we have only relatively recently started work on poverty – shouldn't stop so soon
- Noted that the issues selected to discuss for deprioritisation were all issues seen as new or more challenging to AI
- The common theme to the discussion was that other organisations are doing work on this issue, but we would do this with a human rights lens which would be a valuable contribution

What is the most important thing you've taken from the session?

- Maintain the real human rights priorities of AI
- Stay true to AI's core no matter how the world changes
- How difficult it is to identify where to (de)prioritise
- Don't miss the boat – be bold
- Focus
- Start from what change we want to see at the end of the strategic goals period
- The Board thanked Shoomi for facilitating a stimulating discussion