



THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GROUP NEWSLETTER

Forthcoming Brighton and Hove Amnesty Group Meetings/Events

Group Business Meeting
Group meetings normally take place on the first Thursday of each month from 8-10pm at Community Base, Queens Road, Brighton

6th December 2012
How to answer tricky questions workshop and Christmas social
8pm to 10pm

3rd January 2013
Film Showing
You don't like the truth: 4 days inside Guantanamo
<http://www.youdontlikethetruth.com/>
7.30pm to 10pm

7th February 2013
Business meeting
8pm to 10pm

Letter writing evenings

An evening once a month to sit and write letters with fellow Amnesty members. These evenings are hosted at member's houses. All welcome, simply contact the host/hostess for details: To restart in the New Year—please contact Emma on 01273 232397 if you would like to host a letter writing evening

Monthly Collection

8th December
26th January
23rd February
Contact Catherine : 07828 584430 to volunteer

Monthly Stall

12th January 2013
Contact Jill 01273 621697

8th December 2012

10am to 4pm
Letter Writing Vigil
Friends Meeting House

WRITE FOR RIGHTS



Pens, pencil, paper, cards, post-cards are ready for our annual letter writing day.

As in the last few years, we're organising a lovely full on day with music, cakes, teas and loads of cards ready to be written to one of the 15 cases featured in this years campaign. These include prisoners of conscious, family members waiting for news of a relative who has 'disappeared' and individuals facing risks because of the work they do for human rights.

The GCC will be a day of celebration and a moment to sit down and think about human rights during your Christmas shopping. We are at the Friends Meeting House from 10am until 4pm. Everyone is invited to come and join us for a cup of tea with some delicious homemade cake and to write some cards. We will have live music, a stall entirely dedicated to kids and creative actions and the Brighton peace choir singing festive songs.

We'd like to see you all and hope you will take a moment to write a simple solidarity message to those around the world suffering human rights abuses.

It's during this time of the year that we realise how important it is to receive a message from a friend, a thought, just a couple

of lines to say 'Hi, I haven't forgotten you and I support your cause'.

On the leaflet I received this year there is a quote from Chekib El-Khiari who was imprisoned in Morocco that impressed me...

'Every week I was waiting for those letters. I was reading them again and again, thinking of those people who took five minutes, or maybe more, to write and draw. Five minutes of their time gave me the energy to survive two years of unlawful imprisonment'

That really goes to show how our letters do make a difference to these peoples lives and towards increasing government awareness of our cause.

Your letters are a powerful means by which to defend human rights and unlawful behaviours.

We are really looking forward to seeing you on the 8th of December at the Friends Meetings House from 10am until 4pm.

If you would like to volunteer on the day or donate a cake then please email me esterfederica@gmail.com

Ester

AMNESTEA



their general knowledge with a pub quiz, written by Michael. We were joined at the beginning by Kate Allen (Director, AIUK) who placed a bid and wrote a card to WOZA.

The lots up for grabs were varied with examples including a cookery class, massage and guided walk.

AUCTION OF PROMISES

Thank you to everyone who took part in October's 'Auction of Promises'. The silent auction culminated in an AmnesTEA party on 28th October at the Phoenix Community Centre, Brighton. Members of the group and their family and friends gathered together in the brightly decorated hall to raise money for Amnesty International by bidding generously for the items and enjoying lots of the wide selection of teas and home-made cakes.

There was also the opportunity to make and write cards of solidarity to Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), a group who campaign bravely for human rights in Zimbabwe. Those present also tested



Many of the items were very popular with lots of people vying for a chance to win! In the end the items which received the highest bids were 'Afternoon Tea at the Grand' and an Aquatint print by local artist, Esther Tidy.

Thank you very much for all the generous contributions from Brigh-



ton and Hove members (and friends), Suzanne Jarrett, the Grand Hotel, the Duke of York's Picture House, Infinity Foods, The Co-operative and Sainsbury's, as well as those who volunteered their time on the day.

The Auction and AmnesTEA raised a grand net total of **£295.80!**

By Catherine Forman and Freya Lyte



Kate Allen joins local group members to write cards in support of Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA)

WINTERFEST



Luke and Freya volunteer on the stall at Winterfest

We attended the annual Winterfest at the Unitarian Church in New Road. This small festival is for local bands and singers organised by Mark Hannington from the Amnesty Bookshop. The charity Wateraid also jointly participate with Amnesty. There were stalls from the charities and a large 'chill out' space in the middle for people to lounge on the cushions and rugs listening to the vibes! There were cups of tea and cake for the usual refreshment.

Our stall was all about Shaker Aamer as we had been inspired by the meeting about Guantanamo in Lewes. We had pictures of Shaker with his children before he was captured and interned in Guantanamo. Mainly we were asking people to sign the e-petition for his release to be discussed in parliament. We also had four other letters to send to other significant people for example Obama. It was difficult to make ourselves heard in the room so close to the bands. Maybe next year we'll bag a table at the back!

Jill

(If you are interested in volunteering on one of our monthly stalls contact Jill on 01273 621697)



Group members campaign on behalf of our new Prisoner of Conscience, MOHAMED SAYED IBRAHIM ABDEL LATIF

On the day he was killed he left home to pick up some equipment for his work and met some friends. While he was with them, they came across an injured man near Imbaba Police station. Mohamed tried to help the man by taking him to hospital. While doing so he was shot in the neck and arm, taken to hospital but died shortly

after.

We are calling for a full and independent investigation into Mohamed's death and for those responsible to be brought to justice.

If you are interested in campaigning on this case then contact Celia on 01273 593833

Mohamed was 23 when he was killed. He held a diploma in technology and information and worked in a bakery.

Arms Trade Treaty: A Step Closer

On 7th November 2012 a historic treaty to regulate the global arms trade won the backing of an overwhelming majority of states, in a move seen by Amnesty as a potential victory for human rights worldwide.

In the biggest show of support for the treaty so far, 157 governments at the UN General Assembly's First Committee on Disarmament in New York voted in favour of finalising an Arms Trade Treaty next March.

Among the "big six" arms-exporting countries, only Russia abstained from today's vote, while China joined France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the USA in supporting the resolution.

Even before the vote, 110 states from all world regions put their names on the resolution which was co-authored by seven governments - Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, Finland, Japan, Kenya and the United Kingdom - and co-sponsored by 103 other governments. No government voted against the resolution, although Iran tried to alter it to prevent the current draft treaty text from being used as a basis to complete the negotiation - no other government supported such a move.



Amnesty International Arms Control Manager Brian Wood said:

"After today's resounding vote, if the larger arms trading countries show real political will in the negotiations, we're only

months away from securing a new global deal that has the potential to stop weapons reaching those who seriously abuse human rights. We know sceptics will keep trying to undermine the human rights rules in the final treaty, but Amnesty International and its partners will keep up the pressure to secure the strongest possible text that protects human rights.

"This treaty won't be a panacea - unscrupulous governments will try to bend and ignore the new rules, but global civil society and governments supporting the rule of law and human rights will hold them to account and keep working to improve the treaty rules on critical issues, such as sea and air drones and laser weapons. The treaty should not be a frozen tablet. When it enters into force, a robust Arms Trade Treaty could be the starting shot for a new global process that can be further strengthened to really protect people on the ground."

A long campaign

This is the final leg of a 17-year campaign by Amnesty and its partners to achieve an arms trade treaty to help protect people on the ground who, time and again, have borne the brunt of human rights violations during armed repression, violence and conflicts around the globe.

This resulted in a historic Arms Trade Treaty Conference which produced the current draft treaty text in July 2012. Although a handful of countries held up the negotiations and the text's adoption in July, governments supportive of the treaty are using the delay to hammer out technical issues, such as potential loopholes regarding defence cooperation agreements and the transit of international arms shipments.

Amongst officials at the UN, hopes are high that a new Obama administration in the USA - by far the world's largest arms producer and exporter - will support a reasonably strong treaty next March. However, the USA has previously tried to weaken the human rights rules and the scope of the treaty - by excluding ammunition, and by only favouring watered-down rules on key issues covered in the text.



Final conference on the Arms Trade Treaty

The UN's Final Conference on the treaty will be held in New York from 18-28 March 2013.

If the March Conference fails to finally adopt the treaty text, it will almost certainly be tabled by a large majority for adoption by a vote in the UN General Assembly. After being adopted, the treaty is expected to come into force after being ratified by 65 states.

Luke

To keep up to date on this campaign please see:

<http://www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=10079>

control arms

FORCED EVICTIONS

Campaign Update December 2012

France: Forced evictions continue at an alarming rate in Hollande's France

François Hollande, France's President, is failing to adequately deliver on his pre-election promises to protect the rights of migrant Roma, according to a new report, 'Chased Away' by Amnesty International.

The forced evictions of Roma from Paris and the surrounding area, demonstrate the new Government's failure to incorporate international human rights standards on evictions into domestic law. As a consequence, forced evictions continue to take place without prior information, consultation or notice to residents.

When forced evictions occur, usually alternative housing is not provided leaving families no choice but to re-establish their homes in another informal settlement elsewhere. Maria, a Roma woman living in a warehouse in Sucy-en-Brie, told Amnesty, "it's very hard to move from place to place. We can't even stay for a bit. As soon as I hear I'm going, it's like, I feel my heart ache". Amnesty researchers visited some of these informal settlements and reported that the inhabitants' health was at serious risk due to the absence of, or inadequate access to, running water, toilets and refuse collection. They were also often infested by rats.

Repeated forced evictions do not resolve these problems, they exacerbate them.



A woman prepares her meal near her home in Noisy-le-Grand in June 2012. The camp has since been evicted.

Kenya: The Deep Sea Settlement

This year the Deep Sea Settlement, a Nairobi slum in Kenya home to around 10, 000 people, is featuring in Amnesty's annual 'Write for Rights' campaign. The Kenyan Urban Roads Authority wants to build a road through their community, potentially making thousands homeless and destroying their livelihoods by ruining many small businesses. Since an eviction in 2005, the residents have told Amnesty that messages of support from Amnesty supporters have had a huge effect.

Join us on Saturday 8th December at the Friends' Meeting House, from 10am – 4pm, to write a letter or card of support to this community and others individuals.

By Freya Lyte

WRITE FOR RIGHTS

Take Action



BRING SHAKER AAMER HOME FROM GUANTANAMO SIGN THE E-PETITION WRITE TO YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Shaker Aamer is a British resident with a British wife and children and has been imprisoned without trial by the US in Bagram Airforce Base and Guantanamo for nearly 11 years. The family's MP Jane Ellison MP for Battersea, Balham and Wandsworth is urging supporters to write to their MP so that they can join with her to bring force on the coalition government to end this travesty of justice. A letter is attached with this newsletter or write your own.

Recent reports have suggested there may be a window of opportunity for the resolution of Shaker Aamer's detention in the first few months of President Obama's second term. Shaker Aamer's lawyers also believe that the period between the presidential elections and the second inauguration of President Obama in January 2013 will be crucial to building pressure.



If you have not done so please sign the e-petition and forward it to all your email and facebook friends www.freeshaker.com

These actions are very URGENT. Shaker's lawyer Clive Stafford-Smith reports that he is "gradually dying in Guantanamo" from his many medical problems and from the years of abuse and torture.

For further information and future actions : ssac.contact@googlemail.com.

Celia

It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness

Old Chinese Proverb



Minutes of B&H Amnesty International Meeting
1st November 2012 at Friends Meeting House.

Attended : Emma, Celia, Tessa, Madeline, Luke, Mike, Jess , Angus, Ester, Peter, Gwyneth, Freya, Joe, Jill

Apologies: Liz, Caroline, Catherine, Ollie, Angela

Minutes of last meeting approved.

Card passed round for Malcom Martindale's family.

****Reminder about the Regional Conference in Canterbury on February 23rd 2013.****

****Guest speakers still needed, some members trying to contact representatives of the Middle East and North Africa campaigns and the Syria Country Coordinator.****

Lanes collection rota passed around.

Arms Trade Treaty Campaign: Paper update handed around and UN General Assembly meeting to negotiate terms were discussed. Suggestion to continue lobbying local MPs and David Cameron to push to close any remaining loopholes.

Forced Evictions Campaign: Petition signed by group asking for release of housing rights activist in China. An adequate housing workshop is available through AI, discussed having this at a future meeting.

AIUK budget cuts/redundancies discussed, this may mean certain campaigns become watered down or cut as well as cuts to training budget. Suggestion that members should read the consultation papers and email their responses to Kate Allen.

Prisoners of Conscience Campaign: Update in newsletter re Mohammed Latif, letter passed around to sign and photo of group taken.

Discussed the displaced people of Tavaga in newsletter. Actions to be on monthly stall, suggested faxes to their Minister of Justice. Also suggested to write to Libyan ambassador and ask them to pass on letters.

Death Penalty Campaign: campaign letter in monthly newsletter.

Security and Human Rights Campaign: ePetition for Shaker Aamer's release needs 100,000 signatures to be discussed in the Commons, suggestion that members write to their own MPs. Issue of resolution brought about at last AGM to support Shaker. Group feel that AIUK has not followed this through sufficiently and agreed to write a letter with the Lewes group detailing our concerns.

****No Peace Without Women's Rights Campaign: Tessa to read document and feedback to group.****

Silent Auction/Tea Party Feedback: Event went really well, raised over £280. Group would like to make this an annual event and consider a slightly bigger venue for next time.

Two group members visited Varndean 6th form college and gave a successful talk about AI at their politics club. Write up in newsletter.

Discussion about showing film about Omar Khdar in January meeting.

December meeting workshop: How to defend human rights in everyday situations/conversations. Please feedback any 'awkward' or 'critical' scenarios/questions that you have experienced to AI Brighton email address and these will be discussed at next meeting in workshop.

Rota passed around for letter writing campaign for food and volunteers.

21. Monthly letter writing to take place on 15th November at group member's house. Email the group for more details.

Local Events Notice Board

Brighton and Hove Palestinian Solidarity Campaign presents

OVER THE WALL

Cast and Crew Screening & Director Q. & A.

Thursday 6th December 7.30 p.m.

(tea and coffee from 7 p.m.)

Friends Meeting House



BRIGHTON AND HOVE AMNESTY GROUP CONTACTS

Chair – Emma brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com Tel: 01273 232397

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Newsletter editor: - Emma Parker: Tel: 01273 232397

Please email any contributions for the newsletter to brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com

Lanes collection organiser: - Catherine 07828 584430

Web Site co-ordinator: Michael Fisher - michaelowenfisher@hotmail.com

Amnesty Stalls co-ordinator—Jill Francis—01273 621697

Campaign Co-ordinators:

Prisoner of Conscience – The Displaced People of Tawargha Jill Francis—jrfrancis@hotmail.co.uk

Prisoner of Conscience—MOHAMED SAYED IBRAHIM ABDEL LATIF—Celia Stubbs—01273 593833

Death Penalty— Ester Zanetti —esterfederica@gmail.com

Control Arms; securing the Arms Trade Treaty —Luke Beale—lukebeale@hotmail.com

End Forced Evictions: Poverty and Human Rights—Freya - freya_lyte@hotmail.co.uk

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Amnesty Websites: international - www.amnesty.org AI UK - www.amnesty.org.uk local group - www.amnesty.org.uk/brighton

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