



THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GROUP NEWSLETTER

Forthcoming Brighton & Hove Amnesty Group Meetings/Events

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

(We are pleased to announce that despite worries that we would have to find another venue the meetings will continue at Community Base)

3rd December

Group business meeting and seasonal drinks and nibbles (please bring something to share)

7th January 2016

Film showing

"Those who dance" by Mayyasa Al-Malazi.

Monthly Collection

Contact Julian
julianwatmore@gmail.com
07469776295

19th December

Monthly Stalls

Sydney Street
Contact Jill 01273 621697
The next stalls will start early 2016
Watch this space

Write for Rights

Letter writing vigil
5th December
Friends Meeting House

WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2015



Brighton and Hove Amnesty International's Annual Letter Writing Vigil

Saturday 5th December 2015

10-4pm

Friends Meeting House, Ship St, Brighton

Write a message of hope to human rights victims worldwide

Live music, home-baked refreshments, winter Warmers... and more...

brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com



Every year during November and December we ask you to join our Write for Rights campaign and write a letter, send a message of hope to someone suffering human rights abuses.

Presidents, police chiefs and prison governors do take note when they receive hundreds of appeals to release a prisoner, stop the harassment of an activist or change an unjust law.

Use your freedom of expression to stand up for the freedom of others.

Congratulations to Amnesty Youth Award winners in Brighton!

08.35hrs Thursday 10 December 2016

Brighton school to play host to stars from Bombay Bicycle Club and Razorlight

A Huge well done to pupils from Patcham High School who won the performance category of the 2015 Amnesty Youth awards. To launch the 2016 awards they are hosting a music event with world famous musicians on Human Rights Day

Patcham High School in Brighton will host world famous musicians Jack Steadman (*Bombay Bicycle Club*), Bjorn Agren (*Razorlight*) and singer-songwriters Lucy Rose, Benjamin Francis Leftwich and Rae Morris to help mark International Human Rights Day on 10 December.

The event will also see the launch of the Amnesty Youth Awards 2016, which celebrates the creativity and courage of young people who stand up for human rights. A group from the school won this year's Performance category. The musicians will lead a songwriting workshop for students at 8:35 am, focused on the Amnesty Write for Rights campaign for imprisoned human rights lawyer Waleed Abu al-Khair. Jack Steadman from the *Bombay Bicycle Club* and Bjorn Agren from *Razorlight* will teach pupils how to play guitar as part of the workshop.

Then it will be the turn of the students to perform their human rights song at an all-school assembly at 10.55am.

Jack Steadman said:

"These students have helped highlight the plight of Waleed Abu al-Khair, who is in jail for 15 years for defending human rights. I just hope that their song finds its way to the King of Saudi Arabia and he grants a royal pardon."

John McKee, deputy head of Patcham High, added:

"I am very proud that our students do so much more than the basic school curriculum and have developed the social conscience to promote human rights and justice"



Take Action

STOP UK ARMS TO SAUDI-LED COALITION IN YEMEN

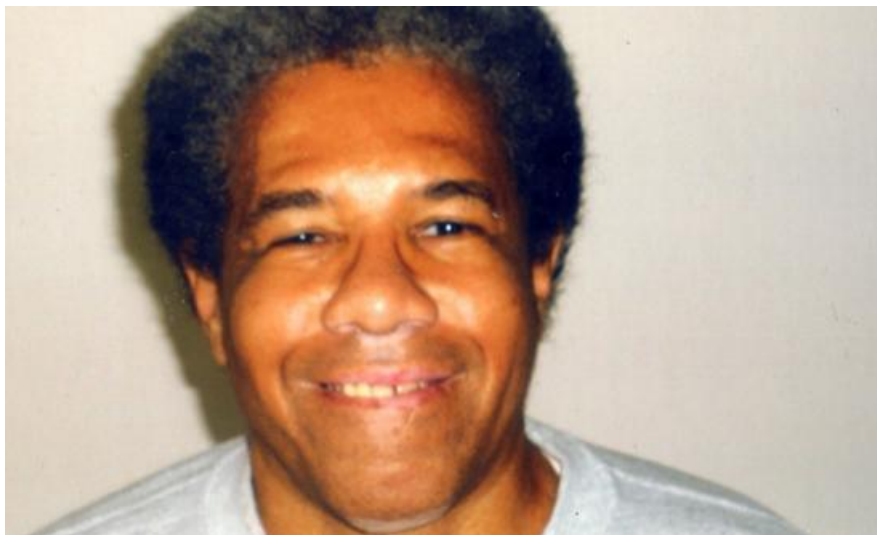
In March 2015 an international coalition led by Saudi Arabia which included the UAE, Egypt, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Morocco, Jordan and Sudan, launched air strikes against the Huthi armed group in Yemen. Since then, the conflict has spread and fighting has engulfed the entire country. On top of relentless attacks by coalition forces from the air, a battle between rival groups is raging on the ground.

Many civilians are trapped and thousands have been killed and injured and there is a humanitarian crisis. Last month a hospital supported by Medecins Sans Frontieres in northern Yemen was bombed in an attack that may amount to a war crime. In another attack a home in Dam-maj valley was bombed killing 8 children from the sae family and injuring 9 other relatives.

The UK must end its transfers to Saudi Arabia of arms that could be used to carry out illegal and indiscriminate air strikes in Yemen. We must not supply weapons that could be used to commit human rights violations or war crimes.

Send your letter to David Cameron to Kieran Aldred, Advocacy Officer, AIUK, The Human Rights Acton Centre, 17-25 New Inn Yard, London EC2A 3EA so they can be handed into Downing Street with others. You can also sign the petition at amnesty.org.uk/saudi.

A solitary hope?



Torture has written some of the bloodiest lines of history. The heretic's fork, the Judas cradle and other medieval devices might be museum curios now, but Amnesty has evidence of torture in 141 countries during the last five years. It remains a global problem.

The use of water boarding at Guantanamo made headlines. Yet a more pervasive and ingrained form of torture receives little media attention but can last months, even years (even decades) and is suffered by tens of thousands of Americans each year. The practice in question is known as solitary confinement. Can solitary confinement produce the severe mental pain or suffering that represents torture in the eyes of the UN? Inmates in Secure Housing Units (SHUs) spend twenty three hours each day in coffin-like cells. They are denied access to health care and educational programmes. Even their brief recreation time is spent alone. Isolation is associated with psychological problems (e.g. confusion, insomnia and hallucinations); research has shown that positive social interactions are required to activate growth factors that enable brain cells to regrow. So, yes, it does meet the UN definition of torture.

Does solitary confinement produce any benefits within the prison system? Unruly inmates are kept away from trouble. Yet any psychiatric conditions of those placed in isolation are likely to be exacerbated by this treatment, and prisoners who have experienced solitary confinement are more likely to be reconvicted of violent crime upon release. If solitary confinement is intended to rehabilitate then the SHU doesn't fit.

Three percent of the US prison population are estimated to be in solitary at any time. One of the most infamous cases is that of Albert Woodfox. He is the final member of the Angola 3 left in jail. His conviction was yet another to be based on witness testimony alone. The most shocking aspect of his case, however, is that he has been in solitary for more than forty years. He said: "I am not sure what damage has been done to me, but I do know that the feeling of pain allows me to know I am alive."

America's detention system falls far short of the minimum international legal standards for treatment of prisoners. In its continued reliance on solitary confinement, the US system is becoming increasingly isolated. *Mike*

To take action for Albert Woodfox please visit
<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/actions/louisiana-free-albert-woodfox-usa-angola-3>

January Film showing

Those Who Dance

7th January 2016

8pm

At the Amnesty Monthly Meeting,
Community Base, Queens Road , Brighton

All Welcome—free event

The film for Jan 7th is called "Those who dance" by Mayyasa Al-Malazi. It is the story of a small community in Rossport, Co. Mayo, Ireland, who have resisted Shell's attempts to construct a high pressure gas pipeline and refinery across their land, which would have potentially devastating environmental and social consequences. The film compares their situation to that of the Ogoni people of the Niger Delta, where Ken Sar'-Wiwa and nine others were murdered by 1996 because of their non-violent opposition to Shell's oil extraction operations and gas flaring.

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Amnesty Stalls co-ordinator—Jill —01273 621697

Campaign Co-ordinators:

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Stop Torture—Michael - michaelowenfisher@hotmail.com

My Body My Rights—Jess 07740 344832

Amnesty Websites: international - www.amnesty.org AI UK -

www.amnesty.org.uk local group - www.amnesty.org.uk/brighton

Follow us on twitter @AmnestyBrighton

See our photos on Flickr—

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/amnestybrighton/pool>

Amnesty UK Human Rights Centre - Tel: 0207 0331500

