

Glasgow West Amnesty International Meeting Minutes

Thursday 14th June 2012

Present: Christine Alison, Julie Allen, Claire Crossan , Ian Cruik, Malcolm Dingwall-Smith, Paul Dunlop, Jo Felton, John Gerrard, Jim Gillies, Margaret Martin, Hazel Mills, Sarah Nash, Merle Read, Karen Wylie (chair), Louise Wylie.

Apologies: Ellie Simpson, Yu Yu Williamson.

1. Secretary's Report

- Groups Newsletter http://www.amnesty.org.uk/uploads/documents/doc_22545.pdf
- Group agreed not to purchase a copy of the annual State of the World Human Rights Report. It is available in electronic form on-line <http://www.amnesty.org/en/annual-report/2012>.
- Amnesty will be holding a Big Skillshare on the topic of "In defence of Human Rights in the UK", in London on 6th October.
http://www.amnesty.org.uk/uploads/documents/doc_22544.pdf

- **Monthly group action:** Write to Lord Coe (Chair of the London Olympics) to call on him to stop defending the Games sponsor, Dow Chemical and apologise to the survivors of the Bhopal gas leak in 1984 which has killed over 20,000 people and from which the contamination still affects the human rights of over 100,000 people.
<http://www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=10046#action>

2. Treasurer's Report:

Jim reported that the group has £1,299.07 in its bank account. Group agreed to send £150 to AI UK just now, but to keep the situation under review and certainly send more when we know the date for the next comedy night.

3. Events update

- Talk by activist and author Tim Gee on 18th May was an interesting and successful event, attracting around 25 people. The link up with the Glasgow Uni group proved successful in both promoting the event and in providing a free venue, allowing the event to be run without any cost to our Group.
- **Gibson Street Gala (Sun 17th June)** – The group has a stall at the Gibson Street Gala (part of the West End Festival) between 12 and 6pm. Volunteers signed up to help man the stall. The public will be invited to decorate rainbows which will be sent to Russia along with a petition calling on the Government to ensure that Russia Pride can take place safely.
<http://gibsonstgala.co.uk/>

- **Refugig (Thur 21st June)** – The Group are hosting a fundraising gig night at The Admiral on Waterloo Street as part of Refugee Week. Funds will be split between Amnesty and the Refugee Survival Trust. Entry £5 (conc £3) and doors open 7.30.

<http://www2.amnesty.org.uk/groups/glasgow-west/refugig-%E2%80%93-gig-refugee-week-thurs-21-june>

<https://www.facebook.com/#!/events/115210398619992/>

- **Refugees and the Arms Trade: Running Away from the Problem (Fri 22nd June)** – Again as part of Refugee Week, the group are working with the Amnesty Scotland office to host a discussion evening highlighting the links between the Arms Trade and the growing flow of refugees around the world. The panel will be chaired by the Scottish Refugee Council and speakers will include, Abu Basil (Syrian-born refugee), Jo Swinson MP (part of the UK delegation to the summer Arms Trade Treaty conference), and Shabnum Mustapha (Amnesty Scotland Director). Location: Glasgow University Union. Entry: Free. Doors: 5.45 for 6pm.

<http://www2.amnesty.org.uk/groups/glasgow-west/refugees-and-arms-trade-running-away-problem-amnesty-international-refugee-week#comments-expand>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/280172525414000/>

- **Future events:** The September monthly meeting will include a training session on campaigning on the death penalty. Heather will contact the Stand in September to book a slot for next year's comedy night. Christine will look in to the potential for holding a book sale.

4. Campaigns

- **Death Penalty.** John highlighted the story that appeared in the Herald on 26th May “Is it the end of the line for death row” about the case of Larry Swearing.

http://www.heraldscotland.com/mobile/news/world-news/is-it-the-end-of-the-line-for-americas-death-row.17634003?_=2a03239cbe63ea7dab547a2aaaf115ce5fb0d1f1

- **Control Arms:** Jo reported that Amnesty members have now met with three local MPs (Anas Sarwar – Strathclyde Uni, Ann McKechin – Glasgow Uni, Tom Harris – Jo), to ask them to write to David Cameron to ask him to push for a strong Arms Trade Treaty at this year's conference. All three agreed to do so!

- **China:** Urgent Action provided by Yu Yu. Falun Gong practitioners at risk of torture. Send appeals before 12th July.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA17/013/2012/en/5f4a84f0-3afb-4c8c-af41-0d22c85c79bd/asa170132012en.html>

- **Individuals at Risk:** Urgent Action provided by Merle. Jailed blogger denied medical leave in Iran. Send appeals before 12th July.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/034/2012/en>

5. Any Other Business

- Malcolm to contact the country co-ordinator for Burma to discuss being the group being assigned a prisoner of conscience..
- Safeguarding course. Church requires us to send someone on their course and will let us know when they have new dates.
- Amnestea – Jo is holding a fundraising Amnestea (tea, coffee and cakes) at her house on Saturday 30th June. Feel free to drop in anytime between 11am and 5pm. If you want to go, drop her an e-mail on jo.felton@googlemail.com to get her address.
- Refugee Demo – There is a “Refugees are Welcome Here” demonstration on Saturday 16th June to protest against the eviction of refugees in Glasgow.

6. Next Meeting

- Next meeting Thursday 12th July
- Chair Ellie.
- Minutes John (John to Chair August meeting).