



GROUPS PLANNING PACK 2013

INTRODUCTION

Twenty years ago, the very idea of an international Arms Trade Treaty was derided by governments and arms dealers alike. But after two decades of dedicated campaigning, 2012 saw real progress towards making it a reality. Despite Russia, China and the USA preventing adoption of a strong draft treaty at the UN conference in July, we kept up the pressure, and in November the UN General Assembly's First Committee on Disarmament voted overwhelmingly to finalise the treaty in 2013. At the final negotiating conference in April 2013, 154 states voted to adopt the Arms Trade Treaty, with only Iran, Syria and North Korea voting against it and 23 countries abstaining. The Amnesty movement can be proud of the important role it played alongside its partners in getting this treaty adopted – it could not have happened without Amnesty activists, and the combination of campaigning, research and advocacy expertise that we brought to the table.

As the ferment in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) entered a second year, the struggle for human rights remained at the heart of our work. It began in February 2012 when Amnesty supporters joined a rally in London demanding human rights across the region. They also took action to stop arms getting to repressive states in MENA countries, calling on the UK government to protect asylum seekers fleeing the fighting in Syria, and asking the Egyptian authorities to end discrimination against women. In June a memorandum from Amnesty to Egypt's new president Mohammed Morsi listed everything that needs to be done to repair Egypt's abysmal human rights record.

Evidence of war crimes gathered by Amnesty in Syria helped our campaign for the situation in that country to be referred to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and for an arms embargo. Intense lobbying by activists finally got Foreign Secretary William Hague to push the UN Security Council to immediately refer Syria to the ICC.

Our team of country coordinators for the MENA region continued to use their individual country expertise and contacts to help mobilise Amnesty supporters to take action on a range of issues. In addition, Amnesty's Active Learning Programme ran workshops with Egyptian human rights defenders and a skill share event with activists from British Solidarity for Syria.

Finally, as we all know, the power of a personal message of solidarity and support for someone whose human rights are denied is basic to what Amnesty is all about, and today it can be anything from a hand-decorated card to an SMS message. The 2012 Write for Rights (Greetings Card) Campaign featured 15 cases. We achieved some positive outcomes. The family of Chinese human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng was able to visit him in prison for the first time in nine months, reporting that he looked physically fine and appeared clear-minded. Kenia Oliva from Cofadeh (Committee of Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared) in Honduras, told us: 'When we receive cards from Amnesty International activists...We read them with love, because we know they were made with love for us. And they mean recognition for our work. That is a big source of satisfaction for us as human rights defenders.' Our urgent actions in support of the three jailed members of Russian punk band Pussy Riot drove the Russian Embassy in London to switch off its fax machines. So balaclava-clad campaigners went to hand over the petition in person instead. One band member was released after an appeal in October and their legal team spoke positively about Amnesty's impact on the case.

Our campaign plans for 2013 are ambitious, but this year again we have a real chance of making an impact, in human rights and on people's lives.

May 2013

Dear Amnesty local groups

As you will be aware, Amnesty International UK needs to make recurrent savings of £2.5million in our operating budget in order to secure our medium term financial stability and to make the agreed increases in our contribution to the international movement.

To deliver these savings we have been reviewing all aspects of our work. This has given us the opportunity to address some concerns often raised by groups regarding the cost-effectiveness of some of our processes, and to make sure that we take advantage of the most up-to-date technology.

As part of this we have looked at how we communicate with local groups and provide you with campaign materials. Following initial discussions with regional representatives, we consulted groups about a range of possible changes. Regional representatives then evaluated your responses and we can now tell you what the proposed changes are.

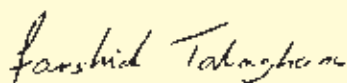
We believe the proposals will make what we do more cost-effective, but we have been concerned to make sure that local groups who do not use information technology are not disadvantaged and will be able to continue with their important campaigning activities.

The proposed changes are set out below.

MONTHLY MAILING

1. This will go online before the start of each month and **we hope that this will be the mechanism by which the majority of groups access this information.**
2. **Monthly email alert** This will let groups know that the monthly information is on the website and give a link. It will go to every person in a local group with an officer role such as the secretary, as well as those with roles such as campaign coordinator, where we have email contact details.
3. **Opt-in to postal mailing** Groups unable to access the monthly mailing online will be able to continue to receive this information by post. Groups can opt in to postal mailing from September 2013 on the attached Options form. If we do not hear from you, we will assume that you are happy with the online option.
4. **Quarterly/occasional mailings** When there is information that it is not possible to provide online (for example, sample campaign postcards or Write for Rights materials), we will send this by post to relevant group members.

Best wishes



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GROUPS NEWS AND AMNESTY MAGAZINE

1. We intend to reduce *Groups News* to two a year (April and November). It may become less glossy if this will save money. You can indicate how many you wish to receive on the attached Options form. Groups that do not respond will receive three copies.
2. *Amnesty Magazine* has gone through a separate review and has changed its format and frequency. We are considering how to include *Groups News* in one issue per year. NB: Unless more are requested, each group will now only receive one copy of the magazine as many group members are Amnesty UK members and receive their own copies.
3. We will also have more space available for groups' news on the new Amnesty UK website once it is up and running.

ANNUAL GROUPS PLANNING PACK

We are sorry we were not able to produce the planning pack at the beginning of the year and are sending it so late. From this year the pack will be much simpler than in recent years, and will consist of:

- descriptions of campaign priorities
- an options form
- a financial return

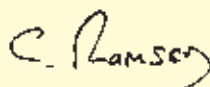
Other forward planning information will only be provided online.

CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

We will continue not to charge for campaign materials but will strictly limit the amount groups can order to discourage over-ordering. However, groups will be able to contact the Activism Team if they need unusually large amounts of material, for example when they are organising particularly large-scale events.

FUNDRAISING

Local groups raised over £190,000 in 2012 and we are hoping to top that in 2013. Groups do all sorts of things to raise their money – organising book sales, bake sales, garden parties, concerts, comedy events and much more. If you are interested in fundraising for Amnesty and would like to discuss your ideas or get some materials to help you, then get in touch with our Community Fundraising Team at fundraise@amnesty.org.uk



Chris Ramsey on behalf of regional representatives

E: christoramsey@gmail.com

THE GUIDE TO AMNESTY'S KEY CAMPAIGNS

WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFGHANISTAN

■ www.amnesty.org.uk/afghanistan

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AT RISK

In Afghanistan today:

- nearly 40 per cent of school-aged girls (almost three million) are enrolled in school, including 164,000 girls in secondary school
- 40,000 young women attend public or private universities or technical and vocational training institutes
- life expectancy has increased to 64 for both women and men
- women have 27 per cent of seats in the Afghan National Assembly
- women's organisations are working to end violence and discrimination against women
- equal rights for women are enshrined in the Afghan Constitution and official Afghan policy.

There has been significant progress in women's rights in Afghanistan since 2001 and the fall of the Taliban. Considering the desperate situation of girls and women just over a decade ago, there have been remarkable gains, in the political as well as the social arena. However, they are not yet firmly established or accepted in Afghan society, and are not effectively enforced.

Recent events, such as attacks against schools (particularly girls' schools), the murder of the Director of Women's Affairs in Laghman and the officially endorsed 'Code of Conduct' which condones wife beating under certain circumstances and aims to restrict women's movements, are causing many Afghan women to fear that reconciliation and transition will reverse the rights they fought so hard to win.

There are also grave concerns about the conduct and accountability of the Afghan National Security Forces, including their lack of awareness of, and responsiveness to, the needs of women. Without accelerated reforms, levels

of abuse and insecurity are likely to increase, fuelling social tensions and undermining stability. Consultations with women leaders last year found that a majority of women felt they had not meaningfully participated in planning for the transition. They feel that the Afghan National Security Forces are not responsive to women's needs and do not uphold human rights standards.

Responsive and accountable security forces are particularly important due to the high levels of violence against women in Afghanistan. A 2008 report found that 87 per cent of women had experienced at least one form of sexual, physical, or psychological violence, and 62 per cent reported more than one form of violence in the home. Women human rights defenders and high-profile women in public life also face attacks and intimidation particularly by powerful elements in society, some of them members of the government, others allied with the Taliban and other anti-government forces. Afghanistan is a top priority for the UK government in its foreign policy, international aid and in terms of military engagement. So far the UK government has championed Afghan women's rights in its rhetoric but is not prioritising them across the relevant government departments. 2013 is a critical time to ensure progress on women's rights is maintained and strengthened.

In 2013, we want to achieve the following outcomes:

- The UK government delivers specific and measurable improvements for protection and support to local women human rights defenders.
- The UK government prioritises and helps deliver Afghan women's full and meaningful participation (with at least 25 per cent representation) in all decision-making, reconciliation and reintegration processes.
- The UK government makes women's human rights, including tackling violence against women, a critical issue within the Department for International Development's (DFID) work on Afghanistan. This includes making violence against women and girls a strategic priority in the next DFID operational plan in 2015.
- The UK government supports and funds the increasing participation of women in the Afghanistan National Security Force, particularly the police.



South London groups International Women's Day comedy night



Minehead group International Women's Day stall

THE GUIDE TO AMNESTY'S KEY CAMPAIGNS

ZIMBABWE ELECTIONS 2013: PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

■ www.amnesty.org.uk/zimbabwe

A referendum on a new constitution for Zimbabwe took place in March 2013. It paves the way for elections this year which could be as soon as the summer, but which must take place by late October. The last election in 2008 was marred by extreme violence with over 200 killed and thousands more injured and displaced. Torture and ill-treatment were widely reported. There has been little accountability for the human rights violations that occurred that year.

In 2008 many of those targeted were human rights defenders (HRDs) and civil society activists. Long-term Amnesty International UK case Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) leaders Jenni Williams and Magodonga Mahlangu were detained for 37 days for peacefully calling on Zimbabwe's neighbours, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), to intervene to halt the bloodshed.

HRDs will play a critical role during this election period as they mobilise activists, monitor and document human rights violations and support those whose rights are abused. They will be on the frontline, promoting respect for human rights. Our researchers have documented a crackdown against HRDs that has already begun ahead of the elections this year, including arrests, beatings and offices raided.

The election violence of 2008 only subsided after an SADC-backed power-sharing agreement was negotiated. We are concerned this year's elections could see a return to the violence and bloodshed of 2008. Our analysis shows that the SADC can again play a key role in influencing the Zimbabwean authorities. In 2013 we will be campaigning for strong pressure on Zimbabwe, from the SADC and the wider international community, to ensure this year's elections are free from violence against HRDs and civil society activists.

In 2013, we want to achieve the following outcomes:

- International pressure and solidarity in support of HRDs helps prevent, end or expose abuses in the context of the 2013 elections, and reinforces HRDs' activism and resilience in the face of repression and violence.
- SADC and the wider international community (including the UK and the EU) pressure the Zimbabwean authorities to ensure the 2013 elections are free from violence against peaceful HRDs, civil society activists and supporters of political parties.

INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS AT RISK

■ www.amnesty.org.uk/cases
■ www.amnesty.org.uk/write

Amnesty International was founded as an organisation of people taking action in solidarity with individuals whose rights were being abused. This type of action remains at the core of our work. Today, we campaign for prisoners of conscience, human rights defenders, community leaders, social media activists, women's rights champions, and communities under threat from violence or forced eviction.

This work enables us to put a face to the issues affecting individuals, communities and human rights defenders across a wide range of Amnesty's key human rights concerns. And it means campaigning to stop specific abuses that affect particular individuals and groups.

Some of the issues our casework will cover will be:

- repression of individuals' freedoms of expression, association and assembly;
- use of the death penalty;
- failure to provide access to truth, justice and reparations to victims of crimes against humanity, war crimes, enforced disappearance, and similar grave abuses of human rights;
- the threat of forced eviction for people living in slums or informal settlements, and the lack of justice or support after they have been forcibly removed;
- denial of women's and girls' sexual and reproductive rights and the large number of preventable maternal deaths and injuries around the world;
- unlawful detention, torture and ill-treatment arising from state counter-terrorism policies and national security concerns, and inadequate access to justice for the individuals affected;
- abuses of police power (such as torture and ill-treatment in detention), and abuses in judicial systems (such as unfair trials).

Your activism on these cases helps build international pressure on the authorities responsible, whether directly through written appeals, or indirectly by drawing the attention of the UK public, media and government to the abuses. In many cases, we also express our solidarity direct to the individuals, their families or communities.

Our Urgent Action Network, which is 40 years old this year, will continue to act swiftly on cases which need quick response. Urgent Actions in 2012 helped defend individuals and communities in imminent danger of torture, execution, forced eviction and other abuses.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Human rights defenders (HRDs) are critical partners in Amnesty's human rights work as they act to promote and protect the human rights of many other individuals and communities, and challenge wider human rights problems. They also provide Amnesty with essential first-hand information. They are key agents of change, and many are at significant risk. Subject to a wide range of violations, from killings and threats to defamation and criminalisation of their activities, Amnesty increasingly strives to defend HRDs and their right to conduct their work.

In the coming year we will mobilise activists to defend specific HRDs and their organisations when they are individually under attack, and to campaign for improvements in the environment in which HRDs operate. This will include supporting women HRDs in Afghanistan and defending HRDs in Zimbabwe. Through urgent and long-term casework, monthly mailings and digital actions, groups will also be asked to act on behalf of HRDs and civil society activists in Azerbaijan, China, and Honduras (and elsewhere in the Americas). Amnesty UK's Human Rights Defenders Programme will reinforce this campaigning through research, policy work and capacity-building to address key underlying trends affecting the ability of HRDs to operate, such as restrictions on freedom of expression and the criminalisation of human rights defenders.



Activists outside Downing Street highlighting human rights abuses in Indonesia, and calling for release of POC Filep Karma

OTHER CAMPAIGN WORK

In other areas of our campaigning we will continue our refugee work and continue to monitor the return of refugees to countries where there are widespread human rights violations such as Iraq, Libya, Zimbabwe and Sudan. We will also continue to review the initial decision-making process. With our death penalty work, we will continue to campaign to prevent people being executed and push more countries towards abolition of the death penalty.

We will continue our crisis work on Syria and our forced evictions work.

REGIONAL AND COUNTRY CAMPAIGNING

Our network of volunteer country coordinators lead our regional country and case work. If your group is interested in working on one (or more) of our world regions, please indicate this on the attached Options form and we will inform the relevant Coordinator team. You will receive information on cases of individuals at risk in that region, as well as actions on the current human rights issues in the region. Please note that if your interest is in a specific country, you may indicate that on the form. However, we will opt you in to the region which contains that country.



Salisbury group collecting signatures for Reggie Clemons, on death row in the USA.



Protest walk for women against street harassment in Kabul. Signs read 'Street violence is illegal' and 'To disgrace women is to disgrace humanity'.

FAQS

WHAT'S NEW IN 2013?

For 2013 we have three priority campaigns: supporting women's human rights in Afghanistan, campaigning to ensure Zimbabwe's election is free from violence against human rights defenders, and campaigning on individuals and groups at risk.

HOW DOES OUR GROUP USE THIS GUIDE?

Read the short descriptions of the campaign work, think about the time and resources you have available – including the expertise and interests of group members – and choose campaigns you want to work on this year. Decide which group member will be the main contact person for each campaign. Then fill in the Options form in this pack and send it back to the Casework and Activism Team.

HOW MANY CAMPAIGNS DO WE HAVE TO OPT INTO?

As many as you like – or as many as you think you have time for. If you have difficulty deciding, please go for one of the top priority campaigns. You are also strongly encouraged to sign up for a case file of an individual at risk.

CAN WE CHANGE OUR MINDS?

Yes, of course. You can opt out of campaigns that you have opted into. We know that plans and group members change. You may opt into a campaign and then find that you do not have the time and resources to work on it. Just let the Casework and Activism Team know of any changes and we will make sure that you have what you need to work on your chosen campaigns. You can call us on **020 7033 1675** or email activism@amnesty.org.uk

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER WE SEND OFF OUR OPTIONS FORM?

The Casework and Activism Team will send you updates and actions to take on your chosen campaign. These will go to the contact person named in the Options form, who is expected to share them with the rest of the group. You can also think about having a workshop to help you run your campaign.



The Cartmel and Grange group with Tim Farron MP



From top: Dan Jones (centre) with Individuals at Risk volunteer Jonathan Miller and Human Rights Defenders campaigner Ruth Dawson, holding a banner made at the student conference for the Honduran human rights organisation Cofadeh



Activists rally outside the Zimbabwe Embassy in London on 10th anniversary of WOZA's first demonstration



Local groups holding a giant card at the Algerian Embassy in London, highlighting enforced disappearance in the 1990s.



Manchester group Arms Trade Treaty event

OPTIONS

THE MENU OF OPTIONS – JANUARY 2013 TO END DECEMBER 2013

Use **The Guide to Amnesty's key campaigns** to help you fill in this menu of options. Please complete and return to the Casework and Activism Team in the enclosed Freepost envelope by **5 July 2013**. Groups can contact the Casework and Activism Team on **020 7033 1675** or by email at **activism@amnesty.org.uk** to update their group's preferences and any change of contacts.

KEY CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

Amnesty International UK will be focusing on the following key campaigns during 2013. We encourage local groups to get involved in our key campaigns and to take up and campaign on

an individual long-term case.

Please note that updates on priority campaigns will be sent to all groups unless you decide to opt out. Please fill in the contact details if you want us to send updates to someone other than the group secretary. When giving details of contact names, for the Women's Rights in Afghanistan campaign, make sure you indicate if this is the same as the existing contact, is a replacement or is in addition to the existing contact. As we would like to communicate with more group members, we are happy to send campaign updates to more than one member of your group.

WOMENS RIGHTS IN AFGHANISTAN OPT OUT ☐

Group name Contact name Existing ☐ Replacement ☐ In addition ☐
 Address
 Postcode
 Tel No Email

ZIMBABWE OPT OUT ☐

Group name Contact name
 Address
 Postcode
 Tel No Email

CAMPAIGNING FOR INDIVIDUALS AT RISK

STEP 1: Signing up to individuals at risk casework

Our group:

- ☐ would like to continue with an existing case which is
- ☐ has no long-term case file and would like an **assigned** case file
- ☐ would like to **replace** our existing long-term case file
- ☐ would like to **add** one more case file to our current long-term case file

Options (please choose option 1 or option 2):

- ☐ (1) We would like **any case** available
- ☐ (2) We would prefer a case from country/region

Group name Case file holder
 Contact name Address
 Postcode
 Tel No Email

☐ Our group wishes to **sign up** to the **Urgent Action Network** to receive UAs by email
 (NB: Groups signed up to thematic campaigns will automatically receive UAs on these. Ticking this box means you are additionally signing up for a wider variety of UAs, which you can also use for your letter writing sessions.)

Urgent Action Coordinator Email

If we do not hear from you, we will assume you are continuing the work you have been doing and we will carry on sending you updates on priority campaigns via the group secretary.

STEP 2: Opting out of individuals at risk casework

☐ Our group wishes to **stop** work on our long-term case file

Case file name.....

☐ Our group wishes to **unsubscribe** from all Urgent Actions
(please confirm below the details of the UA contact person for your group)

Group name.....

UA contact name.....

Email.....

Regional and country campaigning

Country/region name Group name

Contact name Address

..... Postcode

Tel No Email

TELL US WHAT YOU WANT

Groups News, Amnesty Magazine, Postal mailings

Groups News

☐ Please let us know how many copies of Groups News you wish to receive.
(Groups that do not respond will receive three copies.)

Amnesty Magazine

☐ Please let us know how many copies of the Amnesty Magazine you wish to receive.
(Groups that do not respond will receive one copy)

Opt in to Postal mailing

☐ Please let us know if you wish to receive monthly mailing by post.
(Groups that do not respond will receive monthly email alert)