

Action

June 2015



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

4th June

Guest speaker
from Kurdish Community

2nd July

Group Business Meeting

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 be confirmed

Monthly Collection

June
Contact Julian
julianwatmore@gmail.com
07583334740

Monthly Stalls

13th June
Sydney Street
Contact Jill 01273 621697

To see a copy of the video featuring the Brighton and Hove Group at our letter writing vigil in December please see

<https://vimeo.com/124404699>

June 2015

Watch out for our Silent Auction Great lots up for auction including Meals at local restaurants, massage, cinema tickets, a pod on the Brighton Wheel, original artwork by Chris Riddell and much more
Final bids by 30th July

AMNESTY STALL MONTHLY REPORT



Date Saturday 23rd May

Time 11 - 12.30 pm

Venue Outside Amnesty Bookshop, Sydney Street, Brighton

Weather Warm but a cold wind

Volunteers Andrew, Celia and Jill

Campaign STOP TORTURE CAMPAIGN

We were sending cards to the Federal Attorney General in Mexico asking him to ensure the Istanbul Protocol is established as the benchmark procedure for investigating allegations of torture and ill treatment there.

Claudia Medina Tamariz was subjected to electric shocks, beaten and kicked at a local naval base. She was wrapped in cling film to disguise the marks from the beating. Possibly thanks to our interventions she has had her charges dropped.

Target We were able to get 95 cards signed by the general public

Next Stall Saturday 13th June

Jill

Welcome to the groups' new Chair



I have had a long interest in Human Rights issues, having seen them at first hand in the late 1960s growing up with the Civil Rights movement in Northern Ireland. However, it is only in the last few years that I have committed myself more formally to being an activist. This, in part, coincided with my Career as a Maths teacher at Sussex Downs College coming to an end. I still work there in a support role but only 3 days a week now.

I realise that I belong to a group with a long history and a flourishing, experienced and committed current membership. With the help of my friends in the group I hope that I will be able to continue the good work.

Peter Gwilliam

As your new Chair, I thank Emma for her 3 years of sterling service to the Brighton And Hove AI Group. I hope that I can maintain her high standards of efficiency and work for Human Rights.

Shaker Aamer: Trafalgar Square Cage Vigil & MP Delegation to Washington



Following the Parliamentary debate on March 17th, during which MPs debated and carried the motion "That this House calls on the US Government to release Shaker Aamer from his imprisonment in Guantánamo Bay and to allow him to return to his family in the UK" crowdfunding was set up to raise the cost of a delegation of four cross-party MPs to Washington. The vigil continued this fund-raising, taking place as it did in the carnivalesque space of public entertainment, among mime artists and musicians.

Amnesty members from Brighton and Lewes attended the '14 hours for 14 years' sponsored vigil organised by Save Shaker Aamer Campaign in Trafalgar Square on Saturday 16th May 2015. For fourteen hours, from 8am to 10pm, SSAC supporter, Becky, stood in a cage erected on the plaza outside the National Gallery, in solidarity with every minute Shaker has spent in a steel, windowless cell in Guantanamo Bay, despite having been cleared for release twice, in 2007 and again in 2009.

However, those who passed by the vigil were soon drawn in by its silence and solemnity, as Becky stood in the cage surrounded by supporters in orange boiler suits. Every hour, on the hour, supporters recited the words of Shaker himself, taken from letters he has written over the years. Many people donated money for the delegation and many stood in solidarity with Shaker's family. These included Green MEP Jean Lambert, Jeremy Corbyn MP, Bruce Kent, Victoria Brittain, Suliman Gani, Andy Worthington and many many others, including the cast of Arthur Miller's *Death*

of a Salesman, which was playing round the corner in the Noel Coward Theatre.

The delegation of MPs, David Davis (Con), Andrew Mitchell (Con), Jeremy Corbyn (Lab) and Andy Slaughter (Lab,) set off the following Monday, 18th May. Representing, in their own words, 'probably the widest spectrum of UK political views', the four MPs had meetings with Paul Lewis, Special Envoy for the Closure of Guantanamo in the Pentagon and Charles Trumbull, State Department Acting Special Envoy for the Closure of Guantanamo. They also met Senators Patrick Leahy, Dick Durbin and Joe Manchin, and had high level meetings with former presidential candidate Joe McCain, Chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee and Diane Feinstein, vice -chair of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence who oversaw the Committee's report into the

CIA torture programme whose executive summary was published last December.

Following the MPs' return to the UK, , speaking on Victoria Derbyshire's BBC programme on 27th May, Andrew Mitchell stated that the US failure to release Shaker is 'a slap in the face from our oldest ally and staunchest friend' while Shaker's lawyer, Clive Stafford Smith said " I have heard from various sources, which are very reliable I hope, that (Shaker) is to be released in June". However, the worst thing one could do, for Shaker and for his wife and children, who have waited so long, is to promise something that turns out not to be true.

Local information Notice Board

Refugee Tales

At our meeting in May Celia told us about this project which is now only a couple of weeks away - a walk in solidarity with migrants refugees and asylum seekers, which will collectively establish the fact that journeys are integral to our stories, our shared histories and our landscapes

the website is refugeetales.org. if you click on **The Walk** you get details of the walk itself; if you click on **Events** you get details of who is performing at/contributing to each night's storytelling event.

there's also a facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Refugee-Tales/759969237357897>

& a twitter <https://twitter.com/refugeetales>

There are still plenty of tickets left for the final night when the walkers arrive in Crawley. Details on the above.

If you would like to support the Walk without walking, it would be amazing if you could ask everyone you know to buy a ticket for that event. Organising the Walk itself is taking the awesome band of volunteers a huge amount of time and we really really need your help with publicising this event - we don't want to be left with the expense of 300 tickets on our hands. So that is one more truly amazing thing you could help with. You buy tickets direct from the Hawth website. <http://www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk/theatre/Default.aspx?zid=2>

Hawth Theatre Crawley 7.30pm Sunday 21st June £10/£15

yes i know it's crawley, but hey, be adventurous - you won't regret it & you'll be helping hugely to shift the rhetoric of cruelty into one of hope & celebration

Maude

Take action

SUDAN

Dear friends

Human rights activist Mohamed Musa Mohamed Dawud was riding his motorcycle when officers shot him in the legs and arrested him. He is at real risk of torture. Please send a message in your own words or the enclosed letter to the President of Sudan

It may also be sent to

May also be sent to:

Mohamed Bushara Dousa
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
PO Box 302
Al Nil Avenue
Khartoum

Sudan For more information on Amnesty International's Urgent Action 111/15, 20 May 2015: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr54/1677/2015/en/>

BRIGHTON & HOVE AMNESTY GROUP CONTACTS

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Amnesty Stalls co-ordinator—Jill Francis—01273 621697

Campaign Co-ordinators:

Prisoner of Conscience – The Mansoura women (Egypt) Celia Stubbs—01273 593833

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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.

