

Lambeth Amnesty Group Newsletter

October 2013

Forthcoming dates for the diary

Thursday 7 November	Planning meeting for people interested in helping to organize next year's Stand Up Women event. Meet at 7:30pm in the Royal Festival Hall (level 3, green side by the auditorium entrance).
Tuesday 19 November	Lambeth Amnesty monthly meeting to write Urgent Action letters and watch a film about extra-judicial killings during the Spanish Civil War, 8pm at the Clapham Community Project.
Friday 22 November	Soul Night organized by Mayfair & Soho Amnesty Group at Market House on Coldharbour Lane, £5 http://www.amnesty.org.uk/events_details.asp?EventsID=2360
Thursday 5 December	Southwark Amnesty letter-writing evening, Old Red Lion Kennington
Tuesday 10 December	Lambeth Amnesty Carol Singing at Brixton Tube and Write for Rights greeting card campaign in the Dogstar pub, full details tbc.

Meeting Notes from 15 October 2013 at Clapham Community Project

Present

Caroline Toogood chaired the meeting and welcomed Ros Davidson, Anita Sollis, Anna Reisenberger, Gareth Williams (notes), and our guest speaker Graham Minter.

Guest Speaker on Latin America

Graham Minter gave an interesting talk on AIUK campaigns in Latin America. He explained that there are three coordinators for South America and they divide the UK between them. The coordinators each focus on a particular case in a particular country: Paraguay, Colombia, and Brazil.

Graham explained that there are no longer long-term political prisoners in this region as all countries have adopted some form of democracy. There are seven current human rights issues in the region: victims of conflict (particularly in Colombia), indigenous rights, sexual violence (particularly in Colombia), risk to local human rights defenders, land rights/displacement, impunity for those who abuse human rights, business and human rights.

Graham then went on to outline the three cases in which AIUK asks groups to campaign:

In Colombia, the San Jose Peace Community. They refuse to take sides in the civil war. Representatives of the community are coming to the UK and Europe next month to meet parliamentarians and NGOs (including Amnesty) and there will be various events.

In Paraguay, two groups of indigenous people: the Yakye Axa and the Sawhoyamaya. The Yakye Axa people live in temporary homes along the highway west of Concepcion because they have been kicked off the land they have traditionally inhabited. They need basic facilities while intra-American court action continues. The

Sawhoyamaya people have gone back and reoccupied their land and have not been evacuated even though the landowner has asked the government to enforce eviction.

In Brazil, the individual case is Laísa Santos Sampaio, a teacher and activist within a women's project in the municipality of Ipixuna. Her sister and brother-in-law were political campaigners and both were shot dead. Laísa has received death threats and the authorities have provided some protection. However, she is still considered to be at severe risk. In addition to this case, Amnesty plans to closely monitor the situation surrounding preparations for the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016. Other big issues are oil exploration and deforestation in the Amazon. Other significant areas for campaigning include indigenous people's rights, forced eviction, violent crime, prison conditions, police violence (and impunity), and the conduct of businesses operating in the Amazon.

Following Graham's interesting and informative talk, the group agreed to sign up to all three cases with the intention of using the actions at future letter-writing events. The group also thanked Graham for coming to speak to us and educate us about these campaigns.

Secretary's Report, Campaign updates and upcoming events

The monthly action on Sri Lanka was not appropriate for completion in the meeting but details will be emailed out. There was an update regarding the Women in Afghanistan campaign, but no action this month.

Ros reported that Anne-Marie is making arrangements for the carol singing at Brixton tube station on 10 December. We will also write cards for Amnesty's annual greeting card campaign in the Dog Star afterwards.

The Southwark Amnesty group are holding a letter-writing evening on 5 December and details will be circulated nearer the time as we are all welcome to attend.

Anna confirmed that in the November meeting we will watch the video she mentioned at the last meeting about locating and honouring the remains of ordinary people killed during the Spanish Civil War.

The now annual Stand Up Women comedy night is planned for Saturday 8 March 2014 at the Bedford in Balham. The first planning meeting will take place on 7 November at the Royal Festival Hall from 7pm. Martin from the Southwark group is the contact for the evening, so if you need to find them call 07811986360.

The Mayfair & Soho Amnesty group's soul night in Brixton takes place on Friday 22 November. Details of the event are here: http://www.amnesty.org.uk/events_details.asp?EventsID=2360 If you are able to volunteer on the door, please get in touch.

Staying in touch with Amnesty in London

There are numerous ways to find out about what Amnesty is doing in London:

- Lambeth Amnesty website: <http://www2.amnesty.org.uk/groups/lambeth>
- London Amnesty website: <http://london.amnesty.org.uk>
- London Amnesty Google group (you can sign into this to get regular updates of events and opportunities for volunteering): <http://groups.google.com/group/amnesty-london-region>
- Amnesty UK website for events: www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=10011

Next Meeting

The November meeting will be a film-watching and letter-writing meeting. It will take place on Tuesday 19 November from 8pm at the Clapham Community Project.

Usually, meetings are on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the Clapham Community Project, starting at 8pm.