



MANCHESTER AMNESTY GROUP NEWSLETTER

September 2013

<http://manchester.amnesty.org.uk/>

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N.B. HELP NEEDED AT STREET COLLECTION

Recent Happenings

Pride Parade

The Manchester LGBT pride parade on Saturday 24th August was well supported by over 20 volunteers and followed the Love is a Human Right campaign. The volunteers were all dressed from tip to toe in neon 80's fancy dress and kept spirits high throughout the parade. A special thanks to Natalie and Sameena for getting this together.

More pictures can be found on the group's Flickr site at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/manchesteramnesty/sets/72157635401536743/>

Thanks to all volunteers involved in the event for their time and patience for waiting for the parade to start!



This year, Amnesty suggested supporting the cases of Noxolo Nogwaza and Ibrahim Can but a marching parade with a specific 80s theme didn't lend itself to doing the actions provided so we just went with the Love is a Human right theme. However, last year we made a banner on behalf of Noxolo which we used in the Manchester Parade and then sent off the South Africa to be used in Pride Parades there. We've just found this photo on the internet showing our banner in use and then appearing at a conference!

Acoustic Amnesty

A good crowd turned out to watch 10 great artists perform at 2022NQ in Manchester's Northern Quarter Gig last Thursday night. There was a mixture of singers, musicians and performance poets, all performing their own work, which gave us a super night of entertainment. In addition, £324.80 was raised for the Amnesty coffers.

Thanks go to all the artists for giving of their time free and huge thanks to Steve for getting it all together!



Actions to Take

UK Lobbying Bill

The Lobbying Bill is being rushed through parliament and it could effectively gag charities and NGOs by restricting our ability to campaign.



Please E-mail your MP today and demand they protect legitimate debate.

The action and blog can be found at:

<http://action.amnesty.org.uk/ea-action/action?ea.client.id=1194&ea.campaign.id=22550>

<https://www2.amnesty.org.uk/blogs/yes-minister-it-human-rights-issue/will-lobbying-bill-gag-legitimate-debate-charities>

It would be great, if you can share the action,. It's also on the AIUK Facebook where you can share the post directly:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10151825396254395&set=a.398583814394.172651.7624294394&type=1>

Any help spreading this round for fast action-taking will be appreciated.

Syria military intervention – six key points from Amnesty International

Events in Syria go from bad to worse and now the spectre of an international armed conflict looms between the Syrian government and foreign military forces. The protection of civilians is a key priority for Amnesty International and AI is calling on all parties who could be involved to comply with international humanitarian law. In particular, those concerned absolutely must:

- Refrain from targeting civilians or civilian objects;
- Refrain from carrying out indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks;
- Refrain from using weapons which are inherently indiscriminate or otherwise prohibited under international humanitarian law, including cluster munitions;
- Take all necessary precautions in attacks to spare civilians, including by issuing warnings to civilians wherever feasible, and paying particular heed to

the fact that detainees are being held in military bases and facilities;

- Take precautions to protect civilians under their control against the effect of attacks, including avoiding, to the extent feasible, locating military objectives within or near densely populated areas, and removing, where feasible, civilians from the vicinity of military objectives;
- Refrain from using civilians to render military objectives immune from attack (that is, as human shields).

The AIUK team are regularly blogging on the Syrian situation – keep up to date by following these at <http://www2.amnesty.org.uk/blogs?page=1>

Zimbabwe elections

As you all know ZANU-PF gained 75% of the seats in the Zimbabwe Parliament and Robert Mugabe is again President. The opposition parties and civil society NGOs have contested the result claiming rigging in various guises and the MDC has now launched an official legal appeal through the Zimbabwe courts.

While these things have been happening, the AI researcher for Zimbabwe has been in the country trying to establish if and where human rights violations have occurred. He recently interviewed several women who have fled their homes following election-related intimidation and threats. We signed letters to the Provincial Police Chief and Police Commissioner General at the August meeting.

If you want to find out more or take action yourself check out the AIUK website:

<https://www2.amnesty.org.uk/blogs/campaigns/zimbabwe-human-rights-concerns-despite-peaceful-election>

Many of you will remember Nolwandle who attended the national conference in Manchester last year. This inspirational WOZA member agreed to tell her story and for it to be made into an animated film. It has been completed and both Nolwandle and Jenni Williams are pleased with the result. You can watch it on YouTube here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7n1Ks3exko>

Coming up...

Letter Writing session

Saturday 21st September, all day

Sending appeals on behalf of Amnesty cases is a keystone of our work. Come along to an informal letter writing session on the afternoon of Saturday 21st September at 'The Eight Day' café on Oxford Road. Case sheets and paper will be provided. Get motivated!

Street Collection

Saturday 28th September, all day

Our annual Street Collection will be held on Saturday 28th September 2013 in Manchester City Centre. We need plenty of volunteers to help us raise funds from the Manchester public so we can continue to campaign for human rights worldwide. Campaigns cost money to organise, so every pound we collect really helps.



If you can spare an hour or two on the day, please contact the collection organiser, Sean Dunne, by email to sean.a.dunne@btinternet.com, or speak to him at the 11th September Manchester Amnesty meeting. Please let Sean know what times you can be available - we will be starting at 10 a.m. and finishing at 4 p.m.

Manchester Literature Festival Event: Writing a Path through Palestine

Saturday 19th October, 2-3pm
Cross Street Chapel,
Tickets £7/£5 (concessions)

Bidisha is an internationally renowned writer, a regular guest on the BBC shows Front Row, The Review Show and Saturday Review and guest presenter of the World Service

books show The Word. She is also a regular contributor to the Guardian and the Observer.



See her blog at <http://bidisha-online.blogspot.co.uk/>

Bidisha is the highest profile writer we've had at the Festival, so book your ticket and spread the word.

North West Regional Conference

Saturday 16th November 2013.

St Peter's Chaplaincy, Oxford Road, Manchester

We have just confirmed a key note speaker from the Survivors Speak OUT network who comprise former clients of Freedom from Torture who have completed therapy and have come together to campaign against torture and for the rights of torture survivors. The network has been going for a few years now and has been highly successful, speaking on panels at the UN, the EU, and with UK government ministers including the Foreign Secretary. In addition, we plan sessions on Zimbabwe, the Roma, Ethiopia and Afghanistan + Creative action to take onto the streets.

As this will be in Manchester, our group will need to provide support in the form of sorting out drinks, putting lunch out etc. If you plan to come to the conference and are happy to help out, contact Anne Walker (anne.walker9@ntlworld.com) to volunteer.

Booking now open!
See flyer with this newsletter.

Group Meeting

Held 2nd Wednesday each month - Cross Street Chapel - 7.30pm

11th September: Group member, Jennifer Devans, will be talking about the death penalty campaign work and her recent internship.

*If you are in town, why not join a few of us for a pre meeting meal just after 6.
This month we intend to try out Jamie's at the top of King Street. It would be good to see you there.*

Group Calendar

Month	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Group Meeting	Jennifer Devans – Death Penalty	Ian from Kimbolo Project (DRC)	TBC	Greetings cards/IAR/creative session
Events	Acoustic Amnesty (5 th) Street Collection (28 th) Letter writing (21 st)	Manchester Lit Festival (19 th)	NW Regional Conference, Manchester (16 th)	Greetings card stalls