



## Aylesbury Amnesty International Group

**Monthly Group Meeting, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015 7.30pm**

**Friends Meeting House, 9 Rickfords Hill, Aylesbury, HP20 2RT**

### **Present:**

Carol Tarrant  
Bob Corn  
Jim Edwards  
Frances Booth

Henry Mayer-Gross  
Annelies Varsey  
Sallyann Thilthorpe

**Apologies:** Bronwen Lee, Gwyn Jenkins, David Barnard, Katherine Danflous

### **Carol welcomed everyone to the meeting!**

**1.0 Previous Minutes** – Agreed – Carol noting that she will be stepping down as Chair as from our April 2015 AGM – Bob will be stepping down as Secretary; Jim will be taking a reduced role in the Group – he will maintain the role as Treasurer if the Group so wish, but will not attend regular monthly meetings; Sallyann offered to take on the role of Milk and Biscuit monitor – for which grateful thanks!

### **2.0 Urgent Actions and Post:**

- 2.1 Carol reported that Bronwen had received a reply from Chelsea Manning (jailed for 'Whistleblowing' supposed USA secrets to Wikileaks) who we had written to as part of our 'Write for Rights Campaign' – Carol read the letter to the meeting.
- 2.2 Board voting Papers had arrived – Jim proposed, seconded by Henry, that Carol and Bob be deputed to vote on the Group's behalf – members should read candidates' statements on the Amnesty web-site and email their comments to Carol or Bob, to be taken into account.
- 2.3 Noted that the Group's letter to authorities in Uzbekistan, on behalf of Erkin Musaev, had been returned as the 'service has been suspended'!

### **3.0 Recap on Year Plans:**

- 3.1 Fran expressed a wish not to be involved with Central Africa in the forthcoming year, but would be interested in the Middle East; Sallyann will maintain an interest in North America – Carol will continue to pursue West Papuan interests, as will the Group.
- 3.2 Jim will submit the Financial Statement for the past year as soon as he can.

### **4.0 Regional Conference Feedback: Speakers were:**

1	John Bercow	MP
2	Kerry Mosconiuri,	Director of Supporter Campaigning and Communications for Amnesty
3	Mike Kaye	Still Human Still Here
4	Usama Hasan	Quilliam Foundation
5	Margaret Russell	Christians Against Torture
6	Pascal Jerome	Amnesty
7	Allan Hogarth,	Amnesty Head of Advocacy & Programme
8	Ruth Breddal	Amnesty

Carol, Bob and Katherine had attended – accompanied by Andrew Dicker (a national member from Ivinghoe) – with around 50 other delegates; it was the first organised by Emma Hart, the new Regional Rep, and she had organised a very full day. Speakers were very good particularly

Usama Hasan from the Quilliam Foundation, John Bercow, MP – although probably the best discussions were informal, at the close of the conference!

## 5.0 Human Rights at Home and Abroad – UK General Election:

- 5.1 Bob will share the Amnesty International guidance, Candidate nominations as far as he is able to establish them, the Lobbying Act information – which we ran through on the projection screen.
- 5.2 Carol had prepared some case information which referred to the UN Declaration of Human Rights – usefully, Group members individually read them out to illustrate the cases.
- 5.3 The Group launched our campaign with a photoshoot!:



- 5.4 Pledge Cards were discussed – to ask the prospective Parliamentary Candidates to sign, Bob will write to Candidates David Fowler, UKIP, and Alan Francis, Labour; Carol will write to John Bercow MP – Speaker; Jim will write to Will Cass, Labour, and Chris Adams, UKIP; Henry will write to David Liddington, Conservative; Bob will write to David Barnard to ask if he can contact the Candidates for his constituency – Kirsten Johnson, Lib Dem, Alan Stevens, UKIP, Ben Davies, Labour, Cheryl Gillan, Conservative, and Gill Walker, Green Party.
- 5.5 The Group discussed the possibility of embracing the forthcoming 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Magna Carta as part of our Election work – the beginnings of democracy – but the actual anniversary is after the General Election – no resolution was reached.
- 5.6 The Group discussed the possibility of hanging material in support of the Fight for Rights campaign from the Aylesbury Amnesty Tree – it was felt that it might not be appropriate this time.

**6.0 Any Other Business:** Discussion was held as to capacity in the Group, whether members wish the Group to continue, and if so in what form? No resolution was forthcoming – this to be held very much in the front of members' minds for future discussion!

**7.0 NEXT MEETING: 25<sup>th</sup> March 2015** at 7.30pm, Friends Meeting House, 9 Rickfords Hill, Aylesbury, HP20 2RT