



Aylesbury Amnesty International Group

Monthly Group Meeting, 25th November 2015 7.30pm

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

Present: Carol Tarrant
David Barnard
Bob Corn
Frances Booth
Annelies Varsey
Sallyann Thilthorpe
Henry Mayer-Gross

Apologies: Bronwen Lee, Katherine Danflous, Jim Edwards

Carol welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1.0 **Previous Minutes** – Agreed.

2.0 **Urgent Actions:**

2.1 **Katherine** had emailed letters to the Russian Federation in support of **Natalia Sharina** – these had been printed out and signed by everyone present – Bob to post.

2.2 **A letter had been received back from the Russian Federation** – Bob to scan and email to Katherine since no one could translate! Katherine will no doubt forward on to the Country Coordinator.

3.0 **'Carmel and the founding of Tapol'** – A short video was viewed which outlined the experiences in Indonesia in the period surrounding the massacres which occurred in the late 1960's and the imprisoning of over 1 million people. British citizen Carmel herself had been imprisoned for three years, and her Indonesian husband for twelve years, this leading to the Human Rights organisation 'Tapol' which specialises in Indonesian Human Rights defense.

4.0 **The evening's 'Write for Rights' Campaign** – Carol introduced the Campaign, which Annelies will lead – noting that Bronwen will again be working in conjunction with her stall in Hale Leys – there has been a deal of debate (which is still ongoing) with the Hale Leys administration who so far insist on charging us in excess of £200 – Jim Edwards is manfully challenging their policy of charging a charitable group such as ourselves! Meanwhile we have a benefactor for the bulk of the cash required – a good friend of Bronwen, Annelies handed out paper for folk to write letters to individuals named in the AIUK 'Write for Rights' Booklet – each person present selected one named individual to write to or in support of – although more individuals could be written to if time allowed, or later at home! Bob took the completed letters to post – ten in all – David and Henry donating postage for their letters.

5.0 **Filep Karma** and **Shaker Aamer** – The group rejoiced at the recent freeing from a 15 year sentence of West Papuan Political Prisoner Filep Karma after serving 11 years of the sentence – as a group we had campaigned on his behalf! Carol remarked on the dignity which Filep had borne himself with, noting that he had refused earlier clemency since it had been offered provided that he admitted his treason – which he refused to do, since his guilt was only that of peacefully demonstrating for West Papuan independence. Information was pinned to the group's notice board. The meeting also welcomed the freeing from Guantanamo of **Shakir Aamer**, who had been freed on 30th October 2015 – still without charge!

6.0 **Kate Allen's Blog** – Carol will email around the group a copy of Kate Allen's (Director of AIUK) latest blog which discusses the current refugee crisis – and will post hard copy to Henry and Gwyn.

7.0 **Any Other Business** – A post-Christmas Social event was mooted – everyone in favour – an email discussion will decide what and where – Henry and Gwyn to be notified by phone or post.

8.0 **NEXT MEETINGS: 27th January 2016** at 7.30pm, Friends Meeting House, 9 Rickfords Hill, Aylesbury, HP20 2RT, **30th January 2016** at 10.00am Regional Conference, at Royal Latin School, Buckingham (Transport: Lifts available, to be discussed at our 27th Meeting),