



Aylesbury Amnesty International Group

Meeting 26th September 2012, 7.30pm

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

Present:

Carol Tarrant
Bob Corn
Katherine Danflous
Bronwen Lee
Jim Edwards

Annelies Varsey
Jim Cobley
David Barnard
Henry Mayer-Gross
Frances Booth

Apologies: Gwyn Jenkins, Hugh Cousins, Brigitte Glanville

Carol welcomed everyone to the meeting, with tea in hand – hoping that everyone had had a good summer!

1.0 Business – for whom and how do we choose to campaign as a group?:

- 1.1 Carol noted that there had been a directional debate (**the 'Big Debate'**) held at AIUK **last October**, whereat areas of focus for Human rights infringements of the future were determined as poverty, religious fundamentalism and climate change; Carol also noted that the **Control Arms Campaign** had taken a bit of a knock in that **the Arms Trade Treaty had not been agreed in New York over the summer** as had been hoped and deferred to December.
- 1.2 **Carol reviewed our group 'Individual at risk' and lack of progress. Jim Cobley offered to take on the role of supporting Prisoner of Conscience Johan Teterissa of Maluku**, since Rory O'Donnell had moved away (Bob will notify Country Coordinator for Indonesia Paul Hainsworth, & the Individuals at Risk Team at AIUK).
- 1.3 Carol noted that **Sean O'Leary of Reading Group is dedicating a lot of effort to supporting Filep Karma, Prisoner of Conscience in West Papua** – she also noted that **Yusak Pakage, who had earlier been released in West Papua, had now been re-arrested**, despite his having been 'pardoned & that we need to campaign on this'.

2.0 Urgent Actions:

- 2.1 Katherine had prepared letters in support of **Russian Suleymanov of Uzbekistan**, and in support of **Zmiter Dashkevich of Belarus** – everyone signed, Bob to post.
- 2.2 Bob had prepared letters in support of **Olga Hamadi, a lawyer in West Papua** – so harassed she fled for her safety leaving 5 undefended, everyone signed, Bob to post.

3.0 West Papua:

- 3.1 Carol began by explaining where we were with our support for the indigenous people of West Papua as a whole – in our 'individuals at risk' campaigning; she referred also to **the activities of 'Detachment 88' who are a specially trained anti-terrorist Detachment of Police – trained and in part equipped by the U.K., the U.S.A. and Australia** – who are brutalising the folk of West Papua (murder, beatings, house-burnings, evictions, crop-burnings, etc.). 10 items of correspondence, downloads, etc., were passed around the group to illustrate the range of information feeds which are available in gaining & confirming information. Carol discussed the fact that the **Indonesian President is staying at Buckingham Palace from 31st October – 2nd November 2012 as a guest of the British Government**, and that AIUK are suggesting a **demonstration – does the group support the proposal? After unanimous support was given by the group**, Carol and Bob will liaise with AIUK and County Coordinator Paul Hainsworth in firming up arrangements – noting that Dan Jones (of the AIUK Creative Studio) is already preparing banners and placards.

- 3.2 The meeting viewed **a series of four News Clips** – three from Australian Broadcasting Corporation, one from the BBC – links:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-08-30/defending-west-papuan-activism/4234616>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-19414636>

<http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2012/s3577104.htm>

<http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2012/s3578010.htm>

all expressing concern at **the activities of Detachment 88 in West Papua**, noting the struggle for Freedom of Expression for the indigenous people of West Papua, and **discussing the recent brutal murder of Maco Tabuni** – a West Papuan leader – and other killings, torture, burnings, evictions, etc.

- 3.3 **Carol spoke about different forms of campaigning, in the interim to more Amnesty resources** – mentioning blogging, etc., - and the fact that **Indonesia's Special forces Kopassus, appears to be training two dozen groups bloggers and journalists PPWI**, 'Papua Desk, Secret War' to further opinion against the **indigenous West Papuans** by using blogs, social networks, etc., see link: <http://www.etan.org/issues/wpapua/2012/1202wpap.htm>. She also brought the meeting's attention back to the 'Big Debate' held in October of last year – stressing a directional focus on poverty, religious fundamentalism and climate change – and noting the **closer alliance between Amnesty and Greenpeace**. Carol passed around a copy of the Climate Change paper, which stresses the effects on the lives of indigenous peoples when mining companies, logging companies, etc., operate within areas such as West Papua – driving the indigenous folk off their land, polluting water courses, and so on, and generally depriving peoples of their preferred ways of life. David recommended two books – 'Winner Take All' and 'How the West was Lost', Carol referring to several papers which she will circulate links to, suggesting that **we could lobby Kate Allen, Director of AIUK and through her the ICM of AI (being the ultimate decision making body of Amnesty International)**, noting the 'Big Debate' conclusions, which highlighted the plight of the indigenous tribal people.
- 3.4 **The forthcoming Indonesian Presidential visit** was discussed further – the meeting agreeing to lobby M.P's, AIUK and Newspapers, Foreign Sec and Palace spokesman, – Henry suggested contacting the World Wildlife Fund and the R.S.P.B., and David will write to the BBC's Today programme, seeking an on-air interview with perhaps Prime Minister David Cameron on the U.K. Government's position in respect of West Papua and Indonesia's illegal activities there which are evidently supported by British Arms and Weaponry. We will also Lobby Kate Allen at AIUK HQ about media work.

4.0 **DRC:** Frances gave a brief update on her **campaign work in respect of the DRC** – although recently frustrated by her previously arranged meeting at the DRC Embassy having been postponed – she continues a dialogue with AIUK and the IS in pursuing the meeting. She gave a graphic account of the **violence being perpetrated upon the civilians** of the DRC by the military and other militia groups.

5.0 **Reggie Clemons:** Reggie is under **sentence of death in Missouri State, USA**, despite there being some doubt as to the accuracy of witness statements at his trial – he has been under sentence since 1991; Bob stressed that group members can still lobby on-line, despite the AIUK written petition being closed on 17th September 2012 – the internet link is http://action.amnesty.org.uk/ea-action/action?ea.client.id=1194&ea.campaign.id=16092&utm_source=aiuk&utm_medium=Homepage&utm_campaign=DP&utm_content=Reggie_nib

6.0 **Speakers for next meeting:** Fran suggested a member of the AIUK Team for the DRC; Carol mentioned an Arms Trade Treaty person. Since the next meeting will be on 31st October 2012, which is the date upon which the Indonesian President arrives in the UK, a decision will be made as things become clear as to any demonstration which is planned.

7.0 **Group Web-Site:** Bob reported that the new web-site address given by AIUK Web Team is <http://www2.amnesty.org.uk/groups/aylesbury> - which the group felt was unwieldy; Jim Edwards offered that he could use the domain which he has already secured – www.aylesburyamnesty.com – and electronically direct visitors to the Amnesty address.

8.0 **NEXT MEETING:** 31st October 2012, 7.30pm, Friends Meeting House, 9 Rickfords Hill, Aylesbury, HP20 2RT.

Bob Corn, Minutes Secretary, 28th September 2012