



Aylesbury Amnesty International Group

Meeting 29th May 2013 7.30pm

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

Present:

Carol Tarrant
Bob Corn
Frances Booth
Annelies Varsey

Katherine Danflous
Jim Edwards
David Barnard
Brigitte Glanville

Apologies: Jim Cobley, Bronwen Lee, Gwyn Jenkins, Henry Mayer-Gross

Carol welcomed everyone to this meeting – a deferred Group AGM, as that planned for our April Meeting ran out of time due to other reporting.

1.0 **Previous Minutes** – Agreed.

2.0 **Officers' Reports:**

- 2.1 Chair – Carol gave a very full account of our last year's activities, well received by the membership; she was given a vote of thanks for her enthusiasm in the role of Chair.
- 2.2 Treasurer – Jim gave his report for the year, noting that we have had a modest £15 reduction in our finances. He made the point that AIUK was seriously remiss in not sending a receipt for our sending in our annual dues – Bob to raise at a forthcoming Regional Forum; Jim to pursue changing our Group Bank Account to the Cooperative Bank as soon as is practicable. He proposed the Year's Accounts to the meeting – seconded by David – carried; Jim was given a vote of thanks for his efforts.

8 membership subscriptions were paid for 2013 year.

3.0 **Election of Officers:**

- 3.1 Chair – Carol;
- 3.2 Treasurer – Jim Edwards
- 3.3 Minutes Secretary – Bob
- 3.4 Media Officer – Fran
- 3.5 Prisoner of Conscience Support Officer – Jim Cobley
- 3.6 Death Penalty Officer – David
- 3.7 Write for Rights Coordinators – Annelies and Bronwen

4.0 **Urgent Actions:**

- 4.1 Carol had written to Hugo Swire, MP – Minister at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with responsibility for Indonesia – in respect of the lack of Freedom of Expression in West Papua, and the impunity seemingly offered to the Military and Police forces in respect of their violent and brutal – and frequently fatal – treatment handed out to the indigenous population.
- 4.2 Katherine had written concerning the proposed law in Russia which will, if approved, make e.g. Human Rights Workers working with Amnesty International into 'Foreign Agents', with all of the connotations that that would bring.
- 4.3 Fran had written to the Greek Embassy asking for a response to earlier letters, and to the Congolese Embassy offering them our encouragement for their apparent modest improvement in their approach to Human Rights.
- 4.4 Everyone present added their signatures to the letters.

5.0 **Reply from Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria:**

Katherine read out two letters (written in Russian) which we had received from the Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria (City of Nalchik), simply acknowledging our earlier letters,

and saying that our letters are being passed to the Public Prosecutor for his attention.

6.0 Activism:

- 6.1 Carol handed round documents re-the Arms Trade Treaty which confirm that the Treaty is open for signature from 3rd June 2013 in New York – it needs to be signed by 50 states before being brought into UN Law. She and Bob had attended a celebratory function at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office in early May, and had the opportunity to discuss some of our Group's concerns with officials present.
- 6.2 Carol had the Amnesty International 2013 Report available 'The State of the World's Human Rights' – copies are available for purchase from AIUK; Fran borrowed Carol's copy to have a read.
- 6.3 Individual at Risk – Dr Tun Aung, arrested on 11th June 2011 in Rakhine State, Burma – is the subject of this month's Urgent Action from AIUK; Carol to circulate the case electronically to the membership.
- 6.4 Carol introduced the 2013 Groups' Planning Pack – priorities being Women's Rights in Afghanistan, Zimbabwe Elections 2013, Individuals and Groups at Risk, Human Rights Defenders, and 'Other Campaign Work' – Refugee Work in Iraq, Libya, Zimbabwe, Sudan and Burma, Death Penalty, and 'opting in' or 'opting out' of Regional and Country Campaigning. David read the Introductory Page to the Group – Carol will send an electronic copy to the Group (Bob will send Hard Copy to Gwyn and Henry). Carol asked everyone to read the document and complete the last two pages, so that we can respond to the request to give our opinion and desires by 5th July 2013.
- 6.5 An invitation has been received to take part in a demonstration on 6th July 2013 outside the Indonesian Embassy in London, to commemorate the 15th Anniversary of the Biak Massacre, West Papua. It is intended that the demonstration will have representatives from several NGO's, be a mass rally, and have speakers. Carol will clarify times, etc.

7.0 Next Meeting: **26th June 2013** at 7.30pm – Friends Meeting House,
9 Rickfords Hill, Aylesbury, HP20 2RT

Bob Corn, Minutes Secretary,
3rd June 2013