



## Aylesbury Amnesty International Group

Group Meeting 30<sup>th</sup> January 2013 7.30pm

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

**Present** Carol Tarrant  
Bob Corn  
Jim Cobley  
David Barnard

Annelies Varsey  
Frances Booth  
Gwyn Jenkins  
Henry Mayer-Gross

**Apologies:** Bronwen Lee, Hugh Cousins, Katherine Danflous, Jim Edwards

Carol welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1.0 **Previous Minutes** – Approved.

2.0 **Regional Conference Review:**

Attendance at 44 delegates from around the Region was up from last year, but lower than in previous years; Speakers – Hugh Sandeman from the North Africa Team gave an update on current position in North Africa, Kate Allen spoke to the Control Arms Campaign in place of Oliver Sprague who could not attend, Wisam Elmahoui and Laila Alodaat gave a presentation on the current situation in Syria; in the afternoon, Kate Allen as Director of AIUK, and Board Members Helen Parry, Sarah O’Grady and Treasurer Brian Landers (from the floor) formed a panel to discuss the new directions of the Amnesty International Movement.

Several things gave rise to concern – the Disabled Stair Lift did not work when required, the promised Internet connection did not function, there was considerable extraneous noise, and door squeaking noise gave concern. David’s wash-up mop has gone missing, and Carol’s camera has been mislaid (since discovered!).

There was again a proposal to host the Conference in Oxford next year – Bob is to canvass Groups in the Region for their views – this meeting agreed to the proposal.

3.0 **Maluku and Johan Teterissa:**

A short video clip to illustrate the geography and history of Maluku was shown, and Jim gave an update of Prisoner of Conscience Johan Teterissa – a school teacher, jailed for 15 years for peacefully waving the Maluku Independence Flag. Jim had written to David Lidington, MP, and apparently Hugo Swire at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is responding, although Jim has heard nothing yet. Jim has written again, and he had prepared a letter addressed to the Indonesian Minister for Justice and Human Rights – we all signed it.

Two further short video clips were shown.

4.0 **West Papua:**

Carol gave a brief update on events in West Papua, which continue to give rise to great concern in their savagery and seeming total disregard for Human Rights meted out to the indigenous population. Three clips of video were shown, the first two being a record of a meeting in 1976 between a previously uncontacted tribe and two western visitors – the third being ‘Land of the Morning Star’ which gave a summary of the takeover of West Papua by Indonesia, after independence had been given by the Dutch.

Carol will prepare and circulate a letter which she proposes that we send.

5.0 **Priorities and Campaigning for the coming year:**

Attached to these notes are two sheets which had been issued by Farshid Talaghani, Local Groups Coordinator at AIUK – the one dealing with future communications to groups, and the other setting out campaign priorities for the coming year.

6.0 **AIUK AGM:**

This will be held at Warwick University on the weekend of 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> April 2013 – note that it will be simply the Saturday and Sunday, in an effort to reduce overhead costs. All are encouraged to attend – reference can be made to the AIUK website for information, where details of discounted attendance fees can be found for those who qualify.

**7.0 Next Meeting:** 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013, 7.30pm – Friends Meeting House, 9 Rickfords Hill, Aylesbury HP20 2RT.

Bob Corn, Minutes Secretary, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2013

## LOCAL GROUPS COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW:

As you will be aware, we need to make recurrent savings of £2.5million in AI UK's operating budget in order to secure the medium term financial stability of AIUK and make the agreed increases in our contribution to the international movement.

In order to deliver the savings required we have been reviewing all aspects of our work. Although prompted by our need to make savings this has also given us the opportunity to address some concerns often mentioned by groups regarding the cost effectiveness of some of our processes and to make sure that we take advantage of the most up to date technology.

As part of this we have reviewed the way in which we communicate with local groups and provide them with campaign materials. Following initial discussions with regional representatives we have consulted groups about a range of possible changes and following an evaluation of the responses by regional reps are now in a position to tell you about the proposed changes.

Whilst we believe the proposals will make our operations much more cost effective we have been concerned to ensure that those local groups that do not use information technology are not disadvantaged and will be able to continue with their important campaigning activities.

The proposed changes are set out below:

### Monthly Mailing

1. This will go online before the start of each month and we hope that this will be the mechanism by which the majority of groups access this information.
2. **Monthly e-mail alert:** This will inform groups that the monthly information is on the website and give link – This will go to every person in a local group with officer's role such as the secretary as well those with other roles such as campaign coordinator where we have e-mail contact details.
3. **Opt-in to postal mailing:** For the small number of groups unable to access the monthly mailing online there will remain the option of receiving this information by post. Groups will be asked if they want to opt in to postal mailing starting in 2013 through the annual groups planning pack exercise. If we don't hear from groups we will assume that they are happy with the online option.
4. **Quarterly/occasional mailings:** When there is information that it is not possible to send any other ways (sample campaign postcards or Write for Rights materials), we may need to send this by post to relevant group's members.

### Groups Newsletter

1. **We intend to reduce this to two per year:** This may be less glossy if savings can be created by such a change and we will ask groups how many they wish to receive through the annual groups planning pack exercise. Groups that do not respond will receive three copies
2. **We may put more group news in AI magazine** but as the magazine is going through a separate review we need to see the outcome of that before coming to any final conclusions. We will almost certainly be reducing the number of magazines sent to each group to one as many group members are AI UK members and receive them directly.
3. We will also have more space available on the new AI UK website for group news once it is up and running

### Annual Groups' Planning Pack

1. **This will be much more simple than in recent years, comprising:**
  - 4 pages maximum with descriptions of current campaigns
  - Financial return
  - Revised group profile /information form
  - Resources information

Other forward planning information will purely be online

### Campaign Materials

We have decided to continue not to charge for campaign materials, but will limit the amount groups can order more rigorously to discourage over ordering. Groups will be able to contact the activism team or other relevant officers at AI UK when special circumstances arise, e.g. particularly large scale events create a need for unusually large amounts of material.

## **Groups Planning Pack for 2013, and Campaign Priorities**

**NOTE FROM FARSHID TALAGHANI,  
CAMPAIGNER – LOCAL GROUPS, 18th January 2013**

Dear All

Just wanted to update you on this.

I am sure you remember we all went through local groups communication review with local groups back in Sep/Oct last year and we came up with some recommendation. We weren't able to take this further since then but we can now which is great.

I am now hoping to send the following (much simpler groups planning pack) to groups either end of Feb or end of Mar depending on printing schedule.

1 - 4/6 pages description of 2013 campaigns

2 - option form

3 - covering letter explaining the result of comms review - signed by Chris on behalf of Reg Reps & and me

Chris kindly drafted the above letter to explain the comms review. I am attaching this so please have a look and let me know what you think.

The campaign priorities for 2013 are:

- Women's rights in Afghanistan
- Zimbabwe
- India project
- IAR/HRD/Country work

Of course ATT is a priority till end of March when the UN conference takes place.

I have asked Champa to e-mail you all with a bit more details of campaign in 2013. She would also like to attend next Forum meeting to explain the India Project. Unfortunately she is away on 2 March date for our next Forum meeting. So she is asking if we can change from 2 March to 9 March. Please let me know if you are happy to change the date or not.

I think that's it for now.