



THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GROUP NEWSLETTER

Forthcoming Brighton and Hove Amnesty Group Meetings/Events

Group Business Meeting
Group meetings normally take place on the first Thursday of each month from 8-10pm at Community Base, Queens Road, Brighton
Please note change of venue for November meeting

1st November 2012 Business meeting

Friends Meeting House, Ship St,
Brighton
Time 7.45pm to 9.45pm

6th December
Workshop and Christmas party
8pm to 10pm

Letter writing evenings

An evening once a month to sit and write letters with fellow Amnesty members. These evenings are hosted at member's houses. All welcome, simply contact the host/hostess for details:

15th October

Contact Emma 01273 232397

Monthly Lanes Collection

27th October 2012

Contact Catherine : 07828
584430 to volunteer

Monthly Stall

17th November 2012

**At Amnesty Winterfest
Unitarian Church, New Road,**
Contact Jill 01273 621697

28th October

Amnestea party and Auction
3pm to 6pm

Pheonix Community Centre

8th December 2012

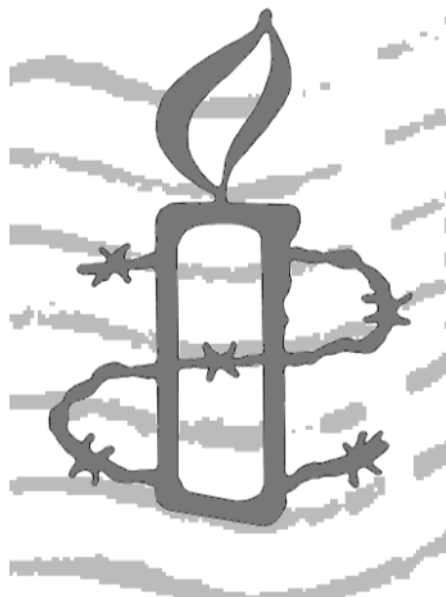
10am to 4pm

Letter Writing Vigil
Friends Meeting House
Ship Street, Brighton



**WRITE FOR
RIGHTS**

2012



Write a message for human rights victims worldwide

Live Music!

Tea and Cake!

All Welcome!

Brighton and Hove Amnesty International Groups Annual Greetings card and letter writing vigil.

Saturday 8th December

10am—4pm

Friends Meeting House
Ship Street
Brighton

Volunteers still needed for this years letter writing event.

We are looking forward to our annual letter writing event on 8th December this year. This is a very popular event were we will be inviting Amnesty members and the general public to join us and send a message of hope to people around the world whose human rights are denied or abused.

Ester has kindly agreed to co ordinate the event for us this year and is looking for volunteers.

If you can help in advance with media/publicity, baking a cake, designing a poster, organising rotas, or if you would be free to help on the day then contact Ester : **esterfederica@gmail.com**



Brighton and Hove Amnesty International's **Auction of Promises**

At our Annual Amnes-Tea Party
Sunday 28th October, 3-6pm

Phoenix Community Centre Brighton

Have a cuppa, place a bid and stand up for human rights!

Varndean Sixth form talk

On Thursday the 11th of October, Emma and I went into Varndean College with the aim of presenting Amnesty International's work to the Politics lunch club there.

The first thing we noticed was that a huge number of students attended the talk, far exceeding the number given to us at the planning stage, which was 35. This shows strong interest towards Amnesty among the students, and despite some lack of familiarity there was clearly enthusiasm.

After Emma's introduction to Amnesty, we showed them a DVD clip, and then Emma outlined some successes of the Brighton and Hove Amnesty group, including the Cuban prisoner of conscience campaign.

To wrap up the short talk, I introduced the students to Women Of Zimbabwe Arise, and issued them with pink tissue paper. There was a superb response to the WOZA campaign, and we got a full bag of postcards on which students had

written messages directed to the Zimbabwe Embassy. We got the students to create pink tissue paper roses, relevant to WOZA's Valentine's day protests, which were attached to the postcards, lending visual impact to the message.

We feel the talk was a great success, and as a result the teachers at Varndean would like to set up an Amnesty group within the school.

Joe.

If you want to find out more about WOZA you can look here: <http://action.amnesty.org.uk/ea-campaign/clientcampaign.do?ea.client.id=1194&ea.campaign.id=10087>

If you would like to send your own rose then You could draw a picture of a rose, make a paper rose, write a poem about a rose, or anything else you can think of related to roses! And send it with a message of solidarity to :



His Excellency Mr Gabriel Mharadze Machinga
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Embassy of the Republic of Zimbabwe House
429 The Strand London
WC2R 0JR

Suggested message: "I am sending this rose in support of WOZA and call on you to respect their right to peaceful protest. "

The BIG Amnesty Skill Share

'In Defence of Human Rights in the UK'

Amnesty has long worked to support Human Rights Defenders. Now we all have to BECOME Human Rights Defenders. Our rights, won over centuries, are now at risk. Human rights are under attack in the UK. Persistent attacks by politicians and scare stories and urban myths printed in the media about the Human Rights Act are turning public opinion against the whole concept of human rights. Over the next 3 years Amnesty UK will be campaigning to ensure that human rights in the UK are understood, valued and defended.

On Saturday 6th October, Brighton and Hove Amnesty group were well represented at the skill share as Emma, Freya, Peter and Gwyneth met at Amnesty UK's Headquarters in London to find out why and how Amnesty activists should be defending human rights here in the UK.

The day began with a brief overview of the Human Rights Act from AIUK's Policy Advisor, Tara Lyle. The Act came into force in 2000 and serves to bring most of the human rights contained in the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law. It protects everyone in the UK. Tara clarified that the Human Rights Act actually makes it easier for us to gain justice for violations of our rights within the UK justice system. It is no secret that human rights have a very bad image in the UK. Tara explained that this is an issue for AIUK because negative views on human rights could damage home support for Amnesty International and the undermining of human rights protection here sends out a negative message to the rest of the world.

Next was a panel discussion on 'why it's important for ordinary people to stand up for Human Rights in the UK' featuring Steven

Bowen (Director, British Institute of Human Rights) and Martin Watson (Advocacy Matters). Steven argued strongly against a 'UK Bill of Rights' (a suggestion by the current government to replace the Human Rights Act) which he feels would only weaken our human rights protection.

Martin told us various stories of people who have been helped by the Human Rights Act; including the case of an older couple who used the Act to stop them being placed in separate care facilities.

After a short break, we all met again for an interactive session on balancing rights, in particular the difference between absolute and non-absolute rights. The majority of rights in the Human Rights Act are non-absolute (e.g. the right to liberty and freedom of expression), in other words they can be restricted as long as the action is lawful, legitimate, necessary and proportionate.

Following lunch we all went off to different workshops.

Emma attended a workshop on how to run a stall. We shared ideas on how to engage with members of the public to attract people to the stall and get them to take part in an Amnesty Action.

We split into groups to design a campaigning stall around the UK Human Rights Act. Bearing in mind that we wanted the stall to be visually appealing as well as emphasising the fact that the Human Rights Act affects all of us, we came up with a design for a stall based around gingerbreadmen! We thought that each person could be asked to write on their gingerbread man or woman why they benefit from human rights—eg 'My name is Emma and I like reading so I like the right to education.'

As well as getting people to think

about human rights in relation to themselves we would be able to use the completed gingerbread people to create a work of art to display locally. We would of course have real gingerbread men to eat too.

I am looking forward to this campaign being launched so that we can put these ideas into action.

Freya took part in a fun workshop on how to put on a photo stunt/street performance facilitated by two Amnesty trainers, including Brighton and Hove member, Angus Lindsay. We discussed what it is that draws in members of the public and began brainstorming ideas for a stunt. We wanted to encourage public ownership of the Act so our ideas including incorporating the figure of Britannia, putting on a street party and using the image of a safety net. We spent the rest of the session putting on a short, entertaining play written by Angus, which we then performed to the other groups.

The last session on the day focused on tackling tricky conversations on human rights in different scenarios.

Overall this Skill Share helped clarify many of the issues surrounding the Human Rights Act and left me feeling confident and inspired to work on this campaign when it becomes part of AIUK's future work.

We both agreed that a trip to the Human Rights Action centre was a great way of re charging our batteries and came away very motivated. We would strongly recommend that you take advantage of any opportunity to take part in these workshops in future. We certainly will be!

By Freya and Emma

BRIGHTON AND HOVE AMNESTY OUR PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

The group have taken on two prisoners of conscience – in fact one is the displaced people from the town of Tawargha in Libya and the other is a young Egyptian man Mohamed Sayed Ibrahim Abdel Latif who was allegedly shot by the police in the outskirts of Cairo on 29th January 2011.

MOHAMED SAYED IBRAHIM ABDEL LATIF (known as Hamoksha)

Mohamed was 23 when he was killed. He held a diploma in technology and information and worked in a bakery. On the day he was killed he left home to pick up some equipment for his work and met some friends. While he was with them, they came across an injured man near Imbaba Police station. Mohamed tried to help the man by taking him to hospital. While doing so he was shot in the neck and arm, taken to hospital but died shortly after.

The next day, on 30th January Mohamed's brother Ashraf was required to sign a statement acknowledging that he did not want the body to be forensically examined or the Public Prosecutor to be notified. However, with the help of a lawyer, Ashraf requested an autopsy and submitted a complaint accusing three police officers from Imbaba Police station of his brother's killing. Shortly after, the family were visited by police officers from this police station pressuring Ashraf to drop the case but the family refused. There have been other protesters killed in the area and their families have also been visited and bribed in exchange for dropping their cases. Mohamed's family have joined with these families killed during the uprising to protest against these unlawful killings in Tahir Square and other areas.

Shortly after Mohamed's death

an Amnesty International delegation met with his family and the Secretary General of AI met his and other families later in the year.

Ashraf Latif, with other families, also met the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Interior who promised that those accused of allegedly of killing their sons would be detained, prior to the start of the trial. This has not happened.

In October 2011 the Public Prosecutor referred for trial before a criminal court, four police officers from the Imbaba Police Station charged with the premeditated murder of Mohamed and others. The trial continues a year later and the officers remain free on bail. To date a number of court verdicts have acquitted police officers accused of killing protesters during the uprising in Egypt, and lawyers and human rights activists have accused prosecutors of not conducting full and independent investigations in these cases.

Please sign the attached letter to the Prime Minister
Celia

The Displaced People of Tawargha.

I know it has been a long time coming but here at last is news of our latest Prisoner of Conscience. Well, actually, Prisoner (s) of Conscience, as we have 30,000 of them. We are taking on a whole town, Tawargha in Libya.

The population were attacked in August 2011 by Misratah opposition fighters who believed the Tawarghas fought alongside the Gaddafi forces. The fighters drove out the people and burned and looted their homes. There has also been enforced disappearance, arbitrary arrest, torture and unlawful killing. As

well as repeatedly raiding the town they have destroyed its infrastructure to stop people returning. Even the town's name has been erased on road signs.

The Tawarghas have been scattered across Libya. They now live in poorly resourced camps for displaced people including camps in Benghazi and in Libya's capital, Tripoli. In February 2012 one of these camps holding 2,500 Tawarghas was attacked by militia, seven civilians were killed. The Misratah militia hunt down and detain hundreds of Tawarghas and take them to Misratah where they are detained. Torture in detention is widespread and routine, some have been tortured to death.

Tawargha's people are being collectively punished for crimes allegedly committed by a few. Their children do not go to school. They continue to live in constant fear and uncertainty.

Amnesty's campaign aim is for the Tawarghas to be able to safely return home. The plight of the Tawarghas reflects wider human rights abuses in Libya. Amnesty calls on the National Transitional Council to end abuses by armed militias in Libya including arbitrary detention and torture. We will be taking action by writing letters to the Libyan Ambassador and sending faxes to Ali Hmeida Ashur, the Minister of Justice and Human Rights in Libya. *Jill*



*A street in the abandoned town of Tawargha. September 4, 2011.
©Sidney Kwiram/Human Rights Watch*

Lewes Amnesty Group Guantanamo Film and Discussion



Many thanks to the Lewes Amnesty group who hosted a film showing and discussion about Guantanamo on Sunday 21st October, 2012.

Several members of the Brighton and Hove Amnesty group were among the audience to watch the moving film 'Outside the Law: Stories from Guantanamo', followed by a lively panel discussion.

Andy Worthington, journalist and co-director of the film was on the panel as well as Omar Deghayes who many of you will recall campaigning for when he was imprisoned in Guantanamo. They were joined by Caroline Lucas, MP for Brighton Pavilion and Norman Baker, MP for Lewes.

A large part of the discussion focussed on Shaker Aamer who is the last remaining British Resident in Guantanamo and



has been there for over 10 years despite having been cleared for release in 2007 by George Bush.

The panel joined the Audience for a photo opportunity where members of the audience held up letters reading 'CLOSE GUANTANAMO NOW. FREE SHAKER AAMER.'

We were urged to attend the Parliamentary Public Meeting on 29th October. Details below— please go if you can:

**A DECADE OF INJUSTICE
WHY IS SHAKER AAMER STILL
IN GUANTANAMO**
MONDAY, 29th OCTOBER, at
7pm -9pm Room 15, the House
of Commons (St. Stephen's En-
trance)

Meeting hosted by Jane Ellison MP on behalf of the Save Shaker Aamer Campaign.

Speakers:

Clive Stafford Smith OBE, Jane Ellison MP, Omar Deghayes, Joy Hurcombe, Yvonne Ridley, Kate Hudson

Others invited include:

Caroline Lucas MP, Sarah Ludford MEP, John McDonnell MP, and Terry Waite CBE.

SSAC will show the new short

video by Spectacle called "Shaker the Decade of Injustice." This will be followed by a panel discussion and Q&A to focus on how we can all work for Shaker Aamer's release and return to the UK.

Further details: contact
SSAC 07756493877



URGENT APPEAL FOR SHAKER AAMER

We have reached our first 10,000 signatures on the e-petition 33133 calling for new initiatives by the UK Government for his release and return to the UK. We need 90,000 more to trigger a parliamentary debate.

Please send this urgent appeal to all your contacts.

SIGN THE E-PETITION AT,
www.freeshaker.com



Take Action

SUDAN

Al-Tom Hamed Tutu (m)

Sudanese man, Al-Tom Hamed Tutu, a member of the Darfuri armed-opposition group, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), faces imminent execution if his death sentence is not overturned on appeal. He was subjected to a flawed trial and has reportedly been tortured in detention.

Al-Tom Hamed Tutu was arrested on 21 July 2011 in the Kadugli locality, in Sudan's Southern Kordofan state. He was charged with seven counts against the state including, "undermining the constitutional system" and "waging war against the state" (under Articles 50 and 51 of the 1991 Criminal Act), both of which are punishable by death or life imprisonment. The trial took place in Kadugli Criminal Court from 22 to 25 August 2011, following which he was sentenced to death by hanging. This sentence was upheld by the appeals chambers of the same court in September 2011.

Al-Tom Hamed Tutu's lawyer was not allowed to introduce witnesses during the trial or given sufficient time to review the evidence against his client. Reports further indicate that Al-Tom Hamed Tutu was tortured in prison on various occasions; his hands and feet were beaten with wooden sticks, and he was suspended from the ceiling with his hands and feet bound together. He has also reportedly been repeatedly threatened with execution.

After appealing to the High Court president, a decision was not communicated to Al-Tom Hamed Tutu or his lawyer, until he was taken for execution on 24 May 2012. His execution was temporarily suspended pending the submission of an appeal to the Constitutional Court, which was submitted on 10 June 2012. There are concerns that if the appeal is unsuccessful he could face execution the following day.

Please write immediately in Arabic, English or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to commute the death sentence against Al-Tom Hamed Tutu;
- Urging the authorities to ensure that Al-Tom Hamed Tutu gets a fair retrial, in accordance with international standards on fair trial;
- Calling on the authorities to ensure that Al-Tom Hamed Tutu is not tortured or otherwise ill-treated;
- Stressing that under international law the execution of people after a trial that does not meet international fair trial standards is a violation of the right to life;
- Calling on the Sudan government to establish an official moratorium on executions in the country, with a view to abolish the death penalty, in line with the growing global trend and resolutions of the UN General Assembly and the African Commission for Human and Peoples' Right, and urging the President to commute all existing death sentences.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 NOVEMBER 2012 TO:

President

HE Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir
Office of the President
People's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum
Sudan
Fax: 00249 183 782 541
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

Mohammed Bushara Dousa
Ministry of Justice,
PO Box 302
Al Nil Avenue,
Khartoum,
Sudan
Salutation: Your Excellency

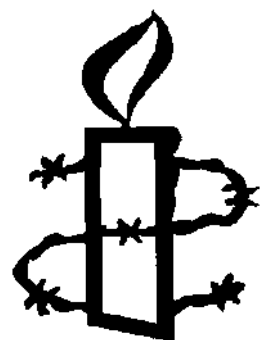
And copies to:

Minister of Interior

Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamed
Ministry of Interior
PO Box 873
Khartoum,
Sudan

It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness

Old Chinese Proverb



Minutes for Brighton and Hove Amnesty International Monthly Meeting Thursday 4th October 2012

8.00pm **Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies: Madeline, Jess

Attendees: Emma, Joe, Becky, Phoebe, Erin, Mike, Ollie, Angela, Joel, Jess, Ester, Freya Catherine, Clare, Jill, Paola, Celia, Jonathan, Caroline, Emma. Ellie

Guest Speaker – Hugh Sandeman

Arab Spring and the Aftermath: Human Rights in North Africa

Hugh Sandeman, AI country coordinator for North Africa, led the discussion surrounding the Arab Spring, focussing particularly on Tunisia, Egypt and Libya.

Unravelling events from when Mohamed Bouazizi, a Tunisian shop vendor, set fire to himself in protest on 17th December 2010, through to the uprising in Tahrir Square in Egypt and the violent conflict that followed in Libya, Hugh Sandeman talked about the place of Human Rights within this chapter of history. In particular he pointed to wards the importance of women's rights, justice and accountability – discovering and disclosing what has happened in the past with the aim of improving the future – as well as capacity building on the ground within the affected areas, supporting human rights defenders in their own countries.

A discussion surrounding the Western provision of arms, religion and human rights and the new regime's positioning within the international community followed.

Tea and Coffee Break

Minutes and matters arising

Cost and Priorities Programme: Emma shared with the group a statement issued from the unionised members of Amnesty International offering an explanation for the strike action by AIUK staff. More information at www.amnesty.org.uk/capp.

Alternative locations for the monthly lanes collection: Freya has contacted a number of supermarkets who have provisionally agreed provided we request in writing with specific dates. ***Catherine will put together a rota for the year 2013***

Guest speakers: Angus to give a group workshop in December and to organise a guest speaker on Syria for February. Jill to invite Medicine San Frontiers for April. **Dates TBC**

Treasurers report

Annual Street Collection total: £453.82

Donation to AI UK head office: £200

Current Balance: £350.66

Lanes Collection

Rota circulated for the monthly lanes collection to be held on the back step of the Friends Meeting House 10am – 4pm Saturday 27th October.

Monthly Stall

Saturday 13th October 2012 11am-1pm: Security and Human Rights. Outside Books for Amnesty, Sydney Street.

Auction of Promises and Amnestea Party

Lists sent round to group for help with catering, serving, setting up and closing down. The group was encouraged to publicise this event as much as possible in their workplaces/schools etc. It was also agreed that we will be holding a relaxed and (hopefully!) fun 'craft evening' in conjunction with the monthly letter writing meeting (details below) to prepare banners/posters etc for the event itself.

The final event will be held at the Phoenix Community Centre (BN2 9ND), Sunday 28th October 3-6pm, admission FREE.

Monthly letter writing meeting

An evening once a month to sit and write letters with fellow Amnesty members. To be held at Emma's house (contact brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com for details) Thursday 18th October from 7.30pm.

Annual Greeting Card Campaign

Ester has agreed to organise this event but called for volunteers to help.

Please contact esterfederica@gmail.com if you wish to help.

The vigil will take place at the Friends Meeting House Saturday 8th December.

New Prisoner of Conscience

AIUK head office has responded to our queries regarding the focus of our Prisoners of Conscience campaign. There are two campaigns which will be long-term projects for the group.

The displaced people of Tawargha, Libya who have been targeted, tortured and abused at the hands of Misratah militias. Hundreds of Tawarghas are believed to be detained in Misratah.

Justice for a young man who was shot dead whilst helping another injured victim during protests in Tahrir Square.

Amnesty International is calling for the Egyptian authorities to fully investigate this case.

For more detailed information surrounding these campaigns contact Jill: jrfrancis@hotmail.co.uk

Any other business

- Brighton and Hove Palestine Solidarity Campaign

Justice for Palestine: Brighton and Boycott

Why our city should not be hosting the Israeli state-sponsored dance company (Batsheva) and a shop (Ecostream) that sells goods made in an illegal Israeli settlement.

Monday 15th October 7.30pm Friends Meeting House, Ship Street, Brighton.

9.45pm Meeting closed

Local Events Notice Board

Saturday November 17th 2012 **Winterfest**—Amnesty Bookshop and Wateraids, annual music (and cake!) festival

Time: 12 until 6:30

Current Line-up.

The Beautiful Word
The Galleons
Los Fantasticos
The Black Fields
Hat full of Rain
Anja McClosky
Hullabaloo Community Quire

Venue: The venue is the Unitarian Church in New Road, Brighton, BN1 1UF

Thursday 1st November 2012, 4pm

Duke of York Film — 5 Broken Cameras

Director: Emad Burnat, Guy Davidi

At the birth of his son Gibreel, Palestinian farmer Emad Burnat is given his first movie camera and begins recording both Gibreel's childhood and the conflict growing around them. 5 BROKEN CAMERAS was awarded the IFDA prize at Amsterdam Film Festival and the Audience Award at Sheffield Doc/Fest, as well as further prizes at Sundance, London Open City, and the Stranger Than Fiction Film Festival in Dublin.

BRIGHTON AND HOVE AMNESTY GROUP CONTACTS

Chair – Emma brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com Tel: 01273 232397

New Member Secretary: Sue Tel: 07790 755921

Mail Secretary: Liz Tel: 07598 467568

Email Secretary: Emma Tel: 01273 232397 **Group Email:** brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com

Minutes Secretary: Catherine 07828 584430

Treasurer: Catherine 07828 584430

Newsletter editor: - Emma Parker: Tel: 01273 232397

Please email any contributions for the newsletter to brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com

Lanes collection organiser: - Catherine 07828 584430

Web Site co-ordinator: Michael Fisher - michaelowenfisher@hotmail.com

Amnesty Stalls co-ordinator—Jill Francis—01273 621697

Campaign Co-ordinators:

Prisoner of Conscience – Jill Francis—jrfrancis@hotmail.co.uk

Death Penalty— Ester Zanetti —esterfederica@gmail.com

Control Arms; securing the Arms Trade Treaty —Luke Beale—lukebeale@hotmail.com

End Forced Evictions: Poverty and Human Rights—Freya - freya_lyte@hotmail.co.uk

Middle East and North Africa (MENA) - Caroline—carolineoreilly@scola.ac.uk

Security and Human Rights—Michael and Jess—michaelowenfisher@hotmail.com

Amnesty Websites: international - www.amnesty.org AI UK - www.amnesty.org.uk local group - www.amnesty.org.uk/brighton

Amnesty UK Human Rights Centre - Tel: 0207 0331500.

