



## **THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GROUP NEWSLETTER**

### **Forthcoming Brighton & Hove Amnesty Group Meetings/Events**

*Group meetings take place on the first Thursday of each month from 8-10pm at Community Base, Queens Road, Brighton*

**6th October**  
Campaign Meeting

**3rd November**  
Speaker from Hummingbird Project

### **Monthly Collection**

Contact Madeline  
01273 508620

[madeline@peasgood.plus.com](mailto:madeline@peasgood.plus.com)

15th October  
19th November  
17th December

### **Monthly Stall**

Sydney Street  
22d October

Contact Jill 01273 621697  
11am to 1pm

### **3rd December 2016**

#### **Write for Rights**

10am to 4pm  
Friends Meeting House

## **Democratic Republic of Congo:**

**THE MOST EXCITING NEWS IS THAT OUR TWO RECENTLY ADOPTED PRISONERS, YVES AND FRED, HAVE JUST BEEN RELEASED!! However, the charges against them have not been dropped and the following press release has an update on the political situation in the DRC.**



### **Chilling crackdown on dissent amidst election delays**

The authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have overseen a systematic crackdown on opponents of President Joseph Kabila's attempt to stay in power beyond the constitutionally mandated second term. The government is violating the rights of opposition politicians and pro-democracy activists to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly while expelling foreign researchers and threatening human rights organizations that are working to monitor these violations with closure.

Local authorities in three different places have imposed blanket bans on demonstrations, and have even broken up indoor meetings of political opposition parties.

At our last meeting we had a talk by Krisztina, the AIUK country coordinator for the DRC. She began with a short history of DRC, mainly under brutal colonial rule, emphasising that it is extremely rich in terms of natural resources, such as minerals, while also being extremely poor in terms of its economy. It is also, sadly, known as "the rape capital of the world".

Krisztina highlighted the following human rights issues:

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Repression on dissent: human rights defenders, journalists and NGOs have been targeted, including organisations like **LUCHA**, a pro-democracy youth movement, of which our two adopted prisoners are leaders.

Rape: extremely prevalent in conflict throughout all the Congo wars, in which the whole community is effected as the women are ostracised.

Child labour and mineral wealth: 50% of the world's cobalt, widely used in mobile phone batteries and the aircraft industry, is found in DRC, and is mined by children using their bare hands for \$1 -2 a day. An estimated 40,000 children work in the mines in DRC.

Recent massacres in Beni (an area in the North East of DRC): a series of brutal civilian killings (36 in one day in August), blamed on various forces: Islamist, the Lords Resistance Army and the military, but there is no real proof as to the perpetrators.

**PLEASE WRITE A LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT DEMANDING THAT ALL CHARGES AGAINST FRED AND YVES ARE DROPPED! Use the one enclosed if you wish**

## Street Collection

**A huge thank you to all our collectors and to everyone who donated**

**We raised a fantastic £305.25**

Fundraising is a crucial part of our role as a local group to enable us to campaign and raise awareness locally. Also so that we can send money to Amnesty Uk to fund research and campaigning into human rights abuses around the world.



## NOVEMBER TALK AT AMNESTY MEETING

Thursday 3rd November @ 8pm Community Base, Queen's Road, Brighton

### THE HUMMINGBIRD PROJECT

Speaker :- Elaine Ortiz

The Hummingbird Project is a Brighton based organisation that collects and delivers material aid to people living in the Calais camps. It was inspired by the story of the hummingbird that carries water in its beak to put out a forest fire. The project began with Elaine Ortiz making a large, fragile banner with the message 'Don't Lose Hope'. More artworks have been produced since then by refugees in Calais. Soup kitchens, medical support and building projects continue support for people forced to flee their homes.

Please come and listen to Elaine's amazing story and find out how you can contribute by donating items or share your skills to keep people warm, dry and healthy in safe spaces.

For more information <https://www.facebook/Hummingbirduk>

## Brighton and Hove Group at Pride 2016

A big thank you to everyone who turned out to walk in the parade and take part on the campaigning stall at pride this year. To see all the pictures look at <https://www.flickr.com/groups/amnestybrighton/>



**We all had fun, the weather was perfect, the atmosphere was exciting as we joined the flamboyantly dressed walkers to parade the streets. We even felt a little bit famous for a while as the crowds cheered us and snapped our photos, but there was a more serious message behind the fun:**

**No matter what your actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, every person on earth should be treated by others and by their governments as equal citizens. But around the world, people are continually persecuted and discriminated against for who they are, and their sexual feelings and consenting behaviour.**

**We're working for a world where no one faces discrimination for their sexual orientation or gender identity.**

## LANES COLLECTION – HELLO AGAIN!

After the summer break and the street collection on 17 September, we will again be collecting on the third Saturday of the month at the back of Friends Meeting House in The Lanes, 11.00am until 5.00pm – six hours. Please volunteer to do an hour! The next few dates are 15 October, 19 November and 17 December – the last is the same day as Write for Rights, so you can combine an hour's collection with letter writing.

We really need the cash which these collections raise, so please offer to help. You might like to be on the list of volunteers even if you cannot help just yet 01273 508620 [madeline@peasgood.plus.com](mailto:madeline@peasgood.plus.com)

### **Amnesty September Stall OPPOSITION LEADER IMPRISONED**

Date Saturday 17th September

Time 11am - 1pm

Venue Outside Amnesty Bookshop, Sydney Street, Brighton

Weather Warm for the time of year

Activists Andrew, Jack, Madeline, Sue and Jill

Campaign Leopoldo Lopez, Opposition Leader in Venezuela



In September 2015 Leopoldo Lopez was jailed for 13 years and 9 months for inciting violence during an anti - government protest. Although he had helped organise protests there is no evidence that he instigated violence or committed any other crime. He is a prisoner of conscience. His imprisonment exposes the current government's lack of respect for dissenting views. Opposition politicians and human rights defenders face continuous attacks from the authorities.

We made a petition to send to Nicolas Maduro Moros, President of Venezuela, to call for the immediate and unconditional release of Leopoldo Lopez.

We collected 98 signatures for the petition to send to Venezuela. There seemed to be generally good support for this prisoner of conscience.

Next stall Saturday 22nd October Campaign

Fred and Yves, Congolese activists - released but without dropping charges and likely to be rearrested.

If you would like to help contact Jill on 01273 621697

## **BRIGHTON & HOVE AMNESTY GROUP CONTACTS**

**Chair** – Peter [brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com](mailto:brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com) Tel: 01273 607110

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**Newsletter editor:** - Emma: Tel: 01273 232397

Please email any contributions for the newsletter to [brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com](mailto:brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com)

**Lanes collection organiser:** - Madeline—01273 508620

**Individuals at Risk** – Fred Bauma and Yves Makwambala—Sue 07790 755921  
[sue@suewilliams44.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:sue@suewilliams44.fsnet.co.uk)

**Amnesty Websites:** international - [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org) AI UK -  
[www.amnesty.org.uk](http://www.amnesty.org.uk) local group – [www.amnesty.org.uk/brighton](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/brighton)

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**Amnesty UK Human Rights Centre** - Tel: 0207 0331500

