

- ensure that people can realise their rights. practices are underpinned by them
- ensure that people understand human rights and that government policies and human rights conventions and protocols rately outstand international and regional about human rights
- use positive language and messages human rights. Specifically, they should demonstrate a willingness to be bound by an international and regional framework of We want whoever governs Scotland to easily enforceable.
- recognised, understood by all, and to ensure that human rights are legally It is the responsibility of government



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## 1 The commitment to human rights

The focus of UK human rights legislation has been on political and civil rights such as the right to life and freedom of speech. These form the basis of our Human Rights Act.

The UK has also signed up to treaties that guarantee us economic, social and cultural rights. These include the right to adequate housing and social security. They are not, however, legally enforceable in Scotland or the UK.

We want a commitment to make such basic rights enforceable. Specifically, we want to see:
 

- rights we have agreed to be bound by embedded in legislation so that they can be upheld in our courts
- full acceptance of the European Social Charter, which includes economic, social and cultural rights.



Glasgow © Getty Images

## 2 The reality of human rights

Amnesty has demonstrated over the past 50 years that by shining a light on human rights abuses we can prevent them occurring, end them, or provide redress for them.

As a signatory to the core international human rights treaties, those who govern Scotland must use their international standing to highlight and address human rights abuses.

We want to see government:
 

- speaking out where evidence exists of a state's serious failure to respect, protect or fulfil human rights – regardless of the economic impact
- demonstrating leadership in advancing human rights on the international stage
- providing support to states, their activists and NGOs, who are pursuing human rights through peaceful activism.



Syria © AP

## 3 The world of human rights

Globalisation has changed the world we live in, with companies that operate internationally gaining unprecedented power and influence in the world economy. Such companies can cause harm by directly abusing human rights, or by colluding with others who violate human rights.

In response to this challenge, the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council adopted the Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights. These aim to ensure business plays its part in the promotion of human rights.

We want to see:
 

- the UN's 'Protect, Respect and Remedy' framework fully adopted by government
- Scottish companies, and those with a significant presence in Scotland, encouraged to embrace human rights in their business operations.



Migrant workers, Qatar © AI

## 4 The business of human rights

Amnesty International believes that the following four issues must be addressed during the referendum debate:

# THE RIGHTS REFERENDUM

The Scottish Independence Referendum on 18 September 2014 is a unique and significant event. It offers an important opportunity to consider Scotland's future and the role human rights will play in it.

The independence debate has so far focused primarily on economic and financial issues. While these are important, more fundamental issues such as our entitlements and freedoms have been overlooked. Our human rights deserve more careful consideration in the face of such an important decision.

# THE RIGHTS REFERENDUM



### RAISING RIGHTS

The most powerful action you can take is to ask questions at every opportunity. The more our politicians and other campaigners in the referendum debate are asked questions about human rights, the higher up their agenda our priorities become. There will be many opportunities to ask questions in the coming months.

### TAKE ACTION

- Contact your MSPs and MPs to tell them that Scotland stands for human rights. You can find their contact details on our campaign pages at [www.amnesty.org.uk/scotland](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/scotland)
- Go along to referendum events, ask those taking part to be photographed with the *Scotland Stands for Human Rights* message and send us the picture.
- Invite representatives from *Yes* and *Better Together* to speak at one of your meetings. It's important that you invite speakers from both sides of the debate to ensure we are recognised as being impartial.

- Organise an Amnesty referendum event. We'll help coordinate dates and give you guidance; just contact the Scotland office.
- Keep this leaflet handy for campaigners who come to your door.
- Display the *Scotland Stands for Human Rights* message in your window.

### INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Visit our website or call the Amnesty office for:
 

- More copies of this leaflet
- Details of how to get a copy of Amnesty's publication, *The Rights Referendum*
- A referendum pack for member groups

### ABOUT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International is a movement of ordinary people from across the world standing up for humanity and human rights. Our purpose is to protect individuals wherever justice, fairness, freedom and truth are denied.

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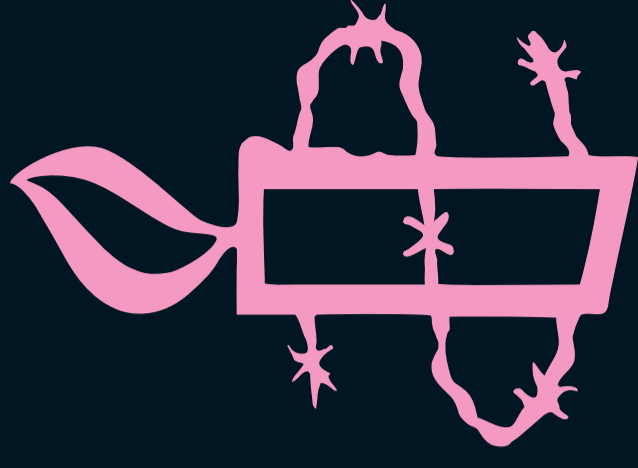


# THE RIGHTS REFERENDUM

## Scottish Independence Referendum 2014

Amnesty International

# SCOTTLAND STANDS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



Amnesty International