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Amnesty International Hillingdon Group Newsletter No 135. Sep-Oct 2014

Diary - *indicates local event

***Mon 22 September.** 7:45 for 8pm Group Meeting, Quaker Meeting Hall, Belmont Road, Uxbridge.

1 Oct World Teachers' Day event, HRAC – details below

***11 October** Street Collection – please email Amnestyhillingdon@hotmail.co.uk, contact Kate, or sign up at a group meeting if you can help with this vital fundraising activity.

18 October 7:30pm Harrow Against Trafficking. Chocolate, Cheese and Wine fundraising event. £8/£5 Christchurch Roxeth Hall. HA2 0JN. Booking/info: Natalia 07773 257024 / Annette 07523 479966.

25 Oct Embassy Crawl, London. For details contact Jon on 07810 811 675 or read here: http://www.amnesty.org.uk/events/london-embassy-crawl?field_event_type_value_many_to_one=All&field_event_description_value=torture

Autumn Meeting Dates: Mon 22 Sep, Mon 27 Oct, Mon 24 Nov.

The Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado remains under threat of violence. Please do continue to write to the relevant authorities.

Women's Rights in Afghanistan: Thank you to Carolyn for arranging a very suitable venue (Dance studio, Ruislip Manor library) for the recent scripted reading event. "Even if we lose our Lives" is based on the testimonies of three Afghan women (including Parwin, below), who bravely persist with their work to improve the lives of Afghan women despite considerable personal danger and loss. Thank you to Christine Usher, the Afghanistan Country Coordinator for Amnesty, for travelling from Central London to attend. A few of us took part in a photo action – with another opportunity at the group meeting 22 September. I recently read the following article about "Kabul's only female graffiti artist": <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/afghan-graffiti-artist-shamsia-hassani-shortlisted-for-artraker-award--but-she-still-has-to-dodge-landmines-to-create-her-work-9732248.html?origin=internalSearch>

World Teachers' Day Event: Wednesday 1 October 6-9pm. The Human Rights Action Centre 17-25 New Inn Yard, London EC2A 3EA

Keynote Speaker: Parwin Wafa, an Afghan headteacher who has been threatened and suffered the kidnapping and brutal murder of her son after she opened a school for girls in eastern Afghanistan. Other speakers are Kate Allen, director of Amnesty International UK, Christine Blower, general secretary of the NUT, and Craig McVicar, Quintin Kynaston School, London.

A panel discussion and Q&A will be followed by an informal reception with refreshments, stalls from Afghan, teaching and human rights organisations, and an action centre where you can show solidarity with Afghan women, support workers' rights, and unite for quality education. This is a free event. Please book online at www.2014wtd.eventbrite.co.uk

Thank you to Sally for hosting the **Garden party** in July. It was a very pleasant get together (and seems such a long time ago!).

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Thank you to Les for organising a stall at the **Hayes Carnival** and for everyone who helped on the day, baked and bought.

Sponsored walk. Thank you to Les for organising a very successful, enjoyable and informative sponsored walk. A leisurely stroll through the Norman Leddy gardens and Barra Hall Park took us to the Fountain House Hotel, where George Orwell taught. We were delighted and privileged to meet Jeffrey, one of “Mr Blair’s” pupils. We were grateful for the warm hospitality of the Ali family, who provided very welcome refreshments and snacks, which we enjoyed while Les gave an interesting and enjoyable talk about George Orwell. The event was a very useful fundraiser and gained some local online publicity.

Keith Vickery We were saddened to learn of the death this summer of group member Keith Vickery. Keith was an active group member from the start (1987). I can remember several enjoyable, successful sponsored walks, which were always meticulously planned and took us through beautiful local countryside.

Helen Bamber died last month. She devoted much of her life to the campaign against torture and the care of victims of torture. She founded the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture, which since its foundation has helped more than 50000 people from around the world. Online obituary: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/11051540/Helen-Bamber-obituary.html>

Stop Torture Torture should have no place in the 21st century, but sadly it is still practiced in many countries. Please follow the link to sign the petition about torture in Nigeria: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/actions/nigeria-stop-medieval-witch-hunt?from=issues>

Festive AmnesTEA Currently, wherever you go there is a Macmillan coffee morning. The Amnesty International equivalent is AmnesTEA, which is not tied to any specific time of year. It would be great to have a festive fundraising event November/December (perhaps close to Human Rights Day, 10 Dec). Please consider whether this is something you could help organise, or if you know a suitable venue. Organisers do not have to be bakers.

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Secretary	Janet Tyas, 16 North Way, Uxbridge UB10 9NG 01895 251566
AIUK Headquarters New look website	17-25 New Inn Yard, London EC2A 3EY (Human Rights Action Centre, aka HRAC) http://www.amnesty.org.uk

Items for the next newsletter to (Amnestyhillington@hotmail.co.uk) by early Nov.