



## THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GROUP NEWSLETTER

### Forthcoming Brighton and Hove Amnesty Group Meetings/Events

#### 6th September

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 October and November meeting**

#### 4th October 2012 1st November 2012

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

#### 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:

#### 19th September

Contact Jill 01273 621697

Monthly Lanes Collection  
Contact Catherine : 07828 584430 to volunteer

Monthly Stall in Sydney St  
**1st September 2012**  
Contact Jill 01273 621697 to volunteer

Annual Street Collection  
**22nd September 2012** (Hove 10am to 1pm)  
**29th September 2012** (Brighton 2pm to 5pm)  
Volunteers needed  
Contact Emma 01273 232397  
Or Catherine 07828 584430

#### 9th December 2012

Letter Writing Vigil  
Friends Meeting House

## Volunteers Needed



We need as many volunteers as possible for our **annual street collection** on 22nd September (Hove) and 29th September 2012 (Brighton).

Please contact **Catherine** who is organising the rota if you are able to collect for an hour to help raise funds for Amnesty International's vital work. Money raised goes to help in researching into human rights abuses and campaigning at national and international levels. Locally funds are used for campaigning and local awareness raising.

Any time you can give to collect will be gratefully received.

Thank you

**Catherine** email: crforman@hotmail.co.uk  
Phone: 07828 584430

## Monthly Stall

### HAKAMADA IWAO

Freya and Celia had a stall last Saturday to yet again campaign on Hakamada Iwao's behalf against his inhuman prison sentence. He has been on death row for 43 years, convicted on the basis of a confession extracted under torture. He has been held in solitary confinement for many years and has mental health problems resulting from the many years he has been on death row, compounded in Japan as the sentenced person does not know when he will be executed until the actual day it is carried out. One of the judges who originally sentenced him, now says he believes that Hakamada is innocent. You can find further action on this case on the Amnesty website.

### JUSTICE FOR NOXOLO

On Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> September from 11am we will be having a stall outside the Amnesty bookshop to celebrate **Pride**, and to call for **Justice for Noxolo**. Noxolo Nogwaza, a 24 year old lesbian, was murdered in April 2011 in her home town of KwaThema, South Africa. Before she was killed, she was raped, repeatedly beaten and stabbed. It is believed that she was killed because of her sexual orientation.

**Noxolo** was a human rights defender and campaigned for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex rights (**LGBT**) rights. Her murder remains unsolved. Her killers have not been brought to justice.

Find out more and join Amnesty's LBGTI network at [www.amnesty.org.uk/lgbt](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/lgbt)

## **FORCED EVICTIONS Campaign Update September 2012**

### **Thousands forcibly evicted in Port Harcourt.**

Many Amnesty supporters will be familiar with the Port Harcourt Waterfront Residents of Nigeria. This beleaguered community has featured in both Urgent Actions and in Amnesty's annual Greeting Card Campaign.

Hundreds of residents of Port Harcourt narrowly avoided eviction in February of this year after pressure from the community, local NGOs and Amnesty International. However, there was no such reprieve in June when an estimated **10,000 – 20,000 people in Abonnema Wharf in Port Harcourt were forcibly evicted** by the Nigerian River State authorities. Many of these people have since been left homeless, thus leaving them vulnerable to further human rights violations.

Information regarding the forthcoming eviction was imprecise and misleading. This resulted in many residents not having time to collect their belongings. Consequently they have lost their possessions along with their homes. There was no offer of alternative housing or even emergency shelter. The situation was made even more difficult as the demolitions took place during the rainy season when it is hard to move around and find alternative accommodation.



Amnesty International and Nigerian civil society organi-

sations met with the commissioner of urban development in July 2012 to condemn the demolitions and call for a stop to all upcoming demolitions. The organisation will continue to campaign on their behalf through other means.  
Freya Lyte

## **Amnesty International's Auction of Promises!**



Brighton and Hove Amnesty International is hosting an Auction of Promises. Unique donations of time, skills or items will be up for grabs in a silent auction to be held throughout September and October. The final winners to be announced at our annual Amnes-Tea party on **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October, 3pm – 6pm\***, at the **Phoenix Community Centre**.

All money raised will go to support the valuable work of Amnesty International: standing up for the human rights of individuals everywhere.

From language lessons to guided walks, art work, yummy food or craft sessions, this Auction is set to be pretty special and there's bound to be something for everyone.

Have you got something unique to offer that money can't buy? Why not donate a promise to our Auction and help support Amnesty's work? Deadline for offers is **10th September 2012**.

A complete list of promises will be included in October's newsletter along with details on how to place a bid on a promise.

Contact: Catherine on 07828584430 or crforman@hotmail.co.uk to make a promise or find out more.

## **ACTION: URGE UK TO CALL FOR RELEASE OF BAHRANI PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE**



*Nabeel Rajab with his family*

On 16<sup>th</sup> August the Bahraini human rights activist Nabeel Rajab was sentenced to 3 years in prison for attending an 'illegal demonstration'. He is already serving a 3 month sentence for posting anti-government comments on the social networking site Twitter. Amnesty International has identified Nabeel as a prisoner of conscience, along with 9 medical workers and 13 opposition activists – and called for all Bahraini prisoners of conscience to be released immediately and unconditionally.

Amnesty's Middle East and North Africa Deputy Programme Director, HassibaHadjSahraoui, said: "The charade of justice has gone on too long in Bahrain, and all prisoners of conscience must be set free immediately and unconditionally... All convictions against them should be quashed."

The UK Foreign Office spokesperson responded to Nabeel Rajab's 3 year sentencing: "We are concerned at the length of sentence handed down to Mr Nabeel Rajab for charges relating to comments made on social networking sites and for incitement of illegal ral-

lies. We urge the Bahraini Government to act proportionately in all cases. The right of individuals to peaceful protest and freedom of expression is a fundamental part of any modern democracy and must be respected. But we expect opposition activists to ensure their words and actions do not incite violence or other illegal acts."

We welcome the Foreign Office's concern, however this does not go far enough. Please urge Foreign Secretary William Hague to call for Nabeel Rajab and all other Bahraini prisoners of conscience to be released immediately and unconditionally. Please write to:

Rt Hon William Hague MP  
House of Commons,  
London, SW1A 0AA

## Take Action

Please sign the enclosed letters.



### Omar Khadr—Guantanamo Bay

The Canadian government has been delaying the repatriation of Omar Khadr. Three weeks ago, Public Safety Minister Vic Toews requested tapes of mental health assessments to be handed over before a decision is made. Please sign the enclosed letter asking the Canadian government to follow through with their original agreement to ensure Omar Khadr's return.

### Talha Ahsan

Talha Ahsan is a British citizen born in London in 1979. He was educated at Dulwich College before receiving first class honours in Arabic from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). Talha has Asperger Syndrome. In a medico legal report of June 2009, consultant psychiatrist DrQuinton Deeley described him as "an extremely vulnerable individual who from a psychiatricperspective would be more appropriately placed in a specialist service for adults with autisticdisorders."

TalhaAhsan was arrested at his home on 19 July 2006 in response to a request from the USA under the Extradition Act 2003 which does not require the presentation of any prima facie evidence. He is accused in the US of terrorism-related offences arising out of an alleged involvement over the period of 1997-2004 with a series of websites, one of which happened to be located on a server in America.

He has never been arrested or questioned by British police. Talha is currently making a final appeal to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). He has now served the equivalent of a 12 year sentence at high security prisons without trial. He has never visited America. He denies all charges.

Please send the enclosed letter to your mp asking that they support the Talha's request for freedom or a fair trial in the UK. There is a legal basis to try his charges in this country. The Home Secretary should also give special consideration to his medical condition.

## **BRIGHTON AND HOVE AMNESTY GROUP CONTACTS**

**Chair** – Emma [brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com](mailto:brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com) Tel: 01273 232397

**New Member Secretary:** Sue Tel: 07790 755921

**Mail Secretary:** Liz Tel: 07598 467568

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**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](mailto:brightonandhoveai@googlemail.com)

**Lanes collection organiser:** - Catherine 07828 584430

**Web Site co-ordinator:** Michael Fisher - [michaelowenfisher@hotmail.com](mailto:michaelowenfisher@hotmail.com)

**Amnesty Stalls co-ordinator**—Jill Francis—01273 621697

### **Campaign Co-ordinators:**

**Prisoner of Conscience** – Jill Francis—[jrfrancis@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jrfrancis@hotmail.co.uk)

**Death Penalty**— Ester Zanetti —[esterfederica@gmail.com](mailto:esterfederica@gmail.com)

**Control Arms; securing the Arms Trade Treaty** —Luke Beale—[lukebeale@hotmail.com](mailto:lukebeale@hotmail.com)

**End Forced Evictions: Poverty and Human Rights**—Freya – [freya\\_lyte@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:freya_lyte@hotmail.co.uk)

**Middle East and North Africa (MENA)** - Caroline—[carolineoreilly@scola.ac.uk](mailto:carolineoreilly@scola.ac.uk)

**Security and Human Rights**—Michael and Jess—[michaelowenfisher@hotmail.com](mailto:michaelowenfisher@hotmail.com)

**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)

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

