

# THE BIG AMNESTY SKILL SHARE



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## EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGNING

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# COUNTRY CAMPAIGNING

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Amnesty International campaigns for human rights in all world regions. Country campaigns are led by our team of volunteer Country Coordinators. Local groups can opt in to campaign on any of these world regions, with a range of support available from the coordinators.

### WHO ARE THE COUNTRY COORDINATORS?

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The coordinators are active Amnesty members who volunteer to advise and support groups with their work on country campaigns and the cases of individuals in those countries.

They have an in-depth understanding of the human rights issues affecting that area and keep up to date with research and Amnesty reports.

Coordinators are supported by the Coordinator Steering Committee. They work in regional teams and provide coverage for all countries in a region, including those with less status within current AIUK campaigning.

The regional teams link with researchers and campaigners at the International Secretariat in order to get access to information and actions which they can send to groups who have opted-in to their region.

Coordinators also work with other key staff at AIUK, in particular the Individuals at Risk team, and the Media and Parliamentary teams.



### WORLD REGIONS

**Central America**

**North America and Caribbean**

**South America**

**Europe**

**Former Soviet Union**

**China and East Asia**

**Indochina and South East Asia**

**South Asia**

**Middle East and Gulf**

**North Africa**

**West and Central Africa**

**Horn and East Africa**

**Southern Africa**

# EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGNING

## COORDINATORS CAN SUPPORT GROUPS IN THEIR COUNTRY CAMPAIGNING IN A RANGE OF WAYS – AND IT'S ALL FREE.

► They can **provide information** on your country or region, including **specific actions** – general letter-writing actions, **urgent actions**, birthday cards and creative solidarity actions.

The Former Soviet Union regional team recently produced a special postcard action for Sergei Gurgurov. Sergei had been left disabled after being tortured while in police detention. He was arrested on suspicion of stealing a mobile phone.



► Many coordinators have a variety of additional materials that they can lend out to groups, eg a **photo display** for an exhibition, a **DVD** to play at a meeting, or a **banner** to hang at your stall.

The Southern Africa team have several DVDs and audio tapes on the situation in Zimbabwe. Some can be downloaded directly from the AIUK website [www.amnesty.org.uk/countries](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/countries)



► Coordinators keep in touch with all groups who have opted-in to their region. This means they can **link your group up with others** working on the same country for more impact and exchange of ideas and materials.

Tunisia Coordinator Bev Foulkes-Jones ensures she's linked up at the 2009 AGM.

► If you are having an event on a particular country or region, invite the relevant coordinator along. They can advise on actions, give a short talk and may even bring along their own banner.

Burma Coordinator Tony Fairman (far right) leads a protest outside the Embassy of the Union of Myanmar with members of the Dorking group, the London Burmese community and PoCs on the banner.



► If you hold a **vigil** or would like to organise an **embassy visit**, the relevant coordinator will be able to advise you on how to do it.

Activists in Edinburgh recently

took part in a global protest for Dr Binayak Sen in India. He has spent two years in prison on trumped up charges aimed at stopping his human rights work.

# EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGNING

## INVITE A COORDINATOR TO SPEAK AT YOUR GROUP MEETING

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Many coordinators are willing to come along to a group meeting and give a talk on their particular country or region. This is a great way of motivating your group to get involved with country campaigning. It's also really useful for coordinators to find out what groups are doing and how they can support them.

For a copy of the coordinators speaker list contact the activism team – or download details from the website (see below).

**JON GILES IS COUNTRY COORDINATOR FOR MOROCCO AND WESTERN SAHARA. HE REVEALS HOW HE FELT DURING HIS FIRST TALK TO A LOCAL GROUP.**

'I had been a coordinator for slightly over a year when I did my first talk to a local group. I tried to keep calm – after a year in the role I thought I was familiar enough with Morocco and Western Sahara to know what I was talking about.

I was joined by my fellow coordinator, Andrea (who works on Algeria), and we boarded the train to Reading. While I was to deliver my first talk, this was Andrea's umpteenth (though he protested that this was his first in English). By now I was terribly nervous, but told myself I had faced bigger challenges in the past.

I was right. The talk went well, with a good mix of visuals and spoken word. It was rewarding to meet the people who form the mainstay of Amnesty International – I was amazed at how much work they do – and experience the supportive atmosphere of the local group.'



## MAKE USE OF THE COUNTRY PAGES ON THE WEBSITE

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The Amnesty website is a great resource for extra country information and actions. Go to **[www.amnesty.org.uk/countries](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/countries)** and browse by world region.

You can also find contact details for country coordinators on the website. To do this you will have to sign in as a local group member to My Amnesty. If you have not got a My Amnesty password already then it's easy to register.

- Go to **[amnesty.org.uk](http://amnesty.org.uk)**
- Click 'Register' on the right hand side of the screen
- Complete your personal details and click 'Sign up'
- Click the link in the confirmation email
- Click 'Edit profile' and then 'Edit you and Amnesty'
- Check the box 'Are you a member of a local group', choose your group and enter the password l0calac7ion (note the first character is a lower-case L and second character is a zero)
- Click save, and return to the homepage
- You should now see a tab called 'My Resources' in the top menu bar

Click on the 'My Resources' tab. You will see listed 'Regional Coordinator team contacts' on the left panel. Now you can get in touch with any of the coordinators directly. You can also see which country positions are vacant in case you'd like to take on the role yourself.



# EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGNING

## GETTING INVOLVED WITH COUNTRY CAMPAIGNING

**IT'S EASY.** You can either sign up at the beginning of the year when you receive the group planning pack, or at any time of the year by contacting the activism team.

Once signed up you will automatically be added to the coordinators contact list and will periodically be sent news, casework, actions and reports. You can unsubscribe from a region at any time by contacting the activism team.

**While coordinators see their main role as supporting the country campaigning work of local groups, many are also active in other ways...**

- Meetings with activists
- Leading workshops at conferences
- Organising conferences, eg world region events or thematic conferences around a key issue such as 'Counter Terror with Justice'
- Organising events such as demonstrations, vigils and speaker events
- Designing regional campaign plans
- Translations/interpreting
- Campaign actions



Coordinators stall at the 2009 AGM in Swansea



**BÁRBARA ITALIA MÉNDEZ** was beaten, threatened and raped by police officers in May 2006. She had travelled to the town of San Salvador Atenco to show solidarity with the community after hearing reports of police violently breaking up protests.

She was one of at least 26 women who reported being physically and sexually abused that day, and still wait for justice. The women of Atenco have chosen the mariposa (butterfly) to represent their cause. Activists were asked to send giant butterfly cards to the Mexican authorities.

**EBRIMA MANNEH** has been held incommunicado since July 2006 for downloading a BBC article critical of the Gambian government. Activists were asked to take photos of their group holding a 'Where is Ebrima?' message and send it to the Individuals at Risk team.



**And don't forget to let coordinators know about your country campaigning work.**