Template press release

**XXXXX Amnesty International group**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: xx xx MARCH 2015**

**XXXXXX CAMPAIGNERS TO HOLD VIGIL MARKING FOUR YEARS OF SYRIA UPRISING**

**‘Syria is the world’s worst humanitarian crisis’ - [group rep]**

Members of the **XXXX** Amnesty International group are holding a vigil for Syria on 15 March [**or nearest convenient date for your group]** as part of a series of global solidarity actions with the people of Syria four years since the uprising began in the country in March 2011.

The vigil - to be held by the **XX monument** in **Our Town’s central square** at **XX**pm - is part of a string of similar events around the country and around the world organised by a coalition of human rights and humanitarian organisations, including Amnesty, Oxfam, Save the Children and Christian Aid.

The vigils - which will be held with a #withSyria theme, call on world leaders to:

\*Boost the humanitarian response - fully fund the aid response and ensure refugees seeking safety find asylum, including through increased resettlement for the most vulnerable (with millions of Syrians now refugees Amnesty has called for the UK to take several thousand of the most vulnerable refugees)

\*Stop attacks on civilians - send an unequivocal message to parties to the conflict that attacks on civilians and blocks to aid will not be tolerated

\*Prioritise a political solution with human rights at the heart, recognising that an end to the suffering can only be achieved if negotiations - whether local or international - include safeguards to ensure respect for international humanitarian and human rights law

Amnesty is pressing for increased humanitarian aid to be delivered into Syria, especially for those besieged by Syrian government or armed opposition group forces.

**XXXX** Amnesty’s vigil has been organised by **XX resident XXXX**, the group’s chair. S/he said:

“Syria is the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.

“Our vigil is a matter of people in XX saying ‘we haven’t forgotten, we’re still trying to help and we’re standing in solidarity with the people of Syria’.

“We need to see the world powers - especially Russia, a key country in this crisis - coming together and demanding increased access for humanitarian aid especially into besieged and hard-to-reach areas of Syria.

“It’s really important to mark this four-year point since the uprising began. We desperately need to see this terrible crisis resolved.”

The vigil is a public event and is open to all local people, who are warmly encouraged to attend.

Note to editors

**XXXXX** Amnesty activists will congregate by the **XX monument** between 6.30-7.00pm on **XXXX XX** March. There will be an opportunity for photographs and interviews with activists.

Background

[If relevant]: Add in a short paragraph or two about any notable activity your group may already have carried out on Syria, especially if it involved any public work - demos etc - in your area, or anything that you may have coming up. Additionally, add in a line about your group’s next meeting.

**ENDS**

Media contacts:

**[Add in XXXXX Amnesty’s media contact details, including a mobile number]**