

Thursday 14th March 2018

Minutes

Apologies: MDS, LS, CA

Attendees: FL, VJ, CC, MA, LL, CC, CCR, MR, JC, MS, MDC, DP, JG, MH, RB, AL

Most usual meeting business (e.g. treasurer's and secretary's reports) was postponed until next month due to a busy meeting this month with our two speakers

Upcoming events

Wednesday 20th June, 11am – 12pm - World Refugee Day in George Square. More information <https://www.facebook.com/events/182879805705079/>

Tuesday 26th June – Sink the Glasgow Arms Fair coalition demo @ the SEC 10am – 12pm (plus other related events over this week) For more information contact Kate and Robin at CAAT Edinburgh caatedinburgh@live.com

Wednesday 27th June, 7.30pm – Letter writing evening @ AL's (0/1, 11 Elie Street, Glasgow)

Tuesday 3rd July, 5.30pm – Banner-making for Pride @ FL's (2/1, 18 Battlefield Gardens, Glasgow)

Friday 13th July – Trump rally

Message to Local Amnesty groups from AIUK:

Donald Trump is visiting the UK on Friday 13 July. In the 16 months of his presidency, there has been a deeply disturbing human rights roll-back **including the discriminatory travel ban and harmful policies on refugees, women's rights and climate change.**

Since moving into the White House, Mr Trump has shown an impatience bordering on intolerance toward peaceful protests, the media and even the democratic process itself.

His visit to Britain is an important opportunity to highlight this human rights roll back and underline the importance of free speech and the right to protest.

We know that Trump has booked out Turnberry, one of his Scottish golf courses, so it is quite likely he will be in Scotland. Amnesty is part of a large coalition that is organising a protest in [Glasgow on Friday 13 July](#) and a rally in [Edinburgh on Saturday 14 July](#).

Saturday 14th – Sunday 15th July – Pride weekend (Glasgow Pride and Free Pride) – we're looking for volunteers to participate in the parade and our stall/s.

Saturday 13th October – Amnesty Scotland Conference

Monday 28th January 2018 – Comedy night fundraiser at the Stand

Guest speakers: Martin and Cathy

The theme of Martin's talk was the environmental situation in the West Bank. Last year, he spent some time with the olive farmers there, assisting with the olive harvest. He shared his experiences and observations with us.

Martin drew our attention to the following links:

- The UN OCHA OPT document (which the organisation he volunteered with feeds information into) can be found here: <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/fragmented-lives-humanitarian-overview-2016>. The 2017 document is still not out yet, publication unknown but usually 14 months .
- The Harvest trip can be applied for and the concept explored on the Zeytoun website, here: http://www.zeytoun.org/visit_palestine.html (The "harvest tour" is NOT the same thing).

After the meeting, Martin also wanted to share the following corrections/ clarifications:

I need to correct something I said: I had said there were very few younger guys who could help with the harvests due to them being overseas and studying and working in the rest of the world; while this is true, I had completely forgotten that of course many of the employed young men of Palestine are employed within Israel or within settlements and so would not be able to get time off for family harvests!

Also the man who spoke to us whose name had escaped me was Hagai El-Ad, Director of the B'Tselem Israeli Human Rights group and a leading advocate of Israel conforming to international laws.

Cathy is an Amnesty trainer and member of the Edinburgh Portobello Amnesty group. She was invited to talk to the group about Amnesty's 'Ban Settlement Goods Campaign'. Her talk covered a brief history of the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), the UK's legal responsibilities, the human rights affected by the settlements, the role of businesses in supporting the settlements and the actions we can take as individuals or as a group. Cathy expressed her optimism about and enthusiasm for this Amnesty campaign as it involves concrete action we can take.

Cathy drew our attention to the following videos and documents:

- Fifty years of Occupation: fifty years of human right violations (Amnesty product code OPT001)
- Think Twice: the human rights risk of doing business with Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (Amnesty product code IOTP008)
- Fifty years too many video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UBtZlkip5FE>
- UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Progress report - <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G18/021/93/PDF/G1802193.pdf?OpenElement>
- <http://www.alhaq.org/publications/Business%20and%20Human%20Rights%20Booklet.pdf>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/28/un-human-rights-warning-letter-firms-palestine-territories-occupied-israel>

Cathy suggested that we consider the following actions:

- Sign the Amnesty postcard to Ban Settlement Goods
- Sign online petition - <http://50yearstoomany.uk/#group-take-action-ino1DTs4Pg>

- Campaign for Issa Amro and Farid al Atrash, human rights defenders in Palestine - <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/drop-charges-against-palestine-human-rights-defenders-israel>
- Write a personal letter to Boris Johnson, Foreign Secretary, explaining why you want action to ban settlement goods and to have legislation to prevent British companies operating in settlements or trading in settlement goods
- Discuss the Occupied Palestinian Territories with family, friends and other networks you operate in to help understanding of the issues
- Run a stall

Urgent actions

Thanks to MR for providing the urgent actions.

[Urgent Action: Environmental activist imprisoned in Cuba](#)

Dr Ariel Ruiz Urquiola, an environmental activist, was sentenced in Cuba to one-year imprisonment for contempt.

[Urgent Action: Indigenous people threatened and displaced in Colombia](#)

Over 200 indigenous Nasa Embera Chamí are currently displaced following an armed attack on a member of their community.

Next meeting: Thursday 12th July

July's meeting is Pride themed.

We will go through the logistics of the parade and our two stalls. Paul from the Amnesty office will also be popping in to talk about the key cases for this year. After the break, there will be chance to get involved with banner making and letter writing.