

April 2020 Minutes



Glasgow West Amnesty International

Attendees: FL, CC, MDS, CL, MR, RT, JGe, KM

Amnesty Lockdown Videoconferences

We held our meeting via videoconference, following on from the weekly Amnesty videoconference organised by our regional rep and Glasgow West member, Malcolm.

The programme for these weekly lockdown videoconferences is as follows:

Thur 9th Apr: Human rights in North Africa with Jackie Fry, Amnesty's Country Co-ordinator for Libya and Algeria

Thur 16th Apr: Brave (Human Rights Defenders) Campaign with Sara Rydkvist, Brave Campaign Manager, AIUK

Thur 23rd Apr: Human Rights in Israel & the Occupied Palestinian Territories with Peter Frankental, AIUK's Economic Affairs Programme Director and Garry Ertle, AIUK's Country Coordinator for Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Thur 30th Apr: Children's Human Rights with Anna Warren, Children's Human Rights Network Committee Member, AIUK

Thur 7th Apr: In discussion with Kate Allen, Director, AIUK

Thur 14th Apr: I Welcome with Tom Davies, the AIUK Campaign Manager for the I Welcome Refugees campaign.

Mal will continue to organise these sessions for as long as the strict lockdown measures continue in Scotland. For information on how to attend please email Mal at malcolm.dingwall-smith@amnesty.org.uk. You can connect using your laptop, tablet, smart phone or call in using a mobile or landline.

Secretary's Report (FL)

Local Group Briefing

Amnesty UK is suggesting Amnesty groups get involved with the following activities at the moment:

- Send messages of solidarity (e.g. Write a message of solidarity with essential workers on social media, using hashtags for your area for example: "A huge thanks to all the supermarket staff in #York for all your hard work in these challenging times. We are with you #coronacrisis", write a letter, or letters, to essential workers in your community, or draw a picture, and post a photo of them on social media, again using the appropriate hashtags and tagging relevant Twitter or Instagram accounts, or design a poster thanking essential workers to put up in your window for neighbours and people passing by to see.
- Send a letter to your local paper calling for emergency support for all migrant victims of domestic violence, suggested wording available here - [on the AIUK website](#)
- Take Action for journalist Darvinson Rojas - On 21 March 2020, journalist Darvinson Rojas was arrested by the Special Action Forces (FAES) of the National Police (PNB), in an apparent attempt to silence his reporting on the spread of COVID-19 in Venezuela. Darvinson live-tweeted when officers came to his house in Caracas claiming there was a "COVID-19 case" and took him in for questioning. There is no evidence of this being the case, nor would it justify his arrest, detention and prosecution. Darvinson is in FAES' custody, who have an appalling record of committing grave human rights violations. Amnesty demand his immediate and unconditional release. Take action here - [via the AIUK website](#)
- Take Action for Azza Soliman - Azza Soliman is a women's rights defender who has been persecuted by the Egyptian government for almost 30 years. Her crime? Simply fighting for the basic human rights of Egyptian women. She faces years in prison on dubious charges. Her freedom is severely limited by an asset freeze and travel ban. Tell President al-Sisi that he must drop these charges and restore Azza's freedom immediately - [take action online here](#)

- Even more ideas of how to keep busy as an Amnesty activist here - [on the AIUK website](#)

Reminder that the June AGM is cancelled. The Board will review the situation in May and make a decision about whether it will be possible to hold a slimmed-down AGM later this year.

Europe Must Act (CL)

CL talked to us about the Europe Must Act Campaign which she has recently become involved in. Europe Must Act is demanding a change to EU refugee policies. It was originally started by grassroots NGOs working with refugees in the Greek islands. They are demanding this change on the highest European level. The campaign's key goals are:

- To immediately decongest the Aegean Islands through fair relocation across Member States
- To replace the EU-Turkey Agreement with a fair and humane EU policy on migration
- To advocate for dignified and legal conditions of reception across Europe

There are lots of ways to get involved, starting with:

1. Follow Europe Must Act on social media - [on Facebook](#), [the Glasgow EMA](#), [on Twitter](#), and [on Instagram](#)
2. Sign the petition asking Glasgow officials to pledge to take in refugees from the Greek islands - [here](#).

CL has agreed to keep the group updated with the campaign.

Virtual Pub Quiz (Events group)

We are planning a virtual pub quiz with other Amnesty groups.

Trial run to test the technology, format, etc. - Sunday 19th April, 8pm

Real thing! - Sunday 26th April, 7.30pm.

Urgent Actions

Keep checking the Urgent Actions sites for actions you can take from your home - <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/urgent-actions>

Next meeting

Thursday 14th May – this will also be via WebEx. Please contact Mal at malcolm.dingwall-smith@amnesty.org.uk for joining instructions. The meeting will follow on from the weekly Amnesty videoconference which runs from 6.30 to 7.30pm.