

November 2020 Minutes



Glasgow West Amnesty International

Attendees: JG, MDS, FL, MR, CA, CL, KM

Apologies: CC

Write for Rights 2020

Our group's activities:

- Nov and Dec: 10 Weeks of W4R on our social media feeds - we'll introduce followers to one case per week and explain how to easily take action
- Thurs 10th Dec: Collaboration with Amnesty Scotland Online Activism group
- Sat 12th Dec: Write for Rights workshop with Interfaith Glasgow's Weekend Club
- Jan 2021: Write for Rights at MILK cafe

You can follow our social media pages:

- Facebook - [@glasgowwestamnesty](#)
- Twitter - [@AmnestyGlasWest](#)
- Instagram - [@glasgowwestamnesty](#)

for updates on all of the above.

Please email mail@glasgowwestamnesty.org.uk for details or to volunteer to help out. We're especially looking for volunteers with the online workshop on the 12th December.

The Write for Rights materials are available online: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights> and <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-rights-2020-get-started>

Secretary's Report (FL)

Local Group Update

You can [read the latest Local Groups Update online here](#).

New Individual at Risk Case: Saudi Women Human Rights Defenders

Following the release of our previous adopted case, Ruben Gonzalez, the Glasgow West Amnesty Group now has a new case to campaign on. Our new case is that of the Saudi Women Human Rights Defenders. The overall campaign goal is to see the release of the women human rights defenders (WHRDs) and the dropping of all charges against them.

Case Summary

On 15 May 2018, a group of activists, including the country's leading women human rights defenders, who campaigned for the right to drive and the end of repressive guardianship laws, were arbitrarily arrested. For the first three months of their detention, at least ten of the activists, including several of the women, endured torture, sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment when they were held incommunicado and in solitary confinement with no access to their families or lawyers.

A year later, the Saudi authorities charged and tried the women for their human rights activism. At least two human rights defenders, detained in the same wave, remain to date without charge or trial. Following the first trial session in March 2019, several Saudi women activists were released on temporary and provisional basis (Iman al-Nafjan, Aziza al-Yousef, Amal al-Harbi, Dr. Ruqayyah al-Mharib, Shadan al-Anezi, Dr. Abir Namankni, and Dr. Hatoon al-Fassi and an anonymous activist). Five remain to this day in detention (Loujain al-Hathloul, Samar Badawi, Naseema al-Sada, Nouf Abdulaziz and Maya'a al-Zahrani) on charges related to their campaigning for women's rights.

Primary Objectives

1. Immediate and unconditional release of Loujain al-Hathloul, Samar Badawi, Naseema al-Sada, Nouf Abdulaziz and Maya'a al-Zahrani

2. Drop charges against all WHRDs and Saudi women activists, Iman al-Nafjan, Aziza al-Yousef, Amal al-Harbi, Dr. Ruqayyah al-Mharib, Shadan al-Anezi, Dr. Abir Namankni, and Dr. Hatoon al-Fassi and an anonymous activist on trial for their human rights work
3. Allow diplomats and journalists access to the trial sessions to ensure the right to fair trial

Take Action

BEFORE 21st November:

1. Write to the Embassy of Saudi Arabia King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud to grant clemency to women's rights activists (see template letter attached).
2. Have a Twitter account? Please re-tweet the following tweet from the Gulf section of Amnesty International:
<https://twitter.com/amnestygulf/status/1326194555662848002>
3. Email the UK Government urging them to use their platform at the G20 summit to make a public statement calling for the immediate and unconditional release of the Saudi Arabia's women's rights activists. You can use this easy online form:

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights/action/nassima?from=issue>

Throughout November and December:

Nassima al-Sada (one of the five currently in detention) is one of this year's Write for Rights cases. You can send Nassima's son a message of solidarity and send an appeal letter to King of Saudi Arabi to release Nassima al-Sada immediately and unconditionally.

[Details on page 13 of the W4R booklet available here.](#)

Ongoing:

Sign this petition: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2018/06/saudi-arabia-release-women-human-rights-defenders/>

Come along to our meetings, read our mailings or follow our social media to hear about future actions you can take.

Urgent Actions (MR)

Thank you to MR for sharing these urgent actions.

1. USA: THREE PEOPLE FACE FEDERAL EXECUTIONS

Two men and one woman convicted under USA federal law face execution in November and December 2020. After a hiatus of 17 years, the Trump administration resumed federal executions on 14 July 2020, putting to death seven men over ten weeks. Their cases reflected concerns on arbitrariness, racial bias and unfairness that have long affected the USA death penalty system, as well as contempt for international law restrictions on the use of the death penalty. We urge the US Attorney General to withdraw any pending death warrants and abandon any plans to pursue further executions.

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/urgent-actions/three-people-face-federal-executions>

2. AUSTRIAN-IRANIAN PRISONER AT RISK

Massud Mossaheb, a 73-year-old Austrian-Iranian dual national, is serving a 10-year prison term imposed after a grossly unfair trial for vague national security offences. He is being held in Tehran's Evin prison and has serious medical conditions, including heart failure and diabetes. He is at heightened risk of severe illness or death if he contracts COVID-19.

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/urgent-actions/austrian-iranian-prisoner-risk>

3. CRITICAL OPPORTUNITY TO LEGALIZE ABORTION

In March 2020, Argentina's President Alberto Fernandez publicly committed to present a bill to Congress to legalise abortion before the year's end. This commitment has still not been fulfilled as we quickly approach the end of Congress' current session on 30 November. After this date the possibilities of getting this vital bill approved will diminish significantly. We are therefore calling on the president to honour his word and meet Argentina's human rights obligations to respect, protect and fulfil women and girls' rights, life, health and autonomy by urgently presenting the bill to legalize abortion before the end of the year.

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/urgent-actions/critical-opportunity-legalize-abortion>

You can download the full PDF or click Take Action at the top of the page for a link to an email action.

Keep checking the Urgent Actions sites for actions you can take from your home:

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/urgent-actions>

Upcoming speakers

We will be starting off the new year with a couple of interesting speakers at our monthly meetings.

January 14th – Paul Dawson (Country Coordinator at AIUK with the Middle East and Gulf Team) will be talking to the group about our new case file and the human rights situation in general in Saudi Arabia.

February 11th – Lynnda Wardle (Programme Manager at Interfaith Glasgow). Interfaith Glasgow is a project which aims to support and develop positive engagement between people from diverse religion and belief backgrounds in Glasgow. She helps run the Weekend Club which aims to address the social isolation experienced by asylum seekers, refugees and new migrants in Glasgow.

AOB

Online Amnesty UK events:

Children’s Human Rights Festival -

Student Conference – For UK university students, including a range of dynamic panels, workshops and discussions on a range of Human Rights topics from Black Lives Matter to Climate change. Dates: 23- 29 November.

[Register on Eventbrite here.](#)

Amnesty LIVE! In Conversation with Donatella Rovera and Sascha Pare

Join Amnesty International UK in conversation with Donatella Rovera and UK student Sascha Pare. Donatella’s work as Amnesty International’s senior investigator on crisis response takes her to the world’s most dangerous and desperate areas. From armed violence in Syria and Libya to the conflicts in Gaza and Sudan, Rovera has reported on the serious human rights abuses that make headlines. Most recently Donatella’s research highlighted the UK Government’s failure to protect older people in care homes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Date: Thursday 26 November.

[Register online here.](#)

Write for Rights Online Event

Kate Allen (Director Amnesty International UK) will be going into conversation with Sena Atici (Individuals at Risk campaigns coordinator), and Geraldine Chacon, a Venezuelan activist who was featured in the Write for Rights campaign in 2018. Date: 2nd of December 2020. Time: 19:00 – 19:45.

[Register online here.](#)

Amnesty LIVE! Black Activism in the UK: From the Battle of Lewisham to Black Lives Matter

This Amnesty LIVE event will be in conversation with Sophie Kabangu, founder & leader of BLM Colchester, Tamika Green, board member of Bury St Edmunds for Black Lives and Trevor Sealy, who experienced the Battle of Lewisham in the 70s & brings a wealth of knowledge to the conversation. Join us to hear from them on impact of racism in the UK, their anti-racist activism covering the Battle of Lewisham in the 70s to today's Black Lives Matter movement in the UK. This conversation will be hosted by Amnesty UK's Human Rights Education Manager, Shoomi Chowdhury. Date: Wednesday 9 December.

[Register online here.](#)

Next meeting

Thursday 10th December – We'll be sharing our meeting with the Amnesty Scotland Online Activism Group with a special event for International Human Rights Day and Write for Rights. As always, joining instructions will be sent out ahead of time via our mailing list and social media. With all these calls there is the option to dial in from a landline or mobile if you don't have internet access. Any issues get in touch with Mal at malcolm.dingwall-smith@amnesty.org.uk