

November 2023 Updates



Glasgow West Amnesty International

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We warmly invite you to attend the next meeting of the AI Glasgow West Group. Please come and join in our lively and friendly discussions and help us make a positive difference to supporting Human Rights around the world.

This email includes:

- Details of our forthcoming November 2023 meeting
- An update from AI on the current situation within Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories
- A brief report on our Group's recent meeting with a AIUK country volunteer lead for Russia
- Excerpts from and a link to AIUK's most recent update for local AI groups
- Minutes of our local Group meeting held last month
- A note of our local Group's meeting dates for 2023

November 2023 Glasgow West AI Group Meeting

Thursday 9th November, Woodlands International Methodist Church, 7:30pm

The next Glasgow West Amnesty meeting takes place on **Thursday 9th November 2023 at 7.30pm – 9pm** in Woodlands International Church, Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LW. Further details on Facebook - <https://fb.me/e/24A3jSi3e>

We would love to see you there!

Our activities for the November meeting include:

- Guest Speaker - Daniel Gilius from Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND) will lead a discussion/workshop on Islamophobia Awareness;
- Planning the Glasgow AI local Groups' annual **'Write for Rights' event**, which will take place **on Sunday 10th December 2023 within Hillhead Library, Byres Road, Glasgow between 12pm – 5pm**; and
- Undertaking letter writing in response to recent [Urgent Actions](#) alerts from AIUK.

Extract Of Local Groups' Updates From AIUK

Full details of AIUK's update for local groups can be viewed via this [browser link](#).

This month's update from AIUK includes the following:

Crisis in Gaza, the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel



© MAHMUD HAMS/AFP via Getty Images

Amnesty International has provided an [update](#) on the crisis in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (IOPT).

As the situation is so fast moving, Amnesty is publishing the latest developments via publications on the press releases page of the AIUK [website](#).

Further details can also be found on AIUK's IOPT [Campaign](#) page.

Since the start of the current crisis in IOPT, members of the AI Glasgow West Group have participated in various vigils and gatherings within Glasgow.



We are horrified by the escalating crisis for civilians in Gaza, the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and Israel. Amnesty International is issuing an urgent call for an immediate ceasefire by all parties in the occupied Gaza Strip and Israel.

If you want to write to your MP, you can take from our [key calls](#) or press releases. And you can take our [urgent action](#) calling for the Israeli military to rescind their evacuation order against Gaza hospitals. [Take action now](#).

Human Rights in Russia – Guest Speaker at Recent Glasgow AI Groups’ meeting



Photo – Iona Fletcher, AIUK Volunteer Co-ordinator for Russia, with some of the members of the Glasgow West and Glasgow Daytime AI Groups

The Glasgow AI Groups hosted a discussion in October, which was led by Iona Fletcher, who has recently taken up the role as an AIUK Volunteer Co-ordinator for Russia.

Iona spoke about her role, working alongside AIUK’s country co-ordinator team. Iona is a Russian national, with family living in Russia, though she herself has lived in Scotland for several years. She has had a long-standing involvement in human rights issues concerning Russia.

Iona provided details on a number of live cases that AIUK is currently supporting, including Russian artist and musician Aleksandra ‘Sasha’ Skochilenko, the opposition leader Aleksei Navalny and the prominent journalist and political activist Vladimir Kara-Murza. Iona also spoke more generally about protecting the right to protest within Russia.

She indicated that there has been an estimated 20,000 individual protesters placed under arrest / detention in Russia since the invasion of Ukraine. She noted that the AI office in Russia has been closed due to safety concerns, so there is no direct official, permanent AI presence within the country.

A wide-ranging discussion and Q&A session followed Iona’s presentation, with members of both the Glasgow West and Glasgow Daytime Groups in attendance at the event.

The Chair thanked Iona for her input to the meeting and for providing a thought-provoking insight into the many Human Rights challenges in Russia.

Digital Campaign Training for AI activists

Weds 15 November: 5:30-7pm (Online)

The objectives of this training are to help you gain a better understanding of digital mobilisation, explore different tactics for mobilising supporters online, and apply those tactics to achieve your campaign objectives.

This training is designed for those who have a foundational knowledge of digital tools and platforms and are looking to enhance their skills in the area of digital mobilisation. If you are interested [sign up here](#).

Anti-racism and human rights course for AI activists

Racism is deeply rooted in the structures of our society. Challenging these structures and the ideologies that support them is key to human rights progress. This short course has been created as a first step for anyone who wants to learn about racism and its relation to and impact on human rights in the UK and around the world. It will help you to understand and confront racism, discrimination, inequality and disempowerment.

[Click this link to access the course](#) or [find the rest of our courses here](#).

Amnesty Christmas Raffle

Enter the AIUK Christmas Raffle and grab your chance to feel like a winner! How would you spend £5,000? That's what's up for grabs when we draw the raffle in December. Tickets cost just £2 and with every ticket you buy, you're speaking up for humanity.

[Buy your raffle tickets online](#) today for your chance to experience that winning feeling, and you could help more people like unfairly imprisoned Taner Kılıç walk free!

Upcoming dates

4th Nov 10am - AIUK National Conference 2023 - [Free online tickets here](#)

9th Nov 6pm - Young Human Rights Journalists panel event - [Sign up here](#)

10th Dec - Human Rights Day, 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

10th Dec (12pm – 5pm) - AI Glasgow Groups' Write for Rights event, which will be held in Hillhead Library, Byres Road, Glasgow

Further information from AIUK

Full details of AIUK's update for local groups can be viewed via this [browser link](#).

Freedom From Torture – Comedy Fundraising Event

The organisation *Freedom From Torture (FfT)* has asked us to share information on its forthcoming fundraising event Amnesty members. The Comedy event for FfT is being held at The Stand Comedy Club, Glasgow on Sunday 12th November 2023.

Tickets cost £12 / £10. Further information is available from [The Stand website](#).

*(*Please note, whilst this is not an Amnesty International event, it is a very worthwhile cause!)*



Updates from October 2023

Amnesty International

Glasgow West Local Group

Meeting held on 12th October 2023

Present: Claire (Chair), Merle, Christine, Kirstie, Neil, Carol, Cait, Mal, Jim McGrath and Andrew. Guest speaker – Iona Fletcher, AIUK Russia Volunteer Co-ordinator.

Apologies submitted: Silvia, Mal, Jean, Fatma, Han, Sophie and Jim Gillies.

Welcome

Claire welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Cait, who was attending our Group for the first time.

Claire circulated hard copies of the meeting agenda.

Minutes of meeting held on 14th September 2023 and Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and any matters arising were included in this month's agenda.

Guest Speaker – Iona Fletcher, AIUK Volunteer Co-ordinator for Russia

Claire introduced Iona to speak about her role as one of AIUK's volunteer co-ordinator for Russia.

Iona indicated that she has been in this role for the past three months, working with AIUK's country co-ordinator team, but that she had a long-standing involvement in human rights issues concerning Russia. Iona is a Russian national, with family living in Russia, though she herself has lived in Scotland since 2015.

Iona circulated information sheets and provided details on a number of live cases that AIUK is currently supporting, namely Russian artist and musician Aleksandra 'Sasha' Skochilenko, the opposition leader Aleksei Navalny and the prominent journalist and political activist Vladimir Kara-Murza. Iona also spoke more generally about protecting the right to protest within Russia.

She indicated that there has been an estimated 20,000 individuals put under arrest / detention in Russia since the invasion of Ukraine. The AI office in Russia has been closed due to safety concerns, so there is no direct official AI presence within the country.

A wide-ranging discussion and Q&A session followed Iona's presentation.

Claire thanked Iona for her input to the meeting and for providing a thought-provoking insight into the many Human Rights challenges in Russia.

Finance Update

Kirstie provided an update on recent transactions on the Group's finances, noting that there was a current balance of £595.37.

Kirstie invited colleagues to claim travel expenses for attending the meeting.

Social Media Update

In Silvia's absence, there was no social media update provided at the evening, although activities had been continuing, including promoting our guest speaker and also highlighting the request from [Freedom from Torture to advertise its forthcoming Comedy evening fundraiser](#), which takes place on 12th November 2023.

ACTION – Silvia to continue to further develop our Group's social media presence.

Lift the Ban

It was noted that there would be an opportunity for members of our Group to join with Lift the Ban (LTB) colleagues to take part in promoting LTB to local businesses at a future 'street walk' awareness raising event – date tbc.

ACTION - Fatma

MEND (Muslim Engagement and Development)

Claire advised that she had attended a meeting on 25th September with representatives of the Dundee, Perth and Edinburgh AI Groups. This had included discussion of options for a potential joint Amnesty-MEND event during November, which had been designated 'Islamophobia Awareness Month'.

Claire spoke to Thea from AIUK on getting agreement for an AI Glasgow West logo to be added to the MEND website, highlighting our Group as a 'supporter' of MEND's work.

ACTION - Claire

We will also share relevant MEND social media posts via our own social media during November – ACTION Silvia

Claire will liaise with AI Glasgow University Group to ask if they wish to put up MEND posters, etc within the university (e.g. library).

ACTION - Claire

We will invite MEND to provide a speaker for our November meeting to lead a discussion.

ACTION – Claire

We will invite members of the Daytime Group and University Group to join us to hear the MEND Guest speaker.

ACTION – Claire

Glasgow Daytime Group members' update on Forthcoming Exhibition

Carol and Jim provided an update on a forthcoming exhibition of political cartoons that had been produced by a Daytime Group member, spanning several decades. The cartoons were extremely high quality and will be displayed in the Mitchell Library at a date tbc. It was noted that there was also a need to find a suitable permanent home for the collection.

Members of the group expressed their interest in attending and asked the Daytime Group members to keep us advised of the exhibition date, once it had been agreed.

ACTION – Carol / Jim McG / (Meredith)

Write for Rights Event

Kirstie has been liaising with Hillhead Library and has agreed a date and time of **12noon – 5pm on Sunday 10th December 2023** (Human Rights Day) for the annual Write for Rights event. It was agreed that it would be beneficial if this could, once again, be run as a joint event between the three Glasgow-based AI Groups. Andrew will continue to liaise with the Daytime and University Groups on this.

Thirty Write for Rights booklets have been requested from Thea in AIUK, along with any relevant posters, or other publicity materials that may be available.

Preparation for the event will be considered further at our next meeting in November – and with the secretaries of the other Glasgow AI Groups.

ACTION – Kirstie / Andrew / Claire

Public Liability Certificate

It was noted that the September 2023 [Local Updates](#) report from AIUK contained a downloadable [Public Liability Insurance document](#), which could be used by local AIUK for any event they were hosting.

Urgent Actions

Merle circulated information relating to Urgent Actions in Iran, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo and members were invited to respond to them following the meeting.

Urgent actions can also be accessed via AIUK's Urgent Actions [link](#), and individual Group members may wish to follow up on these.

The Daytime Group members attending (Carol and Jim McG) described the way their Group organised Urgent Actions, with individuals preparing letters in advance of their meetings and meeting attendees then adding their signatures.

ACTION – All to consider responding to the Urgent Action appeals

AIUK Local Groups' Update

A summary of the latest [AIUK Local Groups' Update](#) was circulated with the meeting notice and Claire briefly highlighted some of the issues covered, including:

- [Anti-racism and human rights course](#): This short course has been created as a first step for anyone who wants to learn about racism and its relation to and impact on human rights in the UK and around the world. It will help you to understand and confront racism, discrimination, inequality and disempowerment.
- **Amnesty Christmas [Raffle](#)**: £5,000 prize. Tickets £2
- **Letter to editor on refugees' rights**: Please share this [template letter](#) to editors on Refugees and Migrants rights issues with your local media.
- **Amnesty UK National Conference 2023** - 10am – 7:30pm, 4 November 2023; London & livestreamed online. Free! Workshops & speakers. Book [here](#).

- **School requests for talks on Human Rights & Amnesty:** the Amnesty Speaker programme closed in 2021. However, if there are requests from schools for talks about AI's work, local activists have access to a number of useful [resources](#). If you require any other support or have any questions you can contact the AI education team at: hre@amnesty.org.uk.
- **Activism Representatives:** AIUK is still looking for voluntary lead activists to coordinate and support local Amnesty groups across the UK: [Find out more here](#)
- **2023 Priority Campaigns:** [Priority Campaigns](#)
- Amnesty [training](#) e.g. [Delivering human rights education](#) and [Anti-Racism and Human Rights](#)

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on **Thursday 9th November 2023, 7.30pm - 9pm** @ Woodlands Methodist Church, 229 Woodlands Road, G3 6LW.

Mal noted his apologies for the next meeting.



2023 Meeting Dates

New Members very welcome!

The Group meets every 2nd Thursday at **7.30pm - 9pm.**

The meetings take place at **Woodlands Methodist Church**, 229 Woodlands Road, G3 6LW

For further information contact mail@glasgowwestamnesty.org.uk

- ~~Thursday 12th January 2023~~
- ~~Thursday 9th February 2023~~
- ~~Thursday 9th March 2023~~
- ~~Thursday 13th April 2023~~
- ~~Thursday 11th May 2023~~
- ~~Thursday 8th June 2023~~
- ~~Thursday 13th July 2023~~
- ~~Thursday 10th August 2023~~
- ~~Thursday 14th September 2023~~
- ~~Thursday 12th October 2023~~
- Thursday 9th November 2023
- Thursday 14th December 2023

BETTER TO LIGHT A CANDLE THAN CURSE THE DARKNESS

