

AMNESTY NEWS

www.amnesty-volunteer.org/uk/southampton-city

February 2004



Southampton University AI Group

Helen Jackson, last years President of AI at University, spoke about the work of the University Group.

Key area of work had been writing Urgent Actions after information gathering on the countries involved. They had organised a structure of getting to know the countries they were targeting. The aim being to bring a disparate group of students together by sharing the job of information gathering.

The last student conference had focussed on Israel, it had been very valuable, including videos on information about the situation.

This year the AI Group is trying to link with various groups e.g. AI, PURE (Fair trade and anti arms). The Uni is now trialling sales of Fair Trade products every Monday. Fair Trade fortnight the first two weeks of March.

University Group Structure:

Meet Wednesday lunch times, write Urgent Actions, focussing on topical issues rather discussions on specific countries. Attended discussions on acceptance of evidence obtained under torture.

STAR:

Student action for refugees aiming at 16-18 year olds. STAR is linked to CLEAR (last months presentation). Students are able to provide specific language teachers etc.

**Group Meeting
Monday March 8th 2004**

**Concert by
SEGALULA**

**Tickets £5/£3 conc.
at the door**

**Avenue St Andrew's
United Reformed Church
The Avenue, Southampton
(Use main Church entrance)**

7.30pm

ALL WELCOME

Refreshments stalls disabled access

AI's VISION

is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international standards.

AI's MISSION

is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.

AI's CORE VALUES

remain those of : international solidarity, effective action for the individual victim, global coverage, the universality and indivisibility of human rights, impartiality and independence, and democracy and mutual respect.

Back to schools has an officer who is intending to contact local schools and talk about AI. The Declaration of Child Rights as advertised in AI Magazine was discussed.

One key problem is the limitation the Uni places on the number and contents of Posters. Two posters allowed on Highfield campus; two on Arts Campus. There is unfortunately a level of apathy with no-one from medicine and engineering involved, although Arts, Law and Physics are well represented.

There was a discussion about how we could assist the Uni Group, the main issue appears to be poor publicity.

Amnesty International-Worldwide Appeals: for February 2004

PAKISTAN: Child offender to be executed

Mohammad Ameen was sentenced to death by an Anti-Terrorism Court in Rawalpindi in January 2000 after being found guilty of involvement in a robbery and killing in 1998, when he was 17 years old.

The Court recorded Mohammad Ameen's age at the time of trial as 17 or 18. The judge hearing the appeal against sentence is said to have confused a medical report on Mohammad Ameen with one on the victim of the crime, and understood he was aged 30. The Chief Justice re-examined the case following articles in the press which raised concerns that he was a juvenile at the time of the offence and that the courts had allegedly made mistakes in the case. His school certificate was presented as evidence of his age. However, the Chief Justice found that there were no grounds to overturn the judgement because the issue of age was not raised until the appeal stage of the proceedings. Mohammad Ameen's only chance of clemency is a mercy



Call for death penalty for juveniles to be prohibited in all areas of Pakistan.

petition lodged with President Pervez Musharraf in August. If the President rejects this appeal Mohammad Ameen could be executed at any time. The use of the death penalty against child offenders, people who were under 18 at the time of the crime, is prohibited under international law. In July 2000, Pakistan banned the death penalty for child offenders. However, in two tribal areas of Pakistan this law is

not yet in force and children could still be legally executed. In other areas an unknown number of children are sentenced to death because some judges and magistrates in the lower courts do not know that it is now illegal to sentence a child to death. In December 2001 President Pervez Musharraf promised to commute all existing death sentences against child offenders. However, an unknown number of child offenders, including Mohammad Amen, remain under sentence of death because the age of the child offender is being contested.

Pleas write: calling for a stay of execution for Mohammad Ameen. Call for the death penalty for juveniles to be prohibited in all areas of Pakistan.

Send appeals to:
President and Chief Executive of Pakistan,
General Pervez Musharraf,
Pakistan Secretariat,
Islamabad,
Pakistan.

Letter writing guide

- *Always be polite. This rule is essential and invariable. Your aim is to help, not to relieve your own feelings. Governments don't respond to abusive or condemnatory letters (however well deserved!)
- *Always write your letters on the basis that the Government concerned is open to reason and discussion.
- *It is important where possible to stress a country's reputation for moderation and justice, to show respect for its constitution and judicial procedures, and to demonstrate an understanding of current difficulties. This will give you more scope to point out ways in which the human rights situation can be improved.
- *Follow strictly the instructions given by AI.
- *Never use political jargon. Don't give the impression that you are writing because you are ideologically or politically opposed to the government in question. It is far more effective to stress that your concern for human rights is not politically based in any way, but in keeping with basic principles of international law.
- *If appropriate, explain who you are and what you do. It shows your letter is genuine, and that people from varying walks of life are following events in the country concerned.

Group News: February 2004

1. **Re: SEGALULA** concert (08.03.04); helpers need to arrive at 6.00 pm or asap after please.

2. **Re: AGM Motions**, a small Group will meet to discuss AGM motions on 17th March at Jenny's .

3. **Re Forthcoming Campaigns:** these include *Stop Violence Against Women; Stop Child Executions; Refugee Week Action 14-20 June; Lobbying MEPs prior to Euro Elections on 10th June; Country Action Programmes focussing on Democratic Republic of Congo; Israel/Occupied Territories; and Iraq and neighbouring regions.*

4. **Re Totton Charity Market** agreed to have a stall on 3rd May, Mary,

Jenny and Jeane volunteered. Appeal for bric-a-brac and second hand goods, plants, jams –in fact anything saleable (but **not** cloths). Please bring to April meeting or ring Mary or Jenny.

5 **Re Finances:** Giampaolo reported:

A) Christmas Cards: we sold £378.03 worth of cards making a profit of £74.97. We also helped the Uni Staff Club sell a total of £1423.91 worth of Christmas Cards. The money raised for AI is more than £74.97 because the Section sells the cards to Groups at a profit. Many thanks to all those who helped.

B) Safeway Tin Rattle: we raised £421.93; again many thanks to all those who helped.

C) We have sent £300 to AI, our total contribution for the current financial year is £500.

D) The bank balance is approximately £500.

6 **Re Web site:** Thanks to Giampaolo's hard work, with a little help from John, we now have an updated and revamped web site. Well worth a visit to all you computer geeks!

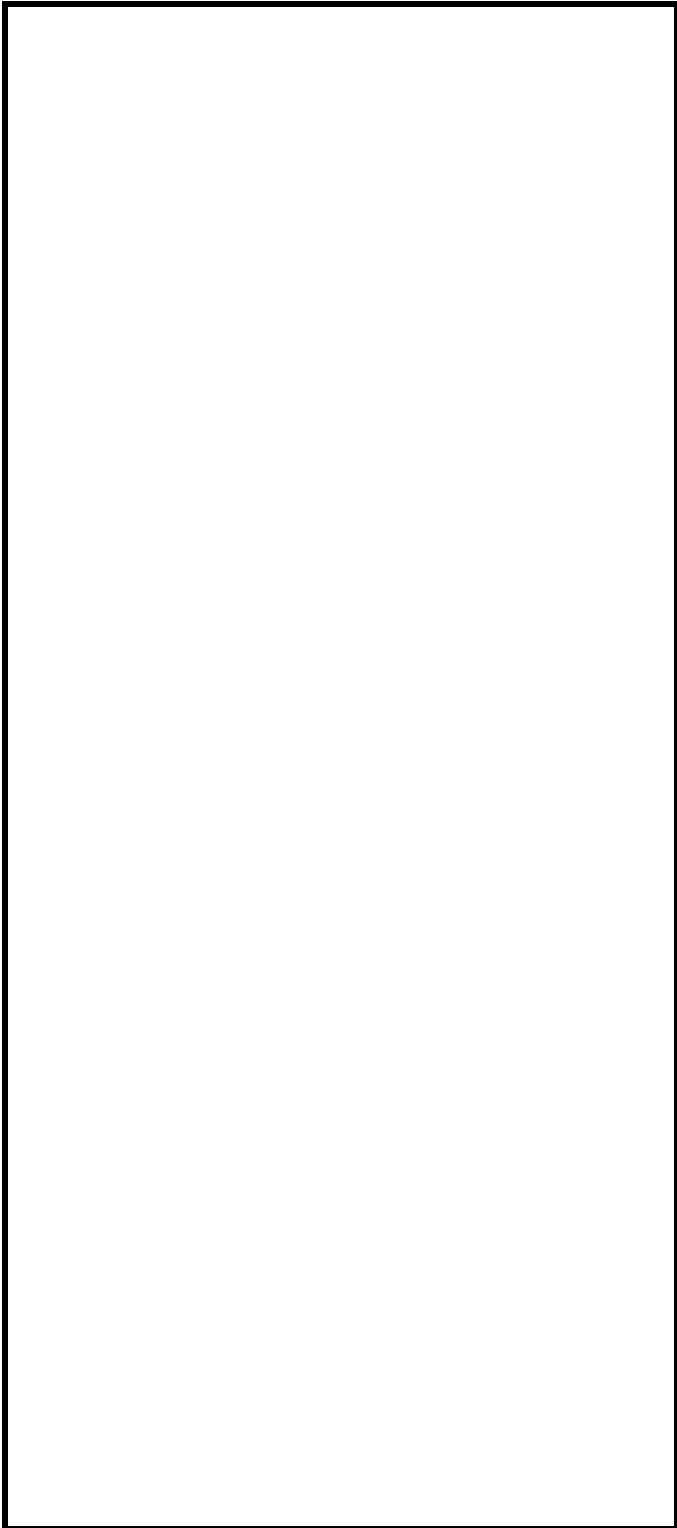
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STOP CHILD EXECUTIONS

AI will be calling for:

- ◆ An immediate end to the executions of all child offenders.
- ◆ All existing death sentences against child offenders to be commuted.
- ◆ Countries that retain the death penalty to prohibit by law the execution of child offenders.
- ◆ These countries to ensure that their courts do not sentence child offenders to death. Measures taken should include the examination of birth certificates; if this form of documentation does not exist, it should be introduced (Article 8. Convention on the Rights of the Child).

For more details please contact Giampaolo or John



"STOP CHILD EXECUTIONS"
Details page 3

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Contact: Alan Scammell for all your printing needs:
023 8063 5808

- Diary:
- ◆ **Monday 8th March:** SEGALULA, a celebration in song for International Women's Day. 7.30 pm, Avenue St Andrew's United Reformed Church, The Avenue. All Welcome NB this replaces our monthly meeting. (see below)
 - ◆ **April 2-4 2004, Amnesty UK, National Conference and AGM.** (Please note the date is incorrect on Events Calendar.
 - ◆ **Monday 19th April:** *Please note this is the third Monday not the usual second because of Easter.* Group Meeting: Iraq-one year on, update on human rights issues. Speaker to be arranged. 7.30 pm, Avenue St Andrew's United Reformed Church, The Avenue. All Welcome

In aid of
Amnesty International

SEGALULA
Presents

**A Celebration in Song
For International
Woman's Day**

Songs to inspire, empower,
delight and amuse in vibrant
unaccompanied harmony
Refreshments Stalls
Monday 8th March 2004
at 7.30 pm

Avenue St Andrew's United
Reformed Church
The Avenue, Southampton
Tickets £5/£3 conc.
at the door
Disabled Access