



Southampton Group

AMNESTY NEWS

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

November 2009



SEPTEMBER MEETING SPEAKER

ROS TOPLEY, Amnesty Trainer

Ros gave us an introduction to the 'Demand Dignity' campaign. As long as a viewing of the accompanying film, we got an introduction to the initial 3 themes and communities Amnesty will be working with as part of the campaign.

FORCED EVICTIONS

Deep Sea Settlement, Nairobi

The Deep Sea settlement is a shanty-town in the Westlands borough of Nairobi. Its 7,000 residents live under constant threat of illegal forced eviction as private companies attempt to gain land for development. Government officials, police and others who support and carry out these evictions face no legal repercussions, while the residents live in fear that their homes could be destroyed at any time.

CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

Lubicon Cree, Canada

In Little Buffalo, Alberta, Canada, the Lubicon Cree indigenous people have been battling for three decades for the right to control their lands and hold to account the oil, gas and logging companies that have devastated their environment. Large-scale logging, followed by oil and gas extraction, have all but destroyed the traditional way of life of the Lubicon Cree.

MATERNAL MORTALITY

Ccarhuacc, Peru

Peru has one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the Americas. According to official figures, 185 women die for every 100,000 live births in Peru. The United Nations puts the number even higher at 240. Most of these are rural, poor and Indigenous women.

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 and 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

ACTION OF THE MONTH

Deep Sea Settlement

Send the appeal below to the Kenyan authorities, by post, calling on them to prevent all further evictions from the Deep Sea Settlement.

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you to express my concern that people living in the Deep Sea Settlement in Nairobi live in constant fear of forcible eviction from their houses and land.

I would ask you to ensure that all further evictions are stopped with immediate effect and that the law is enforced against government officials or third parties who illegally attempt to evict people from the Deep Sea settlements, or to intimidate them, physically hurt them or damage their property in any way in an effort to make them leave.

I further urge you to uphold Kenya's obligations under international law and ensure that the residents of Deep Sea have access to adequate housing, health care and education as well as a proper sewage system, access to electricity and sufficient clean drinking water.. You will be aware that local NGOs are calling for a government programme of comprehensive upgrading to provide affordable and decent housing by improving the existing site of the Deep Sea Settlement.

Finally, as a matter of urgency, I call upon your government to adopt legal guidelines on evictions in line with Kenya's international obligations, and to institute a moratorium on forced evictions throughout the country until the guidelines are in place.

I look forward to hearing from you on this important issue.

Yours faithfully,

Send to:

James Orengo,
Minister of Lands,
Ardhi House,
Ngong Road,
1st Ngong Avenue
P.O. Box 30450
Nairobi, Kenya

READ MORE ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN
WWW.AMNESTY.ORG.UK/DIGNITY

GROUP NEWS

Greetings Card Campaign

Borders, Southampton

5th & 6th December

We are still looking for volunteers to fill gaps in the rota especially in the afternoons.

Please let John know if you can help

CHRISTMAS CARDS

We will have a selection of **Amnesty Christmas cards** for sale at the **November meeting.**

PUB QUIZ

Approximately 30 people made it to the inaugural Southampton Amnesty pub quiz at the Duke of Wellington pub.

It was a close contest with the eventual winners decided with a tie break.

Thanks to all who came and helped to make it a good night.

NEXT GROUP MEETING

Monday 9th November
7.30pm

Creating a scene: making materials, cards etc for the Greetings card event.

Bring your creative ideas!

Avenue St Andrew's
United Reformed Church
The Avenue, Southampton

ALL WELCOME

DIARY

Monday 9th : Group meeting.
Greetings card event preparation.

Friday 13th : Hu Qianci's 2nd birthday

OCTOBER GROUP MEETING

CHAIR

John Williams welcomed all to the meeting.
Special welcome to new faces.

SPEAKER

Ros Topley gave an introduction to the Demand Dignity campaign.

OTHER BUSINESS

2 cards signed for Troy Davis (US prisoner on Death Row) and Hu Jia's daughter. Rota for Borders Greeting Card stall.

The current bank balance is £884.96. £300 sent to section.

Feedback on Anne Curry's lecture and possibility of annual Amnesty lecture at Southampton University.

Regional Conference will be in Bath on 31st October.

Mass lobby of MPs on November on SVAW/No recourse to public funds. Kulbir and Rapinder to send letters to MPs.

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.

SOUTHAMPTON GROUP - WHO'S WHO

Group Officers		Subgroups
Chair John Williams	Outreach and Parliamentary Officer Veronica Tippetts	Stop Violence Against Women Trish McPherson
Deputy Chair Rob Atkinson	Press Cheryll Pitt	China & East Asia Giampaolo D'Alessandro
Secretary Mary Brown	Newsletter Rob Atkinson	Death Penalty John Williams
Membership Secretary Kulbir Chaha		Central America Rapinder Kaur
Treasurer Giampaolo D'Alessandro		Demand Dignity Rob Atkinson