AI Glasgow West Group Meeting Thurs 12th November 2024

Minutes

1. **Welcome and apologies** *(introductions round table)*
   Attending: Claire (Chair), Clara, Mhairi, Lucca, Merle, Christine, Andrew and Elaine
   Apologies: Neil and Kirstie

2. **Agreement of previous meeting minutes** here
3. **Team Updates** (list of roles here)**:**
   a. **Treasurer** (Kirstie): raised £360 for central AIUK through card reader and £70 other cash donations (including for t-shirts), which is put into our local group's bank account; £510 current balance (after £82.77 postage costs)
   b. **Social Media & website** (Mal/Cait)
   c. **Local Political Outreach** (Neil)
   d. **Regional/ Country focus – South East Asia/ Myanmar** (Mal); **Korea** (Clara)
      i. Korea / disability rights - petition? - activism linked to Seoul metro; Write for Rights targeted Seoul metro and Seoul metro has replied → Action - Clara working on response
   e. **Theme focus** - **US Death penalty** - Mal to inform Death Penalty Network / follow up work on California Action - Mal
   f. **Prisoner of Conscience/Individual At Risk Update** (Han) / (Cait)
      i. Cait - BK16 action - letter to send prisoners directly / research local UK politicians?
4. **Actions/updates from previous meeting Minutes:**
   a. **AI Scotland office online meeting (27.11) about Scotland's Human Rights Bill being deprioritised**
   b. **Write for Rights** - Southside / Sunday Assembly / Library; did anyone email organisations with particular cases?
      . 128 cards total & 39 in this meeting = **167 Total number of messages** posted by Glasgow West Group
         1. Angola: 25 & 3 in this meeting
         2. Turkiye: 20 & 5 in this meeting
         3. Saudi Arabia: 19 & 3 in this meeting
         4. Egypt: 16 & 4 in this meeting
         5. Belarus: 13 & 5 in this meeting
         6. Argentina: 10 & 5 in this meeting
         7. South Korea: 9 & 7 in this meeting
         8. Canada: 8 & 7 in this meeting
         9. Vietnam: 8 & 5 in this meeting
   c. **St Andrew's Day 30.11.24**
   d. **Neil Cowan (Programme Director for Scotland Amnesty) previously had confirmed his attendance for Jan** meeting (09.01.24) - Action - Andrew to email Daytime and Uni groups to invite them
      - In light of Neil Cowan of AI Scotland attending, it was agreed to move our AGM from January to February
      - AGM Reminder: pls start considering roles (see list here) and ask current role holders for more info on the role responsibilities if you are at all interested! Action - All to consider
   e. **Seenaryo (Lebanon) film screening:** Actions - Mhairi
      - February screening & panel discussion at Glasgow University inc. lecturer from Dept of Middle East studies
      - ask Country Coordinator from Amnesty to come - Action - Clara to check Lebanon CC
      - Also, there will be a June 2025 screening to take place in CCA for Refugee Festival
      - Clara suggested a donation tin is available for those attending the screenings.

5. **Email received from Watford group:** *to ask for your support in lobbying the AIUK Section Board to respect democracy and implement the decision that was made at the 2024 AIUK AGM regarding resolution O10, which stated: "Delay the sale of the Human Rights Action Centre until a full and transparent consultation with the AIUK membership has been undertaken." This resolution was*

passed at the AGM with over two thirds of the vote, yet the AIUK Section Board has decided not to implement the decision, thereby calling into question the serious nature of democracy within AIUK. Please can you support us by emailing this letter (or a similar letter in your own words) urging the Chairs of both the Section and Charitable Trust Boards to implement Decision O10 – ideally before 31 December 2024. - Do we want to send letter?

a. agreed → Action - Andrew to send

Post meeting: The following text was sent to

Dear Helen and Andrew,

I am writing on behalf of the Glasgow West AI local group regarding the decision by the AIUK Section Board to ignore the resolution 010, which was passed at the 2024 AIUK AGM.

As you know, Resolution O10 called for the delay to the sale of the Human Rights Action Centre until there has been a full and transparent consultation with the membership of AIUK, with options then voted on at a subsequent AIUK AGM.

Following the Watford AI Group's meetings with both of you, it is clear that the Section does indeed have a say in the decisions made by the Charitable Trust. Andrew Lines said in this meeting that if the Section were to express any desire to delay the sale or rethink the decision, then they would reconsider.

This is contrary to what the Section Board has been saying in their "Implementation of AGM resolutions - September 2024" update.

We are therefore asking you to immediately take the HRAC off the market and, instead to respect and implement the results of 2024 AGM Decision O10.

At our recent local AI Group discussion in Glasgow, the major concern amongst our local membership was not neccesarily about the proposed sale of the property. Rather, it was about the apparent failure to follow the spirit of the decision taken at the AGM, with the consequent effect of raising concerns about the legitimacy of the Board's mandate and its apparent willingness to undermine democratic principles.

We look forward to hearing from you with regard to how you propose to address these concerns.

Yours sincerely
Secretary, Glasgow West AI Group

6. **Planning for Comedy Night fundraiser at The Stand Comedy Club** - Thursday 20th February 2024 - see planning doc here
   Event link is now live!:
   https://www.thestand.co.uk/performance/18996/benefit-in-aid-of-amnesty-international/20250220/glasgow
   Tickets: £13 / £11
   - Action - Cait to update flyer and share for people to print and put up around town!
   - Action - All to save the date in diary if possible and **buy tickets!**

7. **Urgent Appeals** - Merle → **Write for Rights**
   Most of the evening was devoted to writing further cards for the W4R cases.

8. **AIUK Local Group Updates – November link here**

- Thea of AUIK Activism team has now left her role and the new contact will be Philippa.

- Demand the UK suspend all arms transfers to Israel now - petition here
  - Write to your MP - **General Letter; Lib Dem, SNP, Greens Letter; Sinn Féin Letter**
- Protect UK nationals arbitrarily detained abroad
- **AIUK 2024 Priority Campaigns** here*;* **Amnesty training courses**: **Activist Education***;* & Updates from various local AI Groups across the UK

AOB

- 7th March - deadline for self-nomination to be on AIUK board and submitting any AGM resolutions. We need to add this to the agenda for the Feb meeting
- 5th/6th July - AIUK AGM

Next meeting – Thurs 9th January 7.30pm - 9pm - Visit by Neil Cowan (AI Scotland Programme Director) will be main item on the agenda

DON'T INCLUDE IN EMAIL, here for reminding for Jan meeting

1. *[Longer-term idea for people to start thinking about]*
   2025 will be Glasgow West group's 50th anniversary!
   a. Do we want to do an event to mark it? Ideas:
      - publicity in local press to help raise awareness of AI & recruit new members & raise funds
      - Resources:
        1. Andrew has resources from former Group secretary, Brian Donnelly, who was active from the 1970s.
        2. Merle has a collection of carefully collated minutes and correspondence covering the period from the Group's founding in 1975 until 2002. This includes local press cuttings and information on the planning and events associated with our Freedom Festival, which was an art festival that took place in the city over several months in 1995.

   ii. Involve John Gerard & wife Margaret - previous member - Mal has contact

   iii. Mitchell Library might be able to take our archive (thanks Merle!) - Andrew to follow up w Head Office to make sure they def can't.

   - Andrew has confirmed w AIUK and Mitchell Library so going ahead

AGM & National Conference - 5th- 6th July 2025
Teaching & Learning Building, University of Birmingham

In 2025, Amnesty UK members and activists will be coming together for a weekend to celebrate our powerful movement, take part in AIUK democracy, meet, network and plan for the year to come.

We hope you enjoyed Amplify Festival 2024. In 2025, we'll be reimagining Amplify as a flagship moment for AIUK activists and members, a space for the movement to gather. Welcome to 'Amplify Summit': a weekend bringing together the AGM alongside workshops and masterclasses. We'll be...

- Participating in AIUK democracy in the 2025 AGM
- Meeting and networking with activists from across the movement
- Hearing amazing activists and campaigners speak in masterclasses
- Participating in campaigning and activism workshops
- Celebrating the incredible work of AIUK activists and members

The event will be open to AIUK Section members and activists, only. It will not be a public event, but rather a gathering space for the AIUK movement. The event will incorporate both important AIUK governance and additional sessions designed to entertain, upskill, and spark conversation.

Whether you are a long-time activist in a local group, or a brand-new activist who has recently joined your student network, this event is for you. It will be the largest gathering of AIUK's base. We cannot wait to welcome you to the Amplify Summit.

We hope you will join us in Birmingham!

Please note that the AIUK AGM is open to AIUK Section members only. If you would like to become a member, you can join as an individual on the AIUK website or the group you are a member of can affiliate. Please join by the end of March to receive the official notice of the AGM. Please reach out to your Community Organising staff member for more information.

Tickets and more information will be launched in early 2025, so keep an eye out for that. We're delighted to say that we will be offering bursaries for travel and accommodation for attendees to come to Birmingham for the full weekend. There will be a specific process to follow for this, information to

follow.

Important Governance Information

Deadline for Resolutions is 7 March 2025. Forms to submit resolutions will be available on the AGM page of our website from January 2025 at the latest.

Any questions, please email agm@amnesty.org.uk

Elections for AGM and Board Roles

Amnesty International UK Section is a member-led movement. The Section Board and the key AGM officers are elected by the members. To keep our democracy healthy and to give members a choice of leaders, it is important that candidates put themselves forward. In 2025, we are seeking candidates for the following roles:

AGM Chair – to ensure that our most important members' meeting runs smoothly and everyone feels welcome and included on the day

One member of the Standing Orders Committee – to help the AGM Chair by interpreting the AGM rules and ensuring that they are followed by everyone

Three members of the Members and Directors Appeals Committee – to act as an appeals body for members who have been expelled from the membership, or Board members who have been removed from the board. It is an important role but one that is, thankfully, rarely called on.

Four Board members:

One who is a member aged between 18 and 23 on 25 July 2025

One member over the age of 16 years on 25 July 2025, who must be nominated by a local group

Two "unreserved seats" meaning that any member over the age of 16 years can stand

The deadline for nominations for all of these roles is 7 March 2025. Further information about the roles and the nomination process will be available on the AIUK website before the end of the year. Please note that for the Board member roles, candidates must have been a member of the Section since at least 7 September 2024.

We know that these roles can seem daunting but support will be provided. If you have any questions, would like to find out more, or would like an informal discussion, please contact the Nominations Sub-Committee by emailing **nomcom@amnesty.org.uk**.

Any questions about the event, please contact **activistevents@amnesty.org.uk**

We also got this email from Liz from the Scotland office:
"Some people had asked what they can do to support our recent work in the Amnesty Scotland office on Scottish public funding for arms companies.
We recently wrote to the Deputy First Minister calling for a review of the human rights due diligence performed before awarding companies public grants: https://www.amnesty.org.uk/resources/letter-deputy-first-minister-scotland-human-rights-due-diligence-scottish-enterprise. This also had some coverage on the BBC's news page and Reporting Scotland: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c2389px8x8eo

Freedom of Information requests we submitted showed that multiple arms manufacturers are being awarded grants by Scottish Enterprise, yet not a single company failed or was flagged as a concern by the due diligence procedures currently in place. Some of these companies have been

linked to supplying states accused of war crimes, including Saudi Arabia and Israel

Enterprise agencies administer public money. It is the Scottish government's overall responsibility to act if it is thought that public money could be caught up in supply chains linked to human rights abuses.

I have attached two template letters for anyone who would like to help by writing to politicians to underline our calls. The first is a letter to the Scottish government's Minister for Business, Richard Lochhead, i have included his email address. The second is suggested wording for anyone who would like to write to their MSPs asking them to support our calls and raise the issue in parliament. As you are probably aware you can find contact details for your constituency and regional MSPs by entering your postcode here: https://www.parliament.scot/msps

I would really appreciate it if you could share any responses you get with me as it's hugely helpful for my advocacy work. The MSPs we have already spoke to about this include Patrick Harvie, Ross Greer (Scottish Green Party) and Katy Clark (Scottish Labour).
"

Letters here:
Scottish Enterprise template letter - Minister for Business.docx
Scottish Enterprise - letter to MSP.docx