

October 2024 Updates



Glasgow West Amnesty International

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We warmly invite you to attend the next meeting of the Amnesty International 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 October 2024 meeting;
- Information on current AIUK activities;

- The minutes from our Group's September 2024 meeting; and
- A note of our local Group's remaining meeting dates for 2024.

October 2024 Glasgow West AI Group Meeting

Thursday 10th October, Woodlands International Methodist Church, 7:30pm

The next Glasgow West Amnesty meeting takes place on **Thursday 10th October 2024 at 7.30pm – 9pm** in Woodlands International Church, Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LW.

We would love to see you there!

Our next meeting will include:

- **Guest Speaker - Omar**, who is AIUK Student Action Network (STAN) Chair and Scotland student representative;
- Updates from our **local group co-ordinators** on their activities; and

Undertaking **letter writing** in response to recent [Urgent Action](#) alerts from AIUK.

AIUK Local Updates

The latest updates for Local AI Groups produced by AIUK can be found via the following [link](#).

Below are some of the highlights extracted from the update.

Demand the UK suspends all arms transfers to Israel



The human rights crisis in Gaza is catastrophic and every day, it is getting worse. As you may know, earlier this month, the UK government suspended roughly 30 arms export licences to Israel out of a total of 350 – but stopping some arms isn't enough.

With the International Court of Justice warning of a risk of genocide against Palestinians by the Israeli authorities, continuing to allow some arms transfers is not in line with international legal standards. There should be no UK arms to Israel.

[Stop the UK from transferring all arms to Israel. Take action now.](#)

In addition to the action will you write to your MP to call for an immediate halt to ALL weapons transfers to Israel – and also ask them to show support for human rights more generally?

We've drafted template letters below for you to use – but please do edit and personalise:

[General Letter Lib Dem, SNP, Greens Letter Sinn Féin Letter](#)

If you aren't sure who your MP is, [enter your postcode here](#) (or the postcode of your group's location).

Amnesty Amplify



We're excited to be sharing details of Amnesty's new Human Rights Festival, Amplify, taking place in **London on 7 December**.

Amplify will bring together leading thinkers, community organisers and changemakers, while connecting you with fellow Amnesty supporters. We all understand the power of conversation and hope this event will provide ample opportunity to challenge, inspire and empower attendees to keep on or take up the fight for human rights change. We hope many of you will be able to join us to celebrate achievements, hear from inspiring success stories and explore next steps.

The event will offer:

- Leading campaigners and activists in conversation
- Creative workshops
- Family-friendly activities
- Live music
- Opportunities to come together, meet and share stories
- An inspiring, energising and fun day out!

[For full details, click here.](#)

Join Amnesty's Online Teacher Training Course

Amnesty International's Online Teacher Training Course will give you the expertise, resources and confidence to engage your students with human rights in your classroom. The course is free for PGCE students and anyone training to teach and will cover topics including, an introduction to teaching human rights, how to diversify your curriculum, developing anti-racist practice, teaching women's rights through dialogue, teaching refugee rights through picture books and exploring LGBTQ+ rights.

Previous participants have valued the 'incredible' facilitators, 'brilliant resources' and the chance to connect with other educators.

[Apply here](#)

For further details of the most recent AIUK Local Groups' Update, click on this [link](#).

Upcoming Dates / events

For updates on planned AIUK training and events, Click on [link](#).

Updates on AIUK Campaigns

For updates on current AIUK Priority Campaigns Click on [link](#).



AI Glasgow West Group Meeting Thurs 12th September 2024 Updates

Minutes of Meeting

1. **Welcome and apologies** (*introductions round table*)

Attending - Mal (Chair), Merle, Clara, Caitlin, Andrew and Emma (from the Glasgow University AI Group).

Apologies – Claire, Carol, Kirstie, Neil and Mhairi.

2. **Team Updates** (list of roles from AGM [here](#)):

- (a) **Treasurer** (Kirstie) – No report, in Kirstie’s absence, but indication from previous minutes that the Group has approx. £700 bank balance.
- (b) **Social Media & website** (Mal) – some updates have been made and others to follow by Mal relating to our Group’s involvement in the recent George Square rally.
- (c) **Local Political Outreach** (Neil) - In absence of Neil, it was agreed to hold over consideration of this item so that he can lead the discussion. **ACTION - Neil**

Possible political activism actions:

- i. find out who is in what constituency
 - ii. find out which politicians we can develop relationships with
 - iii. invite politicians to events
 - iv. support group members to contact CouncillorsMSPsMPs
 - v. contact new MPs and introduce ourselves
- (d) **Regional/ Country focus – South East Asia/ Myanmar** (Mal); **Korea** (Clara); **Pakistan** (Chakar) See separate presentation below from Clara. No update on other areas.
 - (e) **Prisoner of Conscience/Individual At Risk Update** (Han) In absence of Han, there was no update.

3. **Agreement of previous meeting minutes** [here](#)

The minutes of the August meeting were agreed by those who had been present.

Actions from previous meeting Minutes:

- (a) Still open **ACTION** from last month - All to consider emailing MPs asking them to sign John McDonald MP’s [Early Day Motion on Balochistan](#). (*To date, just two MPs have signed the motion*).
- (b) Perthshire (Blairgowrie) blueberry picking fundraiser on Sunday 29th September (see previous minutes for more details). Andrew provided brief information on this event.
- (c) **Far right protest**. Half a dozen members of our Group attended the counter-demonstration in George Square, Glasgow on Saturday 7th Sept. The large numbers of counter-protestors vastly outnumbered the small group of far right activists present, sending a very positive message.

Mal noted that a further anti-racism event was being planned for weekend of **St Andrew's Day, 30th November 2024**. This is being organised by Stand-Up To Racism and the STUC. **ACTION – Claire** - We should put this on the agenda for our November meeting.

4. Scotland-wide Conference

Scotland-wide One-day Conference

Joseph Patumba of Perth AI Group is the new AIUK Scotland Activism Rep. He has suggested organising a one day conference for AI Groups and members, likely to be held on 16th November 2024, with Perthshire as the likely location. **ACTION – All members** are encouraged to attend and note 16/11/24 as the proposed conference date. Further details to follow when available.

Discussion took place on the proposed Scotland conference and all were enthusiastic about the attempt to better join up local Amnesty groups.

A conference organising Group is being formed from across Scotland's AI Local Groups.

ACTION - Colleagues are asked to consider helping with this and getting involved in the WhatsApp group and Zoom calls. **ACTION – All Contact Claire** if you wish to join the WhatsApp Group and/or Zoom calls.

ACTION - It was suggested that [Professor Angela O'Hagan](#), the recently appointed Chair of the Scottish Human Rights Commission, might be suggested as a keynote speaker at the conference.

It was agreed in principle that, if required, our Group should make a donation to help cover the cost of the conference. Further discussion on this to take place once Kirstie (Treasurer) is present and when fuller information is known about the likely costs and funding mechanisms for the conference. **ACTION – To be discussed further at next meeting, if required.**

Claire had attended the first online planning meeting for the conference on 1st Sept - minutes [here](#). A further Scotland conference organising online Zoom meeting is planned for **Sunday 15th September at 8pm**. **ACTION – Any members interested in helping with the conference organisation or feeding in ideas re content / format, etc, are encouraged to attend this online meeting, via the following Zoom link:-.**

Join Zoom Meeting: [Zoom meeting link](#)

Meeting ID: 786 4811 7272

Passcode: 9mwwa3

Other related **ACTIONS:** everyone to read minutes and give feedback asap by:

- writing ideas directly into the googledoc
- messaging in the WhatsApp Scotland-wide group / Glasgow West Signal chat
- emailing ideas to Claire or Joseph.Patumba@amnesty.org.uk
- inputting to the next Conference planning Zoom meeting (15.9.24 @ 8pm)
- Volunteering to join the planning committee
- **'Guest' speaker:**

Guest Speaker: Clara

(AIUK Volunteer Country Co-ordinator for South Korea and North Korea)

Clara delivered a presentation and led discussion on human rights in South Korea, with particular reference to disability rights.

The South Korean disability rights campaigner [Mr Kyung Seouk Park](#) will feature in AI's 2024 Write For Rights campaign.

Clara outlined the background to Mr Park's activities. He is a 63yr old who was paralysed below the waist in a sporting accident circa twenty years ago. He has campaigned on the limited access that many disabled people have to the Seoul subway system. A number of disabled citizens have been injured and a few have died as a result of inadequate access facilities. Seoul Transport Authorities' promises to improve facilities have not materialised. Following peaceful protests at subway stations, there has been a systematic crackdown on protests, which are deemed to be 'illegal'. This included hundreds of police being mobilised to break up protests, cordoning off elevators to halt access and trains not stopping at stations where protests are taking place. Mr Park was physically dragged out of his wheelchair during one protest.

The wider accusation is that the South Korean authorities do not consider people with disabilities as having the same rights as other citizens.

3rd December is the [UN's International Day of People with Disabilities](#) and further activities are planned to co-incide with this.

Discussion at our meeting included colleagues registering surprise that disability rights in South Korea seem to be so far behind what we consider the norm. It was noted, for example, that South Korea had a relatively [limited number](#) of athletes competing at the recent Paris Paralympics. The question was also asked whether AIUK has considered collaborating with specialist disability rights campaign groups, such as [Disability Rights UK](#) on these sort of issues.

Caitlin offered to assist with undertaking further research on the issues and post it on our Signal Group – **ACTION - Caitlin**

Clara will continue to work with AIUK colleagues in helping to lead as Volunteer Co-ordinator for South and North Korea and will provide further updates to our Group, including highlighting opportunities for us to assist with ongoing campaigns. **ACTION – Clara**

It was also noted that we ought to put the 2024 [Write for Rights Campaign](#) on the Agenda of our next Group meeting in October. **ACTION – Claire / Kirstie**

6. Glasgow University AI Group Update

GUAI Group Update

Emma was welcomed to the meeting and invited to give an update on the activities of Glasgow University's AI Group. In the past year, the University Group has raised over £1,000 for Palestinian causes and has worked on issues such as abortion rights and the NI hate crime Bill.

It was noted that the Glasgow West and Glasgow University AI Groups had collaborated in the past on a range of issues. Both Groups are keen to do more of that in the future, albeit it was recognised that the nature / membership of the two Groups is such that they will often work in slightly different ways. Nevertheless, there was definitely seen to be many opportunities for collaboration.

Emma is the Secretary of the Glasgow Univ AI Group and Andrew agreed to add her details to our Group's monthly mailing list and send her information on any events, etc. Likewise, Emma agreed to reciprocate by alerting our Group to opportunities for potential collaboration, etc. **ACTION – Andrew and Emma**

One example of a potential collaboration opportunity was the **Write for Rights event 2024**. It was also noted that the next annual Comedy Night fundraiser for Amnesty International, held at The Stand Comedy Club, will be taking place on **Thursday 20th February 2024**. **ACTION – Emma** to share details with her colleagues and further discussion will take place nearer the time.

7. **Urgent Appeals** - Merle circulated details of two current Urgent Actions:-

- (a) [Manahel al-Otaibi, Saudi Arabia](#)
- (b) [Maryia Kalesnikava, Belarus](#)

ACTION – All to follow up by taking action online via the links above.

8. **AIUK Local Group Updates – August [link here](#)**

Mal and Andrew provided a summary of some of the latest Local Group Updates for the past month.

It was noted that this latest AIUK-wide update include information and photographs from two of our Group's recent activities – our participation in the Pride Rally in Glasgow and the collaborative event held with the artist.

Full details available via the link above.

- [Amplify Human Rights Festival](#) - 7 December 2024, Woolwich Works, London, SE18 6HD
- **AIUK 2024 Priority Campaigns [here](#); Amnesty [training courses: Activist Education](#)**; & Updates from various local AI Groups across the UK

9. **AOB – Human Rights Artwork / Neil Cowan AI Scotland Director**

Andrew noted that Neil Cowan, Scotland Director of AI, had recently taken one of the pieces of artwork donated by the artist Alexander Dakars following our Group's recent collaboration event. That painting will be hung in AI's Edinburgh office.

Neil agreed to think about potential organisations that may be suitable for accepting the other pieces of artwork that had been donated to our Group.

Neil also indicated that he would be keen to attend a future meeting of our Group. Andrew provided him with a copy of the meeting dates for the remainder of this year. **ACTION – Claire** for next agenda - We should consider a suitable date for inviting Neil along to chat with our Group.

10. **Next meeting** – Thurs 10th October 7.30pm - 9pm



2024 Meeting Dates

New Members very welcome!

The Group meets every second Thursday of the month 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 11th January 2024~~
- ~~Thursday 8th February 2024~~
- ~~Thursday 14th March 2024~~
- ~~Thursday 11th April 2024~~
- ~~Thursday 9th May 2024~~
- ~~Thursday 13th June 2024~~
- ~~Thursday 11th July 2024~~
- ~~Thursday 8th August 2024~~
- ~~Thursday 12th September 2024~~
- Thursday 10th October 2024
- Thursday 14th November 2024
- Thursday 12th December 2024

BETTER TO LIGHT A CANDLE THAN CURSE THE DARKNESS

