

Amnesty International Salisbury Group

Minutes of Monthly Meeting on Thursday 11th February, 2016
7.30 pm at 4 Victoria Road.

1	Chairman's Welcome Present: Andrew, Fiona, Tony, Peter, Lesley Apologies: None were received	AH
2	Minutes of previous meeting – These were agreed Matters Arising – PC had emailed Trafalgar School to re-establish contact with the student who wished to set up a Project with Amnesty for his Duke of Edinburgh Award, but had received no response.	
3	Treasurer's Report – None was received	MP
4	Campaign Reports Death Penalty <i>Please see the Salisbury Group's Website www.salisburyai.com for the full international update, covering Saudi Arabia, Iran, USA, Pakistan, China and Ethiopia</i> Urgent Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bahrain - UA 1-15 (Update) - Bahrain's Court of Cassation has upheld the death sentences on Mohamed Ramadan 'Issa 'Ali Hussain and Hussain 'Ali Moosa Hussain Mohamed, sentenced to death for the death of a policeman following a bomb explosion. Neither received a fair trial and evidence obtained under torture was used to incriminate both. Letters are to be sent to the King requesting a pardon for both (<i>Circulated to DPLWG 14.1.16</i>) • USA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>California</i> - UA285/15 Ext - the deadline to respond to the consultation regarding its new lethal injection protocol has been extended to 22nd February. (<i>Circulated to DPLWG 20.1.16</i>) • Saudi Arabia - UA 271/14 - Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr was amongst the 47 people executed earlier this month. His body has not, however, been returned to his parents. (<i>Circulated to DPLWG 21.1.16</i>). • Belarus - Gennadii Yakovitskii has been sentenced to death for the 	LC

	<p>murder of his partner. (He had been found guilty of an earlier killing but this was commuted to 15 years in prison). Conflicting testimonies were given by witnesses of the death of his partner. If his current appeal is turned down, and he does not receive a presidential pardon, he could be executed within months. <i>(Note - Belarus is the last country in Europe to have retained the death penalty. Circulated to DPLWG 26.1.16)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matsumoto Kenji - An Urgent Action blog was received from AI asking for letters to be sent in support of Matsumoto Kenji on his 65th birthday, the 16th he has spent on death row <i>(this month's Group Urgent Action)</i> <p>Campaigning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death Penalty Survey - 46 local groups completed the Survey in December, 4 in the South (including Salisbury). The response was less than had been anticipated so it is difficult to predict the outcome. The replies have been sent to AIUK's Activism Sub-Committee and their response is awaited. • Reggie Clemons - we are heartened by the news from the National Coalition that legislation is 'in play' in Missouri, as in other States, for the abolition of the Death Penalty, although such legislation often does not apply retrospectively. • Matsumoto Kenji - <i>this month's Group Urgent Action</i>. The Group have written to the Minister of Justice urging him not to execute Matsumoto and to commute his sentence and those of all other prisoners on death row, to improve their conditions and to promote debate on the abolition of the death penalty. They have written to the Health Minister asking him to ensure Matsumoto has access to any necessary health care. • Saudi Arabia Juvenile Executions – 14th February marks the 4th anniversary of the imprisonment of Ali al-Nimr at the age of 17. The Salisbury Group will be participating in AI's Thunderclap tweeting to the Saudi Arabian Government, calling on them to spare his life and that of two other teenage boys - Abdullah al-Zaher and Dawood al-Marhoon. <p><i>For information: BBC2 drama One Child starts at 9.00 pm on Wednesday 17th February – a 'probing drama about justice and identity' featuring a 'trumped up' murder charge in China.</i></p> <p>North Korea</p> <p>The US Senate has voted unanimously to bolster sanctions on North Korea in the wake of its satellite launch on 7th February. From their response to this and the nuclear weapons test, it is good to know that</p>	<p>TM</p>
--	--	------------------

	<p>China is not supportive of NK in all matters.</p> <p>TM will be attending a Conference in London on 22nd February. The Conference has been organised by the All Party Parliamentary Group on North Korea. The topic is <i>Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls in the DPRK</i>.</p> <p>A Group meeting was held on 2nd February to plan the way forward in our campaign. It was recognised that AIUK are not pursuing active campaigning in NK because of the difficulty of achieving anything positive, but the Group wishes to keep our own campaign alive.</p> <p>With only limited cash in the Bank, it was felt that it would be better to use in on enabling the campaign to advance on several different fronts – eg hiring films, paying speakers' expenses, transport to attend demonstrations, rather than supporting groups such as religious activists in smuggling pamphlets into NK or Jooil Kim in NK News, however worthy their cause might be. Further discussion touched on the idea of a vigil, but the format, focus and date would need to be decided, possibly after a discussion with Jonathan.</p> <p>The main discussion centred on the proposed visit by Glos and other groups to see the Tapestry - (see 6 <i>Tapestry</i> later) and the production of a video for YouTube. (See also 7 <i>Music for Human Rights</i>)</p>	
5	<p>Social Media Report</p> <p><i>Statistics – January 2016</i></p> <p><i>Web site www.salisburyai.com</i> Views in January: 244 this is down a little on the previous two months. All time views: 4551 (to 11 Feb. 16) Countries: UK; 115, USA; 73, Germany; 11, Canada; 7, Russia; 5 We have 74 followers, <u>none from the Salisbury group</u> as far as can be seen as many are made up names. No 'likes' by Salisbury group members. The site has now over 200 posts.</p> <p><i>Twitter www.twitter.com/salisburyai</i> Impressions in January: 5161 Top tweet: Florida which got an impressive 771 impressions and was re-tweeted twice. Top tweet so far this month (February) is UK involvement in the Yemen war which has had 149 impressions. Followers: we now have 56 who include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nelson Mandela foundation • Various amnesty groups including Leeds, Bath, Herts, AIUK, Bristol University • Salisbury Labour party • The Greens • Professor at an American university 	PC

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British Institute for Human Rights St Thomas's Church <u>KB is the only group member who is a follower</u> – apart from JP A former MP. <p>Facebook: www.facebook.com/salisburyai Basically reproducing website activity. We have 7 followers, none from the Salisbury group.</p> <p><i>North Korea and other videos – to date</i> On Flickr the video has had 301 views and on YouTube 549 making a total of 850 views altogether. Still image has 2260 views on Flickr. www.flickr.com and www.YouTube.com then enter the search terms 'Salisbury' 'North Korea'.</p> <p>The tapestry video has had 39 views on YouTube. Caroline has now returned the stick and her partner is editing the clips into a video film.</p> <p>A new AI Google group of Social Media Coordinators has been formed</p>	
6	<p>Tapestry</p> <p>The Tapestry continues to attract visitors at the Cathedral and the information leaflets have been topped up. 4 of the Stop Torture boards remain in place. There has been no response from Dan Jones at AIHQ regarding their return. The clips for the video are currently being assembled.</p> <p>The Mid Glos Group are planning to visit the tapestry on 3rd April. TM will contact them to try to agree an earlier date as it is unclear how long the Tapestry will be remaining in the Cathedral and the date is difficult for many of the Salisbury members.</p> <p>In the course of their visit it is hoped to carry out a joint Action. The possibility of producing a short YouTube video is being explored, combining the campaigns of both Groups - China and North Korea. PC has had no response from the schools contacted to date and will now approach Godolphin. AH will contact Claire Moody to ask if she would be prepared to be involved.</p>	All
7	<p>Music for Human Rights</p> <p>FD has had difficulty accessing the website of Scott James but will continue to try and is in the process of contacting the Cheltenham and Glos Group. She will be approaching the Arts Centre regarding a second/alternative Band and the possibility of the Centre as the venue. St Thomas's will also be explored. The Bunker will also be contacted for possible Bands. It was agreed that Autumn would be a suitable time for the event.</p>	FD

8	<p>Monthly Action</p> <p>The Group identified two Actions for this month:</p> <p>UK: STOP SELLING ARMS TO SAUDI ARABIA This month we are asking you to call on the UK Government to halt all arms exports to Saudi Arabia and its coalition Of all weapons that risk being used in the Yemen conflict to commit violations of international law. For more information, please visit: Stop selling arms pack</p> <p>STOP TORTURE CAMPAIGN: UK MUST INVESTIGATE ITS ROLE This action is to call on the UK government to hold a fully independent judge-led inquiry into UK involvement in rendition and torture. For more information, please visit: stop torture resource pack</p>	FD AH
9	<p>Human Rights Act</p> <p>For an up-to-date and ongoing assessment of the situation, please see www.rightsinfo.org. It was agreed that the Group will need to have sight of the proposed Bill before deciding on any necessary action. We have been asked by AI to lobby our MP, and have already done this. Once the situation is clearer, the possibility of involving the Salisbury Journal journalist, Annie Riddle, will be investigated.</p> <p><i>(Please also see 10 Campaigning in 2016 below)</i></p>	All
10	<p>Campaigning in 2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Group will continue to campaign on the Death Penalty and North Korea • The Stop Torture campaign will be phased out by May 2016. In the meantime we are to continue with letter writing, card signing and on-line actions. Please see www.amnesty.org.uk/stoptorture for updates. • Protecting the Human Rights Act. Please see www.amnesty.org.uk/issues/Human-Rights-Act for updates. <p>Two new Global Campaigns are to be introduced –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People on the Move – focusing on refugees and migrants whose lives are at risk in transit, and barriers to access to asylum <i>(launch date Sept 2016)</i> • Protecting the Space for Human Rights Defenders – <i>(launch date Jan 17)</i> 	All
11	<p>Regional News</p> <p>There is no further news on our new Regional Coordinator</p>	FD AH

12	Membership Concern was expressed at the declining membership and numbers of activists within the Group. A meeting is to be held at 10.30 on Thursday 3 rd March at the Red Lion.	All
13	AOB P and LC will be attending a meeting organised by the Romsey and Southampton Groups – <i>Changing the Human Rights Act – does it matter?</i> – at 7.00 pm on Friday 19 th February. The meeting will be at St Andrew's Church, Southampton and will be chaired by Peter Henley (BBC South) with Dr Claire Lougarre (University of Southampton) and Dr Alan Whitehead (MP for Southampton Test).	
14	Forthcoming Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint action with Mid Glos group (Tapestry visit) – date to be confirmed • Coffee Morning at St Thomas's? AH to ask JP for possible dates. This will include a petition. • Market Stall – 11th June. A petition will be available on the stall. An increased number of items will be needed • A possible event for Refugee Day on 20th June? • School Talks – FD will contact the Sixth Form College • Wiltshire College Freshers' Week – AH will follow up his contact with the College • World Day Against the Death Penalty – 10.10.16 – the possibility of organising an event, stall or petition will continue to be explored, and the most appropriate date (Saturday before or Tuesday following?) • The Film Night – FD will liaise with the Arts Centre regarding possible films and dates. 	
	Next Meeting: Thursday 10th March Time: 7.30 pm Venue: 4 Victoria Road Group website; www.salisburyai.com AIUK website: www.amnesty.org.uk Twitter site: http://www.twitter.com/salisburyai Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/salisburyai Campaign box and banner: P&LC	