



Amnesty International Salisbury Group

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting on Thursday 9th November 2017
7.30 pm 4 Victoria Road

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| 1 | Chairman's Welcome
Present: Andrew, Tony, Fiona, Eddie, Peter, Lesley
Apologies: Michael S | AH |
| 2 | Minutes of previous Meeting - These were agreed | LC |
| 3 | Treasurer's Report – None was received.

£100 will be required for the Refugee Exhibition in the Gallery at the Library. | MP |
| 4 | Campaign Reports

Death Penalty

<i>Please see the Salisbury Group Website www.salisburyai.com for the full international update, covering South Korea, Pope Francis, The USA, Thailand, Guatemala and Zimbabwe.</i>

Of particular note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pope Francis, who has condemned the death penalty many times in the course of his papacy, has made the significant move of signalling that he would change church teaching to make it inadmissible. • A new study into capital punishment in the State of Pennsylvania has found that death sentences are more common when the victim is white (odds increase by 8%) and decrease when the victim is black (odds decrease by 6%). • In the past six months, men held in death row in Louisiana and Florida have filed class-action lawsuits, challenging what they say is the torturous policy that all persons sentenced to death be held in solitary confinement until their execution or death. • The Death Penalty Review Panel at Florida State Attorney Aramis Ayala's office has made its first decision since it was set up following Governor Rick Scott's removal of her from all death penalty cases. The decision to seek the death penalty in this first case was unanimous. | LC |

- The highest Court in Guatemala, the Constitutional Court, has abolished the death penalty for civil cases. Until now, Guatemalan law has allowed for the death penalty in cases of murder of people under 12 or over 60, kidnapping where the victim is severely hurt or dies, assassination of the President or Vice-President, and certain crimes related to drug-trafficking.
- President Robert Mugabe has said he is in favour of resuming executions in Zimbabwe in response to rising murder rates. There are currently 92 prisoners on death row in the Country. Zimbabwe's Constitution exempts all women, and men under 18 and over 69, from the death penalty.

Urgent Actions

- *USA – Texas – UA 239/17 – Ruben Cárdenas Ramirez, a Mexican national denied his consular rights, was due to be executed on 8th November in violation of international law. Convicted in 1988 of a murder, he maintained his innocence and was seeking new DNA testing. (Circulated to DPLWG 16.10.17.)* **Mr Ramirez was executed on 8th November.**
- *USA – Arkansas – UA 202/17 – Jack Greene, convicted of murder in 1992, was scheduled to be executed on 9th November. His lawyers assert his execution would be unconstitutional because he has a psychotic disorder, which prevents him from having a rational understanding of his punishment. (Circulated to DPLWG 25.10/17.)* **Mr Greene has received a temporary stay of execution.**
- *Iran – UA 38/17 (Update) – Dr Ahmadreza Djalali, an Iranian-born Swedish resident and academic, has been sentenced to death for 'corruption on earth' after a grossly unfair trial. His conviction was based on torture-tainted 'confessions' that he was forced to make while in solitary confinement without access to his lawyer or family. He is a prisoner of conscience. (Circulated to DPLWG 27.10.17.)* **This month's Group Urgent Action.**
- *USA – Florida – UA 214/17 – Patrick Hannon was scheduled to be executed on 8th November. Convicted of two murders in 1991, he had spent half of his life on death row. Two Supreme Court Justices believed he should get a new penalty phase because of a 'classic case of ineffectiveness of counsel', leaving the Jury with 'no meaningful choice' in their decision regarding his sentence. (Circulated to DPLWG 30.10.17.)* **Mr Hannon was executed on 8th November.**
- *USA – Washington DC – UA 246/17 – Mustafa al-Imam, a Libyan facing capital charges in the USA, was seized by US*

Forces in Libya and taken to a ship. The US Department of Justice have issued a statement that he will be presented before a Federal Judge in Washington, although currently there are fears that he may be held incommunicado for a considerable period before being charged. The lead charge, killing a person during an attack on a federal facility, is punishable by death. (*Circulated to DPLWG 3.11.17.*) **Note: An email from AIUK was received on 7.11.17 ending the Action as Mustafa al-Imam had arrived in the USA and appeared in Federal Court.**

- *USA – Ohio – UA 247/17 – Alva Campbell, found guilty of murder, is due to be executed on 15th November. The mitigating circumstances surrounding Mr Campbell's upbringing were not adequately presented by his defence lawyer. The Parole Board has voted against clemency but the Governor could commute the death sentence. (Circulated to DPLWG 3.11.17.)*
- **7.11.17 -Amnesty International USA issued a statement in respect of Patrick Hannon, Ruben Cardenas Ramirez and Jack Green – ‘Three executions set for this week all demonstrate the irreparable failings of the death penalty..... Three States are set to put prisoners to death this week, and every single one of these cases raises disturbing questions about the fairness of the legal proceedings that put them on death row.’ – Kristina Roth, Senior Programme Officer for Criminal Justice Programmes at AIUSA.**

Campaigning

- **Anti-Death Penalty Project** – LC and PC will be attending a Working Group Workshop at AI London on Saturday 25th November.
- **Reggie Clemons** – Members of the Group were asked to bring a Christmas card for Reggie to the December meeting. Reggie's address will be included in the December Minutes for any supporters who might like to send him their own cards or messages.

North Korea

TC circulated papers in respect of the persecution of Christians in North Korea. These included leaflets he had produced for local Churches and papers from the International Day of Prayer held in London on 25th October, together with responses from AIUK and Fiona Bruce, MP.

TM

	<p>It was agreed that AH would contact the Cathedral in connection with the possibility of organising an Amnesty Service with the focus on North Korea, and that TM would circulate Salisbury Churches with the leaflets in his personal capacity.</p> <p>Refugees</p> <p>UA 184/17 had been received and circulated within the Group, calling on the PNG and Australian authorities to ensure all refugees currently at the Manus Island Detention Centre had access to acceptable living conditions, were ensured of their safety and security and brought immediately to Australia.</p> <p>Members of the Group had participated in the Change.org action on the case of Reza Maghsoudi, an Afghan refugee who came to England at the age of 13, and who had been living in Salisbury for a number of years. The case has been supported by Salisbury MP John Glen. Reza's deportation flight was cancelled at the last minute by the Home Office in lieu of a Judicial Review.</p> <p>The Exhibition of the Refugee Photographs is to take place in the Gallery at Salisbury Library from 2nd to 29th December. PC will order the frames. A meeting will be held to assemble the photographs prior to their hanging.</p> <p>I Welcome Campaign – Keep refugee families together – AH is to write on behalf of the Group to John Glen, asking him to make an exception to carrying out his usual Constituency duties on Friday 16th March, to enable him to attend the Second Reading of the Family Reunion Bill, and to vote in favour of the Bill.</p>	AH
5	<p>Social Media Report</p> <p>This is a summary of the activity on our platforms. The full report is available on the website on the 'statistics' tab.</p> <p>Generally, a quiet month due mainly to a lack of content. The web site received over 200 views and the most actively followed post was the stay of execution of Clinton Young in Texas. This seemed to attract wide interest. Followers have increased to 249.</p> <p>We received a record number of views on Twitter concerning the UN's decision to send a team of experts to the Yemen. Readers will be familiar with the backstory and the terrible destruction taking place there. The UK government has supplied over £3.2bn of weapons to the Saudi government and RAF personnel are present in the control room. Despite attempts to frustrate action by the French, UK and US governments, the UN is going ahead with its plans. There were over 1,000 impressions for this tweet.</p>	PC

	<p>This post lifted the number of visits for the month to over 4,000. It is the first time we have seen a slight decline in the number of followers if only by 2.</p> <p>Facebook was quiet mainly due to a lack of posts. The most popular item were the Minutes. However, the Asylum Monologues item still attracts interest and now stands at over 400</p>	
6	<p>Citizenship Day</p> <p>Sessions were run with three groups, and the day was a success. AH will provide a write-up for the website.</p>	<p>AH FD EB</p>
7	<p>Monthly Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are asked to continue to call for charges to be dropped for Taner Kilic and the <u>Istanbul 10</u> Planning for Write for Rights (see below for details of the Salisbury Group event) Help change the law for <u>refugees and their families</u> (See also Refugee Campaign above) The National Conference and AGM will take place on 7-8 April 2018 at the University of Swansea 	All
8	<p>Arts Centre Film</p> <p>‘The Other Side of Hope’ will be shown at The Arts Centre at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 29th November. FD will provide the petition and explain its background in her introduction to the film. Tickets: 01722 321744</p>	FD
9	<p>Write for Rights</p> <p>The Christmas card signing will take place in the Library Passage from 10.00 to 12.00 mid-day on Saturday 16th December. Materials have been ordered and the prisoners of conscience chosen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shackelia Jackson (Jamaica) The Istanbul 10 Issa Amro and Farid al-Atrash (The Palestinian Settlements) 	FD All
10	<p>Carol Singing</p> <p>This will take place on Tuesday 19th December - meeting at the home of MS at 6.00 pm. Our thanks to the Farrant Singers.</p>	JP

The necessary licence has been obtained.

11 **Forthcoming Events**

- Amnesty Film – ‘The Other Side of Hope’ – 29th November
- Library Refugee Exhibition – 2nd-29th December
- Write for Rights – 16th December
- Carol Singing – 19th December
- Vigil for North Korea - TBC
- Market Stall – 23rd June 2018
- Human Rights Celebration 2018 – TBC

Next Meeting: Thursday 14th December

Time: 7.30 pm

Venue : 4 Victoria Road

www.salisburyai.com www.twitter.com/salisburyai www.facebook.com/salisburyai

Campaign box: Andrew