



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Taunton Group

Newsletter

September 2013
www.amnestytaunton.wordpress.com

Welcome

All supporters and friends are welcome to our meetings, held from 8–10pm on the second Tuesday of each month at the Silver Street Baptist Church, Taunton. The next meetings are on:

- **8 October:** Ann Marcus will speak on the Middle East and North Africa.
- **12 November**
- **10 December:** Write for Rights, Amnesty's seasonal greetings card campaign for prisoners of conscience.
- **14 January**

For more details, please contact:

Chairman

Martin Shirley
Email: martin@crich.eclipse.co.uk
Tel: 01460 62608

Secretary

Rosanna Barton
Email: rosanna.barton@btinternet.com
Tel: 01460 234213

Treasurer

Robin Peeler
Email: peeler.robin@gmail.com
Tel: 01823 284001

Voices raised in support of Amnesty

The renowned Taunton Deane Male Voice Choir (TDMVC) has very kindly arranged to perform a fund-raising concert for Amnesty International. The concert will be at St Michael's Church, Galmington, at **7.30pm on Saturday 26th October 2013.**

Here is what the Choir says about its involvement: "The Taunton Deane Male Voice Choir is delighted to be performing in support of Amnesty International in the church of St Michael in Galmington. The choir is in its 67th year and is proud of its strong association with Taunton, having the Mayor as its Patron. Over the course of the last twelve months it has raised more than £11,500 for charity and has sung in many venues in Somerset and beyond. Furthermore in June this year it took part in the Cornwall International Male Voice Choral Festival and during this period it performed in Truro Cathedral, The Lost Gardens of Heligan, The Eden Project and Trebah



Gardens.

The programme for the Amnesty concert will cover a wide variety from romantic love songs through semi-religious numbers to rousing battle tunes and one special number relating to and specifically composed for the TDMVC. In addition we are pleased to welcome as our star guests the Farey Family, who will sing a range of folk and other popular songs."

This is a not-to-be-missed opportunity to hear some really enjoyable performances, and the proceeds from the concert will be shared between Amnesty and St Michael's.

We are most grateful to the Choir and St. Michael's for their support and commitment.

We look forward to seeing you there!

How to book

Tickets for the concert cost £10. Please book your tickets in advance with the Taunton Amnesty Group's Treasurer on 01823 284001 or from the Church office on 01823 332371; cheques payable to 'St Michael's Church' please. Seats will be reserved for payments received by 1st October.

If you only do one thing this month...

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



Burmese Prisoner of Conscience Dr Tun Aung.

BURMA: CALL FOR THE RELEASE OF PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE
Dr Tun Aung is the Taunton Amnesty Group's current adopted prisoner of conscience in Burma.

In June 2012 he was asked by the Burmese authorities to help the police in trying to stop violence starting due to the heightened ethnic tensions in his region. He actively tried to calm an agitated crowd – only to be arrested later by the people he had agreed to help, and charged with inciting violence, which led to his being sentenced to 17 years in prison.

Please will you write, as soon as possible, to:
U Nyan Naing Win, Legal Adviser, President's Office, Nay Pyi Taw, Republic of the Union of Myanmar

In your own words, welcome his government's recent releases of prisoners of conscience and appeal for Dr Tun Aung and all remaining prisoners of conscience to have their cases reviewed as a matter of urgency, with a view to their being immediately and unconditionally released.

Human rights in the Middle East and North Africa

The problems of the Middle East are so great that it is easy to feel overwhelmed. What can a local group do? We have decided to focus on the plight of an individual in Egypt, Azza Hilal Ahmad Suleiman. In December 2011, Azza was part of a large protest at Tahrir Square which was dispersed by soldiers; as she was leaving, she intervened to assist a young woman who was being attacked by the soldiers, and was herself brutally beaten. Her skull was fractured, and she barely escaped with her life. Despite her complaints, no-one has been held to account for what took place. Azza's case is not only worthy of support in itself, but

it is also representative of the issues of violence against women in Egypt, and the absence of legal accountability in the Egyptian military.

We also support other cases, when urgent action is required. Sadly there is no shortage of such cases.

Middle East workshop

At our meeting on 8 October Ann Marcus, who is an expert on Middle East issues, will be telling us much more about the problems of this area, and the work of Amnesty International to alleviate them. Why not come and join us to learn more?

* **Tues 8 October, 8pm.**
Silver Street Baptist Church, Taunton.

Stay in touch with our exciting new group website

amnestytaunton.wordpress.com

We've launched an exciting new website, offering you a simple way to keep up-to-date with group campaigns, activities and actions. Simply visit **amnestytaunton.wordpress.com** and subscribe to receive news, actions and updates via email.

If you have any difficulties subscribing, please email us at:
amnestytaunton@gmail.com

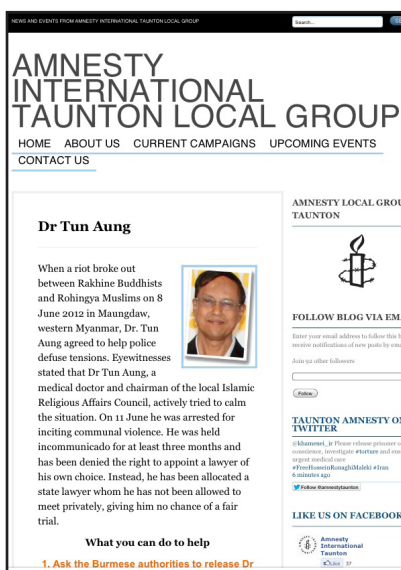


You can also follow us on Twitter:

@**amnestytaunton**

and Facebook:

www.facebook.com/amnestytaunton



Why Amnesty matters

Remember, it all helps: each time you donate, every petition you sign, every text action and letter you send to the authorities, each heartfelt message of solidarity, and every fundraising challenge you set yourself.

Thank you, as ever, for taking the time to protect human rights - it really does make a difference.

*Kate Allen,
Director, Amnesty
International UK*