

**Amnesty International Australia (AIA) National Board Report
for meetings held on 10 July and 19 August 2023**

Agenda item	Information / Report
International matters	<p>The Board noted that no motions were to be discussed at the 2023 Global Assembly.</p> <p>The Board approved the international nominee recommendations, as suggested by the International Nominations Committee, to be voted on from 14-21 July 2023, and noted the distribution to AI Asia Pacific chairs of a summary of the Global Strategic Framework - 2022 Impact and Progress report.</p>
Annual General Meeting	<p>The Board discussed matters relating to the Annual General Meeting that was held on 3 June 2023.</p> <p>It was confirmed that at all times the 2023 AGM was chaired in accordance with the AI Constitution and the Standing Orders for General Meetings adopted at the AGM.</p> <p>The outcome of votes on resolutions was also confirmed, as per clause 12.8 in the AI Australia constitution regarding decisions at general meetings. Abstentions are included when calculating the total number of votes cast in order to determine the majority (or special majority where relevant).</p> <p>The Board will consider clarifying how voting is counted on resolutions at a future Annual General Meeting.</p> <p>The Board decided to expel Drew Pavlou from membership pursuant to clause 11.5 of the Constitution following his behaviour at the AGM and subsequently on social media.</p>
Half year review of 2023 work plans and budget	<p>The AI Australia Management Team (AMT) presented a half-year review on the progress against the KPIs for the year.</p> <p>The decline in fundraising income and increased operational expenses linked to the IT environment had put some pressure on the budget. The AMT will continue to implement its fundraising strategy, with a focus on philanthropic income, identifying cost savings opportunities, reviewing the operating model and developing a five-year plan.</p> <p>The Board received an update on ongoing discussions with the International Secretariat at finance team, national director and board chair levels regarding waiving AI Australia’s assessment contribution.</p>



Management reports

The Board noted the August management report, the August 2023, the June and July 2023 Finance reports, and the June and July 2023 Fundraising dashboards.

Key highlights included:

International:

- Over that period (July to 4 August), the focus was primarily on preparations for the Global Assembly and section visits. The National Director visited AI Netherlands on 31 July and 1 August with the Director of AI Malaysia. The visit program included fundraising strategy, national and international governance, activism, movement building and campaign strategy. The delegation then travelled together to the Global Assembly commencing 4 August.
- The National Director was appointed to the Coalition Leadership Team (CLT) of the International Secretariat as one of two section representatives. This role commences in September 2023.

Human Rights Act / Right to Protest

- Submissions for the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry on human rights were due on 31 July. The inquiry was to hold hearings in August and September, and is due to issue a report in March 2024, which will recommend to the government whether or not to legislate a Human Rights Act.
- As well as developing a comprehensive submission from Amnesty International Australia, we mobilised online supporters to send 4,130 email submissions to the Inquiry. At least 9 Action Groups and ALCs also sent submissions showing their support for a Human Rights Act. This allowed us to demonstrate to the inquiry, and the government, that there is significant support for a Human Rights Act from everyday people, not only human rights and legal organisations. MPs have previously told us that the campaign for a Human Rights Act was hampered by the fact that they were only seeing support from human rights and legal organisations.
- We tested messages, and developed a supporter journey for a wide base of supporters, to increase the number of email submissions sent.
- AI Australia made a submission to the Australian Labor Party National Platform consultation in the lead up to the 49th Australian Labor Party Conference in August 2023, where we also hosted an event about the Human Rights Act. Amnesty's submission focuses on key aspects concerning human rights in Australia that the Albanese Labor Government must implement,



including but not limited to, the establishment of a Human Rights Act.

Community is Everything (CIE) / Indigenous Rights

- **NAIDOC week events:** Indigenous Rights team members actively participated in various NAIDOC week events, where they delivered speeches on Indigenous Rights and the importance of the Voice to Parliament.
- **Referendum/Voice Campaign Launch:** The AI Australia referendum/voice campaign was launched on 8 August. This campaign was aimed at raising awareness about the Voice to Parliament and its significance for Indigenous communities.
- **Strategic engagement on the Voice:** We conducted two webinars to engage our major stakeholders about the Voice to Parliament and outlining out campaign strategies. The second webinar targeted ALC members and Amnesty group convenors and provided insights into the Indigenous Political advocacy leading to the Uluru Statement and how they can be involved with more webinars planned. Rodney Dillon has been actively engaging with key politicians including the Prime Minister in his capacity on the Referendum Working Group. His efforts are helping to bring Indigenous Rights and the Voice to Parliament to the forefront of political discussions and solidifying Amnesty's relationships with decision-makers he has been speaking at events across the country.
- **Raising support and awareness for the Voice:** An educational quiz was developed and promoted to the general public, to help people understand what they will be voting for in the Referendum and what can be achieved with the Voice - the quiz targeted audiences on Facebook and Instagram with the aim of swaying people likely to vote no in the Referendum. A second action has been developed to invite the general public to direct questions about the Voice to our First Nations campaigners, to help them make an informed decision on voting for the Voice - this action was also promoted through Facebook and Instagram. 55,859 people had been reached with these actions by early August.
- **The Body Shop partnership:** With the ongoing help from the philanthropy team we finalised the artwork for our Holiday gift tags launching in September or October and have continued to grow our relationship with the Body Shop, who put our campaign materials for the Referendum campaign in their stores across the country.
- **First Nations Delegation to Parliament:** As a result of our community consultation and with the expertise of our Strategic Campaigns Lead, Kyinzom Dhongdue, we took a delegation of First Nations community members to Parliament to speak to relevant politicians about Raise the Age and Justice



Reinvestment on 7 and 8 August.

Individuals at Risk / International

- Our work has contributed to improvements in 72 people's human rights situation, and 6 systemic changes that improve human rights, during this vision period.
- Vietnamese-Australian retired baker and human rights defender, Chau Van Kham, was finally released from a Vietnamese prison and arrived safely back in Sydney on 11 July. The *former* prisoner of conscience was greeted at the airport by DFAT and ministerial officials as well as his wife, Trang, and lawyer, Dan. AI Australia led Amnesty's work in securing his release, 4 years into a 12 year sentence - DFAT and parliamentary advocacy, multiple media stories, strategy coordination and advice with family and lawyers, and mobilisation with 39,000 actions taken by Amnesty supporters. Thank you to everyone who played a part.
- Egyptian human rights lawyer Mohamed Baker, who had been locked up since 2019, received a presidential pardon on 19 July and was released from prison the following day. Mohamed has now been reunited with his family and loved ones. AI Australia worked for Mohamed as part of the 2021 W4R campaign, collecting over 9,500 signatures.
- Zimbabwean activists Cecillia Chimбири and Joanah Mamombe, who were abducted and tortured after leading a peaceful protest in Zimbabwe, have been acquitted. AI Australia worked for Cecilia and Joanah, as well as fellow activist Netsai Marova, as part of the 2022 W4R campaign, collecting 4,000 signatures for their case. Cecilia and Joanah [sent a video](#) thanking Amnesty for the support and messages of solidarity.
- Emirlendris Benítez was finally transferred to a medical facility in late July where she was diagnosed and received treatment for health conditions she suffers from as a result of torture and inhumane prison conditions. She has been arbitrarily detained since 2018 and is currently serving an unfair 30-year prison sentence in Venezuela. We continue demanding her immediate and unconditional release. Thousands of Amnesty Australia supporters took action for her in recent weeks.

Write for Rights

- The last two months have been heavily invested in writing the global Write for Rights campaign strategy for Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul with the International Secretariat and Grata Fund. With them being one of the ten global cases that all Amnesty entities are being asked to campaign for, we have produced with the IS not only a 15 page strategy but also materials including: poster case sheet, human rights education units, letter to target



(Australian PM), as well as social media test ads. More assets including a video we are producing in-house by the Story & Content team will be available soon.

Refugee Rights

- The Federal Court found in July that the Australian Government did in fact have the legislative power to detain refugee Mostafa (Moz) Azimitabar in two Melbourne-based hotels operating as Alternative Places of Detention (APODs) under Australia's Migration Act 1958 (Cth). On Tuesday, 1 August, Moz lodged his appeal against the decision which will now be heard by the Full Bench of the Federal Court, likely in February or May 2024.
- The documentary film 'Freedom is Beautiful' premiered at the Sydney and Melbourne film festivals, taking out the prize of best documentary film at the Melbourne Festival. The film follows the lives of refugees Mostafa Azimitabar and Farhad Bandesh post their release from detention in Australia. Amnesty contributed funds to the production of the film and we're working with AIUK colleagues around building the film into their plans in response to their own anti-refugee legislation. The screenings were also attended by select major donors.
- On 22 June 2023 AI Australia in partnership with the Australian Institute of Music held a musical night showcasing musical talent from recently arrived refugees from Afghanistan. The featured musicians are those individuals/families who arrived based on our active advocacy and direct case escalation with the Department for high risk individuals in need of priority processing and resettlement to Australia. The music event was attended by prominent people from DHA, Immigration, Human Rights Commission, major donors and others, and was also live streamed. The event was fully covered by SBS World.
- AI Australia representatives attended the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (**ATCR**) with UNHCR and resettlement countries, in Geneva from 26 - 28 July. The key issues of focus for AI Australia at the ATCR were: further our work on convincing the Australian (and other) governments to do more to resettle Rohingya refugees; meet with UNHCR Afghanistan staff to progress our work on behalf of Afghan refugees (work we are doing in collaboration with the IS Afghan researcher). As well as an opportunity to highlight Amnesty's recent [report on persecution of LGBTQI+ refugees in Kenya.](#)) This also enabled AIA to highlight our work on LGBTQI+ refugees more broadly and escalate a number of the cases we have been working on.
- On 1 August AI Australia representatives attended a briefing in Parliament House Canberra, convened by Senator Pocock and



MP Kylea Tink on key refugee issues of concern. 13 MPs and Senators attended the briefing with 17 NGOs giving updates on various aspects of concern relating to Australia's refugee and asylum policies. AI Australia spoke specifically on issues relating to regional protection. Following the meeting there was a press conference where AI Australia joined the independent MPs and other NGOs, calling for a Royal Commission into offshore processing.

- On 31 July AI Australia representatives gave evidence to the Panel set up by the government as part of its [Multicultural Review Framework](#).
- The Refugee Rights Team completed planning sessions, with activities mapped out for the remainder of 2023 and 2024 and setting a course for the long term direction of our priority campaign focus. Which remains an increase to the Humanitarian Program. As part of this planning we have ensured the voice of lived experience is centred by expanding our relationship with NRAAG (National Refugee-led Advisory and Advocacy Group). They will be acting as the advisory body for the refugee rights campaign. NRAAG is a team of professionals with lived experience. They provide advice to a few different organisations in the refugee sector including Refugee Council of Australia.

Casework and Campaign Support

- The Campaign Support Team had an incredible win with a case relating to a woman at risk from Syria based in Lebanon. She is a medically blind woman with two teenage daughters with medical needs who are Australian citizens and were abandoned by their father. On 1 August 2023 the client was issued a humanitarian visa. AI Australia (Graham Thom) was the proposer for this case and will be supported by Settlement Services International (SSI).
- In addition the team is currently working on 3 other cases of similar nature with the International Secretariat and its Global Relief Fund.
- Case escalation and advocacy has continued to bring refugees to Australia over June to August, with Australia welcoming an additional 7 refugee families.

LGBTQIA+

- Gender, sexual orientation and variations of sex characteristics have been included in the proposed shortlist of new topics for the next Census published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. AI Australia has been campaigning for this since 2021, with submissions, advocacy meetings and handing over [1,000 personal stories](#) from supporters and activists to the Assistant Treasurer that illustrate why it is crucial LGBTQIA+ people are properly counted.



Right to Protest

- The Right to Protest campaign team began planning for AI Australia's rollout of the Flagship Campaign, "Protect the Protest", which will launch at the end of September. As part of the planning, we undertook sensing activities with key audiences to ensure we are heading in the right direction with the strategy of the campaign. This included a focus group of experienced LGBTQIA+, diaspora and First Nations activists who have lived experience of protesting for their communities. We plan to continue to work with this group as an ongoing part of the campaign.
- 212 messages of solidarity were collected for LGBTQIA+ people in Türkiye, as part of a global action for Pride. Since 2015, Pride events have been systemically banned in Türkiye, and this year has seen prominent figures ramping up anti-LGBTQIA+ rhetoric, with increasing discrimination against LGBTQIA+ people being observed. The messages were also sent to authorities in cities where marches are taking place, to send a clear message that people around the world stand with LGBTQIA+ people in Türkiye and their right to march, protest and celebrate Pride.

Climate Justice

- The end of June saw the wonderful culmination of our two climate justice campaigns we have been working on - our International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion (ICJAO) work with Greenpeace and other Alliance partners, and our work for Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul with Grata Fund. These have been separate campaigns for AI Australia, but through our work the two have met in real life on the Rainbow Warrior while it docked in Cairns on the eve of its pacific trip - spreading the word of the ICJAO campaign, and having Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul join for the 11-day Vanuatu leg. It was an important relationship building moment for Amnesty, Greenpeace and Grata Fund. Without this important investment in climate justice campaigning over the past year by AI Australia staff and activists we would not have had this moment, we would not have had Uncle Paul and Uncle Pabai in the global ten cases for Write for Rights, and we would not have had Amnesty (with AI Australia leading) in the global Alliance for ICJAO which secured UN support for an advisory opinion in May.

Media coverage:

- Share of voice has been benchmarked against key organisations in the human rights space in Australia and compares print and online coverage only.



- During this period there were 2.58k pieces of coverage (print, online and broadcast).
- Key coverage included:
 - Refugee week: Amnesty's campaign to raise the humanitarian intake,
 - Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Australia,
 - Federal court hands down decision in Amnesty International's strategic litigation against Alternative Places of Detention for refugees and asylum seekers,
 - First Nations justice: planned and reactive media to Raise the Age of criminal responsibility,
 - Australian citizen Chau Van Kham freed from Vietnamese prison,
 - Death penalty: Amnesty's new report, and ongoing amplification of cases of people facing the death penalty or who were tragically executed in Vietnam, Iran and Singapore,
 - Sudan: new report exposing rampant war crimes in civil war

Membership:

- New member induction materials have been created including a slide deck, planning notes, and generic reusable social media promotion tiles. These induction materials are standardised to ensure basic information is shared with all new members across the country, but also allow for modifications to align with regional/ALC contexts, e.g.: upcoming events, local actions, etc. These materials will be made available to all ALCs who will be encouraged to make contact with and welcome new members to the Amnesty community.
- Recruitment was underway for new Youth Advisory Group members.

Activist Leadership:

- There currently are 617 Activist Leaders, 183 Core and 434 Committed. Leader numbers have remained stable throughout a number of challenges this year, which is positive. We've surpassed our goal of training 1,000 activists. 1,034 activists have completed training across 2022 and 2023. With the People Powered Strategy we plan to shift the focus from just growing the number of leaders to measurements of growth in the capacity and power of leaders and the impact they're having.
- Working alongside Activism Membership Committee peers and Organisers, we've established a Steering Committee and have started planning for Amnesty's 2023 Virtual Activism Forum on



	<p>November 18 & 19. An initial Save the Date was sent to activists in July. Registration was due to open in September.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Organising Team has worked with the Activist Skills collective to successfully facilitate the first 3 out of 4 Leadership Skills trainings for new Activism Leadership Committee members. The final Session 4 was held on 14 August. • Organisers have initiated a new rhythm of once monthly coaching sessions to offer additional support to ALCs. <p>Organisational profile and brand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with research agency Fiftyfive5, we've undertaken deep dive research into the perceptions, human rights interests (particularly the right to protest), motivations, needs and barriers to support for two key audiences: general public youth 16-25 and existing Amnesty supporters who've shown a decline in their support and advocacy over the last two years. The rich insights gathered will help inform our youth strategy, audience retention strategy and right to protest campaign plans. <p>Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Action Plan (2023-2025) was launched and shared with staff and the rest of the movement in July (through Slack channels and the People Powered Bulletin). • The first round of feedback on our draft Reconciliation Action Plan has been received from Reconciliation Australia. We expect another 1-2 rounds of feedback and a launch date for the RAP in Q1 2024. • The Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Community of Practice (REDI CoP) brings together equity, diversity, access and inclusion officers from the Amnesty International global movement to collectively support and influence equity, diversity, access and inclusion initiatives, programs and practices in the International Secretariat, the Regional offices and the Section offices. The REDI CoP currently has 15 members from 13 sections and 2 members from the International Secretariat. This year, members of the REDI CoP, including Phoebe Mwanza (AIA's Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Specialist), spoke at the Global Assembly in August on "Deconstructing Amnesty's practices, power and policies through an anti-racism and intersectional lens".
<p>Risk register</p>	<p>The Board conducted its regular review of the risk register, major risks and emerging risks.</p>



<p>Global Assembly</p>	<p>The National Director reported back on her recent visit to AI Netherlands, AI UK and attendance at the Global Assembly in Brussels.</p> <p>The Global Assembly lasted for three days and gathered 300 delegates, with at least one person from each Section. In addition, Section Directors, Chairs and Youth delegates all had their own, additional meeting. Volunteer United Nations interpreters did a magnificent job at translating the meeting into English, French and Spanish.</p> <p>In the past, Global Assemblies had been very technical meetings focussing on resolutions and motions. The 2023 Global Assembly had plenary sessions each day, as well as capacity building sessions and workshops. Each workshop had actions and responsibilities for moving these actions forward.</p> <p>The Australian Section was very well represented, with Phoebe Mwanza, AI Australia Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Specialist leading one of the capacity building sessions, and Gavin Choong, member, ALC member and global youth collective, being the leader of the closing keynote. Both were sponsored by the International Secretariat. The Australian delegation consisted of the National Director, the Board Chair and the Global Assembly delegate/Chair of the International Issues Committee. Ian Gibson, member of the Membership Review Committee, was also in attendance.</p> <p>Two Australian candidates, Kate Waterford and Dawna Wright, were elected to the Finance & Audit Committee and the International Board respectively..</p> <p>The National Director participated in the feminist leadership workshop, as well as the global distribution of funds, an implication for AI Australia being an increase to its assessment amount. It was noted that the workshop group advocated for a higher percentage of the assessment to go to RAM-funded sections.</p> <p>It was the National Director's 4th global assembly and the first one she attended face to face, which made a huge difference. She was pleased to report that the Asia Pacific Region is strong and collegial, and that its voice is being heard.</p>
<p>Nomination and Assessment Committee report</p>	<p>Directors noted the Nomination & Assessment Committee's (NAC) report on its work leading up to the 2023 AGM and agreed to task the NAC with the recruitment of an Indigenous Board director between the 2023 and 2024 Annual General Meetings.</p>
<p>Human Rights Impact presentation</p>	<p>Indigenous Rights Team members joined the meeting to report back on the community consultations recently held in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Darwin and Perth. A number of meetings had been secured thanks to personal connections, with some of the stakeholders being the same people with whom we have engaged for years.</p>



	<p>They provided an overview on the engagement with key stakeholders through an “Inform, Consult and Involve, collaborate, Empower” model.</p> <p>Key concerns expressed by the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of implementation of the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and the Royal Commission into Don Dale ● Lack of justice reinvestment ● Housing ● Raising the age continues to be a priority <p>Key insights and takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AI Australia needs to change our campaigning a little to secure more funding for Aboriginal-led solutions. ● It is hard to get traction in Western Australia. ● There are unique challenges to central Australia. ● Media reports about the violence in Alice Springs are grossly misleading. ● Key decision makers want informed advocacy, community-centric solutions and empowering regional voices. ● The need for consultation and engagement is ongoing and consistent. ● We need to expand our network and build new relationships. ● There is an expectation that AI Australia should support communities more; the team explained that we are short-staffed. ● We need to continue to work on our relationship with the community so that it is not felt to be extractive and more reciprocal. <p>The team took a First Nations delegation from community groups (including “Strong Grandmothers of the Central Desert”) to Parliament to speak to relevant politicians about Raise the Age and Justice Reinvestment on 7 and 8 August.</p> <p>As for all quarterly human rights impact updates to the Board, all external Board Committee members had been invited to this human rights impact segment.</p>
<p>Board Committee minutes and appointments</p>	<p>The Board noted the minutes from the latest meetings of the Activism and Membership Committee, Audit and Risk Committee, Governance Committee and IT Roadmap Steering Committee.</p>
<p>Next meeting</p>	<p>The next scheduled Board meeting will be held on 24 October 2023.</p>