

**Amnesty International Australia (AIA) National Board Report
for meeting held on 24 October 2023**

Agenda item	Information / Report
People Power Strategy	The board noted the first draft of the People Power Strategy implementation plan.
Budget	<p>The budget and reserve levels for 2024 were approved.</p> <p>The budget will aim to return to growth and invest in a sustainable and diverse income stream. It will deliver a growth of 2% and a surplus of \$813K. The budget will be reviewed to account for the Pareto collapse. AI Australia is unlikely to be able to make a full financial contribution and we continue our engagement with the International Secretariat on this matter.</p>
Policy review	<p>As part of the annual policy review, the Board reviewed all the Section Policies that were due to be updated.</p> <p><i>Note: Policies can be found on this public site.</i></p>
Management reports	<p>The Board noted the October management report, the August and September 2023 Finance reports, and the August and September 2023 Fundraising dashboards.</p> <p>Key highlights included:</p> <p>International:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The crisis in Israel/Gaza/OPT had been a focus for the global movement. The International Secretariat have established the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crisis Response Team supported by the Coalition Leadership Team - Movement Sounding Board, represented by 8 Sections - The Regional Office, in particular the Israel/OPT team, and crisis teams including the evidence lab had been planning, reviewing and assessing videos and other evidence, identifying survivors, victims and their families for interviews. The global Law & Policy Programme team was assisting with the legal and policy input. ● Following the Global assembly, the National Director visited the International Secretariat office in London and met with the Global Finance and Global Fundraising teams. The purpose of the visit was to discuss the financial performance and assessment requests to the IS, and to discuss global considerations in fundraising strategy development.



- The National Director was inducted into the Coalition Leadership Team and attended the first meeting in September.
- The National Director and senior leaders met with the Asia Pacific Regional Office. One of these meetings included diaspora representatives and leaders from the Uyghur community discussing directly with the Regional Director and China Researcher areas of concern and priorities for consideration.

National:

- The People Powered Strategy had been finalised and the first operational plan to deliver this strategy was being workshopped with staff teams to ensure collective direction and shared goals.
- The Voice campaign had been a priority across the organisation in the final push towards referendum voting.

Human Rights Act

- Amnesty presented at the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry into a federal human rights framework on 27 September alongside Human Rights Watch. We were able to answer Committee member's questions about how a proposed Human Rights Act would work, and to share the support we have documented in our polling.
- The Committee noted the 4,000 email submissions sent by Amnesty supporters to the inquiry.
- We also held an event at the Labor Fringe conference event on 18 August, during which we shared why we need a Human Rights Act, and how people can support the campaign, with Labor and union members. The attendees were engaged in the event and supportive of a Human Rights Act, and members of the Parliamentary Joint Committee were at the event, and able to see that support.
- A few days later, a resolution passed the Labor conference concerning a Human Rights Act meaning Labor's Policy Platform now includes a call to consider a human rights charter (Act).
- We have reported back to supporters who have taken action in support of a Human Rights Act.
- Activists have continued to run consultations with their communities about a Human Rights Act, including the Darwin Action Group on 29 and 30 September.
- Activists in the Northern Territory have started a campaign in support of a Human Rights Act in the Northern Territory, in the lead up to the Territory election in August 2024. They launched their petition for a Northern Territory Human Rights Act on 1 October through a stall at the Nightcliff Sunday Market in Darwin.



- Launceston College also held their annual Peace Walk with schools, community organisations, and a number of MPs, which they used to advocate for a federal Human Rights Act.
- We will continue consultations, and will meet with MPs in mid-October, and prepare for the release of the inquiry's report in March (which will recommend whether or not to legislate a HRA). The government's appetite to legislate a HRA will be affected by the outcome of the Referendum. The campaign strategy will be adjusted in accordance with the referendum result.
- We supported a trip by Hazara women from Afghanistan to Parliament to meet MPs ahead of the anniversary of the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan on 15 August. Our support included providing funds for travel, inviting MPs to meet with the women, and sharing the media release with journalists. We also shared content related to the anniversary, and worked with the women to email Amnesty's action takers about their trip. We will work with the Hazara community on the release of our upcoming report on the persecution of Hazara by the Taliban, and as they progress their advocacy and campaigning.
- We worked with the Iranian community and DFAT on several roundtables about human rights in Afghanistan. These roundtables followed a meeting we helped organise with the Foreign Minister and Labor MPs earlier in the year. These roundtables allowed the government to hear the communities' thoughts and what they were asking the government to do, and for the community to hear the government's thoughts on those asks.
- We marked the anniversary of protests in Iran in September, promoting diaspora events and sharing content created by the International Secretariat. Activists also supported events, including an event in Melbourne.
- We are organising a trip to Parliament with representatives from the Uyghur, Tibetan, Hong Konger and Chinese dissident communities in mid-October. This will be the first time these communities have visited Parliament together, and is an opportunity to highlight their concerns about human rights ahead of Albanese's visit to China (expected in late-October, early-November). We will mobilise our supporters to support the communities' asks of Albanese and highlight the trip in media/website.
- We made a [submission to the Australian Government](#), who are preparing Australia's mid-term report in response to its third cycle Universal Periodic Review (UPR) that took place in 2021. Mid-term reporting is increasingly an important feature of the UPR reporting and implementation cycles which takes place every 4.5 years.



Write For Rights

- We officially launched Write for Right 2023 in the Australian section of Amnesty. You can meet the 10 global cases and take action for all of them all at once [here](#). Materials which have been prepared for activists, or anyone who would like to take offline action are [here](#).

Refugees Rights

- In September, Zaki Haidari, Amnesty's Refugee Campaigner, attended the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN's) 9th Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights
- At that meeting Zaki was elected Chair of APRRN's Australia NZ Pacific Working Group and is now on the APRRN Steering Committee
- The meeting was followed by the two day UNHCR Regional Consultations with NGOs in Asia and the Pacific, also attended by AIA's Refugee Campaigner.
- Further international engagement in September included AIA's Refugee Adviser attending two virtual meetings of UNHCR's "Friends of Resettlement" group that is preparing a pledge on resettlement for the December Global Refugee Forum (GRF)
- On 3 October AIA was part of a private briefing for key NGOs, by DHA and Minister's advisors, on the upcoming Government response to the Nixon Review and changes to be made to the refugee status determination process to tackle the backlog of people seeking asylum in Australia.
- AIA refugee rights campaigner presented at the Labor fringe at the Labor 49th conference in Brisbane highlighting the ongoing human rights violation of people seeking asylum and refugees in the detention centres, PNG and Nauru and the community on bridging visas. The ALP National Conference passed a series of amendments to the National Platform to ensure the rights of asylum seekers and refugees are protected. ALP committed to providing work and study rights for asylum seekers and initiating a parliamentary inquiry into immigration detention.
- The refugee rights team has continued collaborating with the refugee sector and refugee rights advocates for the refugee rights campaign for the next 3 years.

Casework and Campaign Support

- During the reporting period we had some success in getting Afghans out of Pakistan (Afghans), and have managed to secure an additional 13 visas for families who are now on their way to Australia.



- The team is conducting active advocacy on 3 Rohingya cases.
- 150 new cases were escalated to the Department of Immigration in September.
- The team successfully managed to negotiate with DFAT to pay for airline tickets for minors to fly with their mum and they were due to arrive early November.
- Cross collaboration with IS on Kakuma and some African cases (8 in total)

Community is Everything (CIE)

- Amnesty organised a First Nations delegation to Canberra including community leaders and activists from Alice Springs and Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory. They included the Strong Grandmothers of the Central Desert whom we met during our last community consultation trip in June. The delegation met with a wide range of MPs including Indigenous Affairs Minister Linda Burney, Assistant Indigenous Affairs Minister Malarndirri McCarthy, Attorney General Mark Dreyfus' First Nations Adviser, and a photo opportunity with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.
- Together we called for national leadership to raise the age of criminal responsibility and for greater and long term investments in First Nations-led Justice Reinvestment programs that will help Aboriginal kids in communities and away from the prison system.
- Since then, the Government has opened the application for Justice Reinvestment funding that was promised in the Federal Budget. We have been supporting one of the First Nations delegation members to apply for that funding.
- Since the visit, we have supported one of the Grandmothers to get her grandson who has been incarcerated for many years out of prison for a day to attend his great-grandmother's sorry business, a cultural right that was denied to him earlier in the year when his grandfather died.

Referendum/The Voice campaign

- Amnesty partnered with the Uluru Youth Dialogues to host nationwide Picnics for Change. There were 30+ events held across the country where Amnesty Staff and Uluru Youth Dialogues, hands on hearts delegates provided amnesty resources on the voice and other information, merchandise and light refreshments. This was a great event and was a great opportunity to engage with the public and promote our work on the voice and other CIE work.
- The team hosted a range of webinars for staff, volunteers and the public, developed a range of resources and partnered with TBWA



for an amazing collaboration with the help of ACQ to platform Aboriginal “storytellers” on Australian celebrities social media talking about the effect of the voice on their lives (platforming lived experience) .

- Indigenous Rights Team members went to Darwin/Larrakia country for community engagement and to host the Darwin Picnic for Change, a great opportunity to engage with the community and key organisations in the Northern Territory.
- Indigenous Rights Team members took part in a wide range of events for the voice, representing Amnesty international.

The Board and AMT acknowledged the disappointing result from the Voice referendum, whilst also acknowledging the creative and impactful AIA Voice campaign. A thank you was offered to the entire campaign team. The Board and AMT acknowledged the amazing leadership of Rodney, Kacey and Rachel and their tireless campaigning.

Climate Justice

- Amnesty International Australia joined a coalition of NGOs to support young climate campaigner Anjali Sharma and her campaign for [Duty of Care legislation](#). We will be making our submission to the [inquiry](#), asking young members in our movement to be involved, and, working as part of a coalition to progress campaigning around this as best we can.
- In good news, the Australian Government recently announced that it is re-joining the UN-led Green Climate Fund, reversing the former government’s decision to withdraw in 2018. The fund to be contributed by wealthy countries will support climate mitigation and adaptation projects in less wealthy countries. One of our advocacy asks to the Australian government has been to "increase Australia’s contribution to global climate finance to less-wealthy countries for mitigation and adaptation measures to reach the 100 billion USD annual goal this year." This \$100 billion a year was a climate finance commitment by wealthy countries set in 2009, which has not been met. The Green Climate Fund is one of the key channels of contributing to that \$100 billion global target.

Coverage for this reporting period:

- **Refugee Rights**
 - Media interest in AIA’s comment on UK refugee and asylum seeker policies
- **First Nations Justice:**



- Solid coverage of Amnesty and spokespeople including Kacey Teerman and Rodney Dillon in context of Voice referendum campaign.
- AIA and other organisations condemn QLD government's failure to uphold its own human rights act

- **Individuals at Risk (death penalty, political prisoners)**

- International Secretary-General's travel to advocate on behalf of Bahraini activist Abdulhadi al-Khawaja with his daughter

- **Conflict zones:**

- AI quoted in relation to Sudan conflict, relating to war crimes and the unacceptable humanitarian crisis for civilians

- **International advocacy:**

- Reporting on protests for anniversary of Mahsa Amini's death, and Iran crackdown
- Media interest on Indonesian human rights issues, including blasphemy law breach, and crackdown on demonstrators against commercial development
- Reporting covered AI's call for transparency and accountability on for the victims of the Lebanese port explosion on the third anniversary

- **Local News for Amnesty Activists:**

- Excellent local coverage for Tamar Valley Peace Festival Walk for Peace, featuring student activists and organiser and AIA activist leader Gillian Pitt.

- **Other issues**

- Prominent inclusion of AIA staff in Four Corners episode investigating the AFL's culture and homophobia
- AIA identified amongst 70+ other charities affected by Pareto Phone breach in reporting

Total Mentions 1 Aug - 30 Sep: 5,000 (+42% compared to the previous period of 3.53k)

Membership:

- Over the period, there were 5135 members, including 196 Youth members.
- The online Member Community platform continues to be a very quiet space with minimal levels of engagement by members, despite membership staff ensuring new content is posted weekly.



However, registrations for the member-only Members Forum, held on Tuesday 31 October, 2023, indicated a relatively high level of member engagement..

- Since launching our first youth engagement program, Diverse Voices, we have seen an increase in the depth of engagement from the youth in our movement. We had 17 youth RSVP to the Diverse Voices Program and 14 put their hand up to be a part of the Activism Forum working group to plan the youth session.

Activist Leadership

- Working alongside AMC peers and Organisers, the Activism Forum Steering Committee was on track with planning and recruitment for Amnesty's 2023 Virtual Activism Forum on November 18 & 19.
- The Organising Team had worked with the Activist Skills collective to successfully facilitate all 4 Leadership Skills trainings for new ALC members. The final Session 4 was held on Monday 14 August.
- Organisers held our first Amnesty Activist Huddle in September. Members from 12 Amnesty activist teams across 5 states and territories joined the virtual huddle. At the huddle, activists connected with each other and received priority campaign updates. The October Activist Huddle was to focus on the People Powered Strategy.

People power workshops

- The global group on activism (GGA) developed the people powered modules in 2022. These modules were developed for the purpose of supporting sections to transition to the people powered direction of the global strategic framework. Seven sections have now received these workshops and started to develop next steps on their own path to people powered approaches. Amnesty Australia's movement director led one of these workshops in AI Nepal in October. The session was highly successful with AI Nepal leaving the 3 days of workshops with an agreed definition of people power for their section and 3 priorities identified for the section to action. Those priorities were (1) reforming membership to be aligned to people power and ensuring young people stay engaged post age 25, (2) mapping the motivations of the movement to assess what new activism models they want to consider, and (3) developing a plan of action to start to tackle issues of diversity and inclusion with a priority focus on LGBTQI and class.

Diversity Inclusion & Wellbeing (DIW)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We participated in the 2023 Diversity Council of Australia (DCA) Inclusive Employer Index (Index). The Index is conducted nationally every 2 years for organisations that are members of the DCA. The DCA has advised that we have met the criteria to be listed as an Inclusive Employer for 2023 - 2024. • Two sessions on Mental Health matters were delivered by the Australian Red Cross to staff in September. The sessions included guidance on recognising the signs and symptoms of mental health concerns, tips on supporting a person experiencing mental health concerns and useful mental health support resources. • We have submitted our annual supplier spending on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses to Supply Nation. Over the last financial year (2022 - 2023), we spent \$3,510 on registered Supply Nation businesses and \$28,435 on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses that are not registered with Supply Nation. • We have submitted our annual Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Impact Survey responses. The RAP Impact Survey is a mechanism for AIA to measure annual performance and progress against our reconciliation commitments. Once our new RAP is endorsed by Reconciliation Australia and launched, we will use the survey to measure the commitments in our RAP. The results from the survey will contribute to Reconciliation Australia's annual RAP Impact Report, which outlines the collective impact of RAPs each year.
<p>Member undertaking</p>	<p>Further to its previous decision to develop a new "Member Undertaking" to clarify member expectations, the Board reviewed a first draft and provided comments to the Governance Committee, for the Committee to incorporate those into a revised version to be brought back to the Board for approval.</p> <p>It was noted that across the international movement, people holding or standing for election for political office cannot hold Amnesty governance positions. This is consistent with Amnesty International Australia's position.</p>
<p>Internal Conflict Resolution Policy and Unreasonable Conduct Policy</p>	<p>Discussion took place about aspects of the Internal Conflict Resolution Policy, which had been tabled at the August and October board meetings. The Board delegated to the Governance Committee to make the final changes and approve the policy on the Board's behalf.</p> <p>An Unreasonable Conduct Policy had also been drafted. The Board reviewed it and the Governance Committee was tasked with making the changes and asked to bring it back to the Board for approval.</p>



2024 board and AGM dates	The Board approved its calendar of meetings for the whole of 2024. Due to financial constraints, the Annual General Meeting will be held virtually on 1 June 2024.
Deputy Chair position	The Board re-established the position of Deputy Chair.
Board Committee minutes and appointments	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, as well as the Global Assembly update provided by the International Issues Committee.
Next meeting	The next Board meeting was scheduled for 25 November 2023.