

## Statement of Belinda Neal

### Democratically elected Amnesty Director

I am a director of Amnesty elected by democratic vote of members in 2023 and was the longest serving member of the NSW ALC. I am deeply committed to the protection of human rights, democratic principles and transparency of the decision-making process.

Last year the Amnesty leadership regime conducted an EGM asserting I had a conflict of interest. This was untrue. Under the constitution I have no conflict of interest.

### Breach of the Universal Declaration of Rights

Further the actions of the regime to impose sanctions against me for participating in local government is contrary to Article 21 of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

#### Article 21

1. Everyone has the **right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.**

AIA constitution states;

#### 3.3 AIA's objects

*AIA's objects are:*

*(a) **to promote, defend and protect the human rights of all people as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and subsequent United Nations conventions and declarations based on the UDHR, as well as in regional codes of human rights which incorporate the rights contained in the UDHR, the provisions to which governments have voluntarily acceded;***

No action should be taken by Amnesty which violates the UDHR and any proposal to do so by the regime should be rejected.

Actions by the regime to remove me as a Director for taking part in the government is a parody of a human rights organisation.

The regime is claiming that this it's necessary to remove me as a Director for the second time. Clearly if their claim that the conflict of interest required my exclusion as a board member was correct, then it would not be necessary to call a further EGM. By calling this meeting they are confirming that their claim of a conflict of interest was not a proper basis to remove me as a Director at the last EGM.

I have not been notified of any reason I should be removed as a Director for the second time, a fundamental failure of procedural fairness.

It is quite clear that the reason we are here today, is that the original claims by the regime were unsound and that way we are returning here to see if the membership will remove a director, Democratically elected for absolutely no reason, in a manner contrary to the AIA Constitution.

### **Resolution Contrary to AIA Constitution**

The regime is relying on S. 203D Corporations Act in putting forward this resolution today.

The Amnesty Constitution states that;

#### *1.3 Exercise of powers*

*(a) AIA may exercise in any manner permitted by the applicable Commonwealth legislation any power which under the applicable Commonwealth legislation a company limited by guarantee may exercise **if authorised by this constitution.***

Nowhere in the Amnesty constitution is there authority to remove a Director except as set out below.

The Amnesty constitution only sets out two grounds for the removal of a Director and that is as follows;

- (a) *The grounds on which a director can be removed under clause 13.7(b) are:*
  - (iv) *the person contravened or failed to comply with a provision of this constitution;*
  - (v) *the person acted in a manner contrary to, or has failed to perform, an obligation required by AJA in general meeting.*

These are the sole reasons for removing a Director authorised by the Constitution. Proposing a resolution that seeks my removal for other than set out above is completely contrary to Amnesty's constitution and foundation principles of 'human rights and respect for individuals

### **Why is the Regime removing me as a Director?**

Is that I have serious expressed serious concerns to the Amnesty Leadership regime regarding the operations of Amnesty Australia.

I believe that the leadership regime has not acted on matters that crucial to the

interest of Amnesty Australia and the principles of human rights, fairness and respect for other people.

### **Putting members at the core of decision making on campaigns**

I expressed a strong view that members of Amnesty should determine which human rights campaigns should be undertaken. This concern was ignored and decisions are still made by staff on which campaigns are undertaken with token consultation with the membership. I believe the final determination of what campaigns are undertaken should be determined by the Amnesty members at the AGM.

### **Counting of Resolution votes at AGM and Ballots**

I expressed deep concern about the validity of the procedure used to count whether resolutions were carried out at AGM's. There were also a number of whistle blower complaints about the conduct of ballots and irregularities about how they were conducted for general voters that could have altered the results of the ballot and subsequently for the election of Directors.

No external independent investigation was conducted to verify the fairness and accuracy of the ballot process or the process of determining resolutions.

### **Source of Large Donations**

I expressed concern about confirming the true identify of the source of large donations being received by Amnesty International Australia. Those in excess of half a million dollars. I was advised that this issue is covered by the international office but this is not a satisfactory to properly ensure compliance with terrorism legislation and to ensure the independence of Amnesty Australia. No further action was taken to safeguard Amnesty.

### **Bias in Campaigns**

I expressed concern about the Gaza campaign that was not undertaken in compliance with Amnesty's policy set out on a website and in a manner that gave preference to one side of the conflict and was highly emotive and. In particular the campaign emails gave little coverage to the release of the hostages. My concerns were ignored. There has been a surge in anti-Semitic crimes in Australia in recent times that are abhorrent.

Since my election to the board, I have been victimised, ostracized, and harassed due to my different views. This motion for my removal is the end result of these attempts to exclude me.