

# THE MEETING ROCKET

A SUGGESTION AS TO HOW THE GROUP MAY GET STARTED

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SINCE 1961

ENLIGA RÄTTIGHETER  
GÄLLER ALLA, ALLTID

**AMNESTY**  
INTERNATIONAL





# THE MEETING ROCKET

This is a suggestion as to how you may start your group. It should be read by everyone in the group before you start your work. Even though this is not absolutely necessary, your work risks coming to an early “standstill” if it is unclear what should be done.

You are welcome to report to the Secretariat when the whole rocket has been launched, to let us know if it was of any use.

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## CONTACT

**EMMA BROSSNER SKAWONIUS**  
ACTIVIST COORDINATOR, STUDENT & YOUTH

08 - 729 02 43  
070 - 812 95 36  
EMMA.BROSSNER-SKAWONIUS@AMNESTY.SE

# MEETING 1

*Estimated duration:*

*About 1-1.5 hours*

**Time for your first group meeting. Everyone comes to this meeting filled with expectations and hopes so now it is time to start forming your common ideas.**

## **GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER**

It is important that the group members get to know each other, so this meeting should begin with everybody telling something of specific interest about themselves.

## **AMNESTY CAMPAIGN WORK**

Within Amnesty framework there are always at least two campaigns in progress, with which your group may work. We strongly recommend you to take part in at least one of them. When your group chooses to join a long term campaign you will be updated on the campaign and its contents on a monthly basis, and you will be able to work with the campaign in between the action days. Read more about our current campaigns at our activist site **aktivism.amnesty.se**. Discuss which campaign you would prefer to work with, and if you agree you simply decide on that. You are of course welcome to join both the campaigns, but if so you should appoint one group member to be responsible for each of them.

## **CHECK THE ACTIVIST SITE TOGETHER**

At the activist site (**aktivism.amnesty.se**) you will find all the information necessary for you as activists. Look together at the home site during the meeting to form an opinion as to how you can use this page in the continuing group work. The activist site is a very useful source of knowledge when seeking answers to many of the questions related to your activism.

## **READ TOGETHER THE GROUP START KIT**

Now it is time to read the group start kit sent to your group. Read the document together and discuss possible problems. The start kit is supposed to answer questions from the groups as to how, why and in what way you can work in Amnesty.

## **BRAIN STORMING ON THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN**

Discuss what will be the group's first activity to lift the current case within the campaign. Have an open discussion or a brain storm as to what you would like to do and how to work. You are likely to have different thoughts and ideas. Bring all the suggestions to the table and have a discussion to find something that you can all agree on. This may take some time, but if so it is quite all right. Try to make a concrete action plan.

### **FINISH WITH AN ACTION**

Make sure to include an action for human rights in each meeting. You may sign one of the action cases at the Amnesty home site or spread our appeals to others.

Before the next meeting you should ask yourselves what you would prefer doing within Amnesty and in your group. End this meeting by sending along with each other a question for the meetings to come. Work within Amnesty may be broad, vast and including many varying forms of activism. Ask all the group members to think of what tasks they would like to take on next. This will facilitate and prepare your next meeting when you are to plan your work together.

# MEETING 2

*Estimated duration:*

*About 2 hours*

**At your second meeting it is time to decide what sort of group you are going to be. It means that you need to decide what to do, what way of work is best suited to your group, how often and where you are to meet. The best way is to make a plan for your activity. The group secretary starts the meeting and is in charge.**

## **ICE-BREAKER**

Your meeting should always start with an ice-breaker. You may all tell the others about something nice or funny that has happened since last time you met, or you may show a short film from an inspiring action. Repeat your names around the table. If there is a new member it is important to tell all your names.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

Start by finding out what the various group members expect from the group work and by going back to last meeting's discussions.

## **APPOINT A GROUP SECRETARY, A TREASURER AND AN AUDITOR**

The group must have a group secretary, who is the contact person of the group and has a coordinating role, as well as a treasurer who takes care of the group's money, keeps the accounts and compiles an economic report each year. You also have to appoint an auditor who checks each year's economic report and accounts. The accounts are handled within the group and need not be sent to the Amnesty headquarters. Try to avoid spending too much time in appointing these persons; they can always be exchanged after a few months if something does not work.

## **CONTINUED CAMPAIGN PLANNING**

At an earlier meeting you have talked and brain stormed concerning current Amnesty campaigns. Now it is time to go on planning and to decide time and place for a planned activity.

## **MAKE A PLAN OF ACTIVITY**

In order to facilitate your future work it is a good idea to fill in and use a plan of activity. Included is a simple model for writing such a plan (See appendix 1 & 2) where you will find all the questions you need answered. If later on you find that something you decided on does not work it is always possible to change your area of work or the method as long as the group members are in agreement.

## **MAKE A LIST OF THINGS TO DO**

At an early stage in your work you should make a list of things that should be done, available to all the group members. New things needed to be done should be added continuously.

## **INSATS**

“Insats” contains important information for all those engaged in Amnesty. There you can find all that your group needs to know, from current campaign days and courses to other useful information. Before your second meeting you should have read the latest issue. Discuss the contents. “Insats” is sent to all the group secretaries but is also available at the activity site. It should be imparted to every member of the group, so it is the role of the group secretary to forward it. Insats is in Swedish.

## **END WITH AN ACTION**

Ask everybody to sign the action of the month.

# MEETING 3

*Estimated duration:*

*About 1 hour*

**You are now well on your way towards starting the new group. You have decided what you want to work with and how you want to work. At your third meeting it is time to decide who does what. It is good if the group secretary is in charge of the meeting.**

## **ICE-BREAKER**

Start by letting everyone tell what job they dreamed of as children and what are their favorite sweets. This helps towards creating good feeling and getting to know each other a little better.

## **REPORT BACK**

At this meeting you should report back on the tasks the different group members were given at the second meeting. Has the treasurer applied for means for the work? Is the group secretary registered? Etc.

## **DISTRIBUTE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WORK**

You have made a plan for your work, and now it is time to ask yourselves how you want to distribute the work within the group. A good idea is to give each member an area of responsibility. That particular person has the main responsibility for the progress of work within this area, but the group helps when needed. If your group is large it may be a good idea to organize different committees where smaller groups are responsible for certain areas. Suitable areas of responsibility are campaigning (if you have joined two campaigns two members may be responsible for one each), recruiting, communication, and education.

## **CAMPAIGNING**

You have probably carried out your first action. Now it is good to evaluate your work within the group. What was successful and what would you like to change next time? Do not forget to celebrate with some good “fika”.

## **EDUCATION**

By this time you have probably come across a number of national or local possibilities for education. Look for them in “Insats” or at the activist site. Then decide who can go there, register, and apply for travel allowance. Amnesty’s principle is that activity should be free of charge, so at our courses we always offer free lodging if necessary, free food and travel allowance.

## **BOOK AMNESTY ABC**

Amnesty can offer your group to take part in our basic education. Then you can learn more about our organization and how we have grown, what questions we work with and how we work, but also how your group may contribute to the work for human rights.

# MEETING 4

*Estimated duration:*

*About 1 hour*

**Now your group has met on at least three occasions and it is time to formalize your work further. From now on your meetings may be built on the following five principles.**

**This will help to create continuity and stability in the group.**

- 1. Comfort and well-being** – it is very important that all the group members feel at ease and enjoy seeing each other. This is something your group has to work with, so each meeting should in some way deal with the social aspects of being part of a group. You can have various sorts of talk rounds; or why not let a group meeting take the form of a dinner at the home of one of you.
- 2. Take action** – always include some kind of common action for our issues. You may sign the appeal of the week at **amnesty.se** or you may choose to make a solidarity action where you take a photo of the group, or something similar.
- 3. Plan** – an action, a public meeting, a demonstration. Large or small is only a matter of form. Try to vary your out-going actions. Sometimes you may plan something that needs a considerable amount of work, other times you may meet after work/school and gather signatures outside the largest bus or train station of your town. A simple thing is often quite good enough.
- 4. Educate yourself!** - A good idea is to teach each other in the group; one of the group members is perhaps very interested in the Arabic Spring, then let him or her prepare a short lecture for the next meeting. Pass this task around in the group. Also look out for our regional or national opportunities of education and make sure always to attend them. In connection with this you may also have a group meeting, two birds with one stone. Make sure that as many of you as possible take part in basic Amnesty education. This is arranged locally when needed.
- 5. Inform** – what happens within Amnesty? Somebody has to read “Insats” and share that information with the rest. It is important to keep up with upcoming courses, campaign days etc.

**Good luck!**

# Appendix 1

## MODEL FOR A PLAN OF ACTION

Making a plan of action for the year is an important part of your work as a group. There you can decide on activities, and you also have a document guiding you through the year. You are welcome to use the following disposition.

### Plan of action

Group/district:

Place:

### Campaigns and activities

1. Central campaigns and activities
2. Ongoing/recurring work (cases of action and land programs)
3. Local activities
4. Information

### Recruiting and funding

5. Trying to recruit new activists or form new groups
6. Funding activities

### Organization

7. Developing and changing organization, working order and routines.
8. Taking care of the members / well-being

### Education/ meetings/ gatherings

9. Taking part in the annual section meeting, activist seminars or meetings and gatherings.
10. Taking part in courses/meetings/gatherings locally or regionally.

### Further items

11. Further items

## Appendix 2

# FICTIONAL PLAN OF ACTIVITY FOR U 70

This term/year the group will focus on:

### Plan of activity 2014

**Group/district: U70**

**Place: Linköping**

### Campaigns and activities

1. Central campaigns and activities:

The SRR campaign

This work year we will carry through three out-going actions. On October 10 we will arrange a manifestation of our own at our school. Within Write for freedom we will work together with the other work groups in the region. On March 8 we will take part in a manifestation together with various local organizations. Before each campaign we will appoint a contact person/project leader to be mainly responsible for coordinating the campaign.

2. Ongoing/recurring forms of work (e.g. case work and land program)

None

3. Local activities

Work together with group 95 in Linköping to arrange a festival on March 8.

4. Informative activities

Try to take part in at least two informative occasions outside our own school

### Recruiting and funding

5. Take steps to recruit new active members or start new groups. Invite lecturers and then try to engage new members.

6. Funding activities

Organizing a funding day at our school.

## **Organization**

7. Take steps to develop and change the organization, working methods and routines. GS always brings current information from the secretariat to our meetings. In order to stimulate the democratic process in our group we take turns chairing the meetings. We always follow an agenda that we have made in common.
8. Take care of the members / wellbeing.

## **Education / meetings / gatherings**

9. Take part in the annual section meeting, seminars for activists or courses / gatherings.
10. Take part in education / meetings / gatherings arranged locally or regionally.

## **Further**

11. At our first meeting in January we apply for funding for our work. That means that the group gets SEK 2000, to be used for running expenses.