

## **English version of Insats for the month of March (#3)**

A little throwback on 2018. It was an intense and exciting year and people's basic human rights are continued to be violated in the world in a bigger context. But, we also see success in many quarters for example in Eskinder Nega, Fikru Maru and Teodora del Carmen Vásquez are just some of the cases we worked on that were finally released. Here's also some examples from how we worked during the year in Sweden.

### **March 8<sup>th</sup>**

During international women's day 2018 in Sweden, we supported the women's lawyer Azza Soliman's case in Sweden and a total of 87 groups of 53 locations participated in the campaign, and a total of 10,881 physical signatures were collected for Azza, including from the Stockholms district also organized a torchlight procession to Egypt's Embassy. The collected signatures were handed over to Egypt's Embassy this September, along with the signatures from the winter of 2017.

### **FOOTBALL + TORTURE = TRUE?**

Summer of 2018, the football World Cup took place in Russia. In connection to this, we raised three of the human rights defenders whose rights were brutally violated in Putin's Russia: Oyub Titijev, Andrei Rudomaka and Igor Nagavkin. A number of activities were involved and took action, among other things, group 78 in Östersund carried out a football flashmob! During the campaign, we gathered, together with other Amnesty sections in the world, a total of 169 241 signatures, which were then submitted to the authorities in Russia.

### **# INTEMINRÖST (not my vote)**

Before the Riksdags election, we started the campaign #Inteminröst (not my vote), to show that the political tone in Sweden has become more strict and to inform about the consequences from a human rights perspective. Almost 50 community actors stood behind the campaign and around 15 activist groups were involved, and together we gathered almost 29,000 signatures. On September 7th, the signatures were handed over to representatives of Sweden's all parliamentary parties.

### **Begging banning - NO THANKS!**

In 2018, stricter approach began to demand local or national begging bans. To be like a counterpole until that we took out the material to be able to have conversations with their local politicians, and as many as 255 people ordered material and demanded an end to the demands for begging prohibitions!

### **ALSO PEOPLE**

After all work against a begging ban, a report was launched called *Sweden: A Cold Welcome. Human rights of Roma and other vulnerable citizens at risk*. After this, the campaign started. So far, we have trained over 200 people, and together we have gathered

nearly 10,000 signatures that were handed over to representatives of the Chief of Police on February 22, 2019.

### **PRIDE**

During the spring and summer of 2018, 18 activist groups were engaged in their local Pride parades and festivals, we noticed Xulhaz Mannan from Bangladesh. During Pride, we gathered 5413 signatures that required justice for Xulhaz. One of the groups involved was Umeå's fantastic student group.

### **Decoders**

After the US-led bombings against ISIS, 80% of the city of Raqqa, located in Syria has been destroyed and thousands of civilians have been injured and killed in the bombing. 32 activists in Sweden participated in the Decoders project Strike-tracker and helped to analyze buildings and times when bombings took place. With your help we were able to gather evidence of the attacks, which will be compiled in a report from Amnesty International published in April 2019. During the campaign, 29 collaborative schools participated.

93 Swedish Amnesty groups participated by having letter-writing evenings, torchlight nights, pub nights, solidarity actions and gatherings of names. The picture shows the Gothenburg district's torchlight in December. Together we collected over 45,000 signatures for the cases.

### **ACTIVISM IN THE SWEDISH SECTION**

During the year we increased the number of groups from 197 to 201 and has a long negative trend with reduced number of groups broken for the second consecutive year. It is mainly our youth groups that have increased and during the autumn tour of upper secondary schools we met 11,000 young people and talked and Amnesty and human rights. The student project has meant a strong student council and new forms of engagement.

Thanks for all your commitment in 2018! Now we are looking ahead and make sure that 2019 becomes an at least as strong a year of activity!

### **DID YOU KNOW...**

That 2018 we collected a total of 370 276 signatures on our actions.

The first campaign within the campaign will be on International Women's Day. Then we will collect name signatures for Denmark to introduce a consent-based law when it comes to rape and sexual harassment. The date for the report launch is the 3rd of April and there will be a joint event in Stockholm for the Nordic countries. Towards the end of April/early May, a campaign focusing on shortcomings in the Swedish legal system will be launched. More information on this is to follow.

Did you miss the campaign training? if you did, a new chance will come soon and the opportunity to learn more about the issue at the annual meeting in Gävle on 10-12 May. There we hold a couple of exciting passes on the theme so a hot tip is to sign up there!

For anyone who is between the ages of 16 and 24 and especially interested in the theme and how we can work together with activists from the other Nordic sections, there is also the possibility to apply for the Nordic Youth Conference! You can read more about this on page 10 in this issue of Insert.

On March 14, 2018, Marielle Franco was shot dead in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Marielle was a human rights defender and elected politician in the municipal chamber of Rio de Janeiro. She identified herself as a black, bisexual woman and she fought for, among other things, the rights of women and LGBT people.

Marielle Franco's death will remain unresolved unless the Brazilian authorities are pressed to guarantee a thorough and inquiry. Until mid-February 2019, almost a year after Marielle's death, the investigation has shown no relevant progress and those involved in the murder, and the motives behind it are still unknown.

The anniversary will be highlighted internationally and your events will take place in Brazil between March 8 and 14. Among other things, over 300,000 signatures have been collected entered under Write for freedom from Sweden and internationally, to be handed over to President Jair Bolsonaro in Brasilia.

What can we do? On Wednesday, March 13th

We aim to address the local authorities responsible for the investigation, on Twitter and other social media! And we need your help to pay attention to the anniversary! Write a greeting and use #MarielleFranco and #AmnestySweden on the channels that you use.

### **ACT FOR INTERSEXUAL RIGHTS!**

"No Shame in Diversity" was launched on February 19<sup>th</sup> focusing on Icelandic people with intersex variations and their right to health and self-determination. Although Iceland has been at the forefront of gender equality issues, much remains to be done with regard to gender stereotypes and discrimination.

### **WHY ICELAND?**

In the spring, a bill is put forward in the Icelandic Parliament. The bill aims to ensure everyone's right to self-determination and bodily integrity. Amnesty campaigns for the bill also ensures the intersex people's right to self-determination over their own bodies.

### **WHAT CAN I DO?**

Put pressure on the Icelandic government by collecting signatures! Petition lists are printed from the Activist portal and then sent to [sanne.malmberg@amnesty.se](mailto:sanne.malmberg@amnesty.se) before April 31st. At Aktivistportalen, [aktivism.amnesty.se/hbtqi](http://aktivism.amnesty.se/hbtqi), you can also read more about intersex variations, the bill and take part of other useful information.

### **A WARM WELCOME TO AMNESTY'S ANNUAL MEETING IN GÄVLE, 10-12<sup>th</sup> OF MAY 2019**

Welcome to this year's most important event where you are part of Amnesty's future. The annual meeting gives you the opportunity to meet like-minded people, gain knowledge about the human rights situation in the world and develop your engagement. We have achieved and gather strength for the challenges we face. We need to stand up for the equal value of all people - now more than ever.

The program focuses on two human rights issues that are topical for Amnesty Sweden: Vulnerable EU citizens in Sweden and rape and consent legislation in the Nordic countries.

In addition, we highlight the section's equality work, our upcoming activism strategy and decide on the democratic form we will have in the future. At this annual meeting you will also have the opportunity to think about which strategic issues our international business will prioritize in the next few years.

But not enough of that. Two human rights defenders from the autumn campaign Write for freedom also visit us. Monica Benicio from Brazil (Marielle Franco's widow), and Nonhle Mbuthuma from South Africa, are struggling for people's freedom at a time when those in power are trying to silence their and others' voices. On the spot, they will share their experiences and how the situation looks for human rights defenders in the world today.

More detailed information on all program items is available on our website on March 11th. Participating in the annual meeting is free for all members. For 300kr you also get travel, accommodation and food - if you register by April 22 at the latest. Enter and register at [amnesty.se/year meeting](https://www.amnesty.se/year-meeting).

## **JOIN OUR STRATEGY MEETINGS!**

In order for the strategy to land in as good a decision as possible, it largely depends on members' experiences and opinions. A discussion and anchoring process will be carried out in the spring, based on a discussion paper sent to all groups and districts on March 11. The first impacts in the process will be our strategy meetings on March 30<sup>th</sup> in Stockholm and 6<sup>th</sup> of April in Gothenburg.

We hope that as many groups and districts as possible can be represented during the meetings! The section accounts for travel expenses for two members per group / district. We regret that the information comes late, we would like to emphasize that there will be your opportunities to contribute ideas and views in the future.

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, we hold a workshop on the activism strategy during the section's annual meeting in Gävle. We will of course also meet the Section Board, the Youth Council, the Student Council and our colleagues during the work. If possible, we will also be happy to meet individual groups or districts that cannot attend the meetings on March 30<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> of April. We also want to make it possible for us to contribute with opinions, ideas and suggestions via e-mail or telephone. We promise to take part of them with the greatest interest.