



# Update

Amnesty International Edmonton Group 12/26

November 2014

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## Our Vision for Amnesty

**Our Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 25th at 7.30p.m. in the Knox Metropolitan Hall on 83rd Avenue just east of 109 Street. Please ring the bell for entry.**

**Everyone is welcome to join us.**

### **Agenda**

**Fieldworker Charlene: Our Vision for Amnesty**

**Write for Rights**

**General Meeting Location**

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## Write for Rights

It's an awe-inspiring thought that you and I can really save someone's life.

What makes this possible is that the few minutes, or maybe a full hour or more, of your time on November 29th. Write for Rights contributes one small part to a massive, life-saving effort as Amnesty International mobilizes its world-wide network to take action on some of the most high-profile cases in human rights.

It's worth your time because your involvement can lead to these kind of results:

- "Your letters kept hope alive at the darkest hours of need."
- "I am alive today because the international community has heard about our work."
- "Amnesty International members are living proof that this world can be a better place."

Please join us next Sunday November 29 at one of these locations.

This year, we will be writing at 4 different locations around Edmonton from noon to around 6 pm next Sunday (depending on the location):

**Downtown (Oliver Square Second Cup, 11640 - 104 Ave)**

**Whyte Avenue (Block 1912, 10361 - 82 Ave)**

**U of A Campus (Good Earth, 8623 - 112 St)**

**West Edmonton Mall (Starbucks, directions TBA)**

Join our Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/events/300827786780624/>

## Update Appeals

Please sign and send the appeal letter that is attached or write a letter in your own words making the same requests as outlined in the sample letter. If you receive a reply please forward a copy to the National Office, at 312 Laurier Avenue East, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1H9 or fax it to 613-746-2411.

**The first letter is on behalf of Iwao Hakamada** of Japan who has spent more than 40 years in prison after a coerced confession to murder in 1966. He was convicted and sentenced to death after an unfair trial and remained on death row until March 2014 when the District Court ordered his release and granted him a retrial. The prosecution appealed against his retrial and the Toyko High Court will now decide whether his retrial can go ahead.

Iwao Hakamada is now 78 years old and in poor mental and physical health due to his treatment in prison. One of the original trial judges stated in 2007 that he believed Hakamada was innocent. DNA evidence can now be used in his retrial and will likely exonerate him.

Please send the attached letter to the Japanese Public Prosecutor's Office in Tokyo and copies to

His Excellency Norihiro Okuda  
Embassy of Japan  
255 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa  
Ontario  
K1N 9E6

**The second letter is regarding the ill treatment of Ihar Tsikhanyuk by police during questioning.**

Ihar Tsikhanyuk is a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex activist who along with other activists attempted to register an organization the Human Rights. Over the ensuing months, more than 60 others involved alongside Tsikhanyuk in the unsuccessful attempt were called in for questioning on trumped-up charges, including false claims of drug dealing and rape.

"I don't want to hide myself," Tsikhanyuk said a number of weeks after the incidents.

"I live openly. It is not easy in Belarus, but I want to show people that I am a person like everybody. With my example I want to show that it is possible to live openly."

Although Belarus was the third republic of the former USSR to abolish criminal sanctions for homosexuality in 1994, there has never been any effort since to ensure that legislation protected the rights of LGBTI individuals in the country.

Like in nearby Russia, LGBTI Belarusians face high levels of negative stereotyping and social prejudice, with such attitudes being shared by the country's leaders.

**Thank you for taking these actions on these cases.**

## Minutes of the 2014 September General Meeting

Edmonton Amnesty International Group Sept 23, 2014  
17 people in attendance

### **Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women**

Muriel Stanley Venne, President and Founder and Marggo Pariseau Vice President spoke to us.

In 2005 Muriel Stanley Venne received the Governor General's Award in Commemoration of the Persons Case. In June of the same year she was named a Member of the Order of Canada. In February 2007 she was recognized as a Woman of Vision by Global Television. In November 2007 Canadian Ambassador McNee recognized her work at the United Nations citing her as a "Human Rights Defender" of the human rights issues pertaining to Aboriginal women, children and families. On September 2008 she was elected Vice President of the Métis Nation of Alberta.

Currently there are 110 missing and murdered where no one is charged. This is the shame of Canada.

CBC did a documentary on Helen Bette Osborne. Even though people knew who murdered her, no one came forward. The police work was so sloppy and poor. In the case of Robert Picton the police work was poor. The inquiry into her death said that she was killed because she was aboriginal.

The issue of Missing and Murdered women is known to Canadians now.

In the I.A.A.W. the problem that aboriginal women have is that they are aboriginal and female. Discrimination is very prevalent. Muriel believes that this is genocide. There are statutes that were legislated to entrench discrimination.

Marggo

Marggo was the manager of the Women's Emergency Shelter for over 20 years.

The Esquao Awards for Honouring Aboriginal Women was started by Murielle and Marggo. Marggo works in the prison system. There are many women who went through the residential school system. Some end up on the streets after leaving the reserves and there is poverty.

There is still a lot of shame. More than 50% of inmates are aboriginal in the Women's Institution. Some committed murders when they were intoxicated. Housing after incarceration is very difficult. Women go to Half way houses where many breach parole. When there is nowhere to stay, life is easier in jail. Some are not allowed to return to their communities or contact their families. Shelters are not for long term residence. Some end up in motels that are not safe, where drug dealers are around. Police and Social Workers are checking daily.

Marggo believes that if you are an aboriginal woman you should not go anywhere alone.

Marggo sits on the Aboriginal Council for Alberta. Aboriginal women are not recognised under Provincial jurisdiction but under Federal.

Stolen Sisters Report was written in 2005.

All Provincial aboriginal leaders have requested an inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Women.

Why are these women murdered?

Why are the most disadvantaged women aboriginal?

Why are the most women in prison aboriginal?

Why are services underfunded?

\$150,000 was previously allocated annually to IAAW. Now the maximum allocated to one organization is \$20,000

We have had multiple reports over the past 10 years and now it is time for implementation of their recommendations.

A Financial independence program is run throughout the Province. Savings are matched by funders. Candora Society of Edmonton is one organization that carries out this program.

Marggo was at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings where she listened to the depositions of women. Many of the depositions were very disturbing.

The Patron of IAAW is Colleen Klein.

## Minutes of the September 2014 Meeting continued

### **Business Meeting**

#### **Meetings**

We need to plan for future meetings

#### **Meeting location**

Ilona phoned the libraries and they are mostly booked up the cost is \$15. Café on 109 Street \$50 for an hour. Art Centre is \$50. Library beside Westmount will be checked. We could start earlier at 5.00pm.

#### **I.A.A.W.**

Ilona will check with Char regarding the support requested by I.A.A.W.

#### **Stop Torture Campaign**

There are Video resources and actions for us to take.

Nigeria uses torture and the expected pressure from governments has not been heard.

#### **Sisters in Spirit Walk**

Oct 4 at City Hall.

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### **Membership and Supporters**

I want to reinforce that Amnesty has changed its definition of Member and Supporter because of changes to the Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations Act

A Member is someone who notifies Amnesty International Canada in writing, either by snail mail or via email, that they want to be a Member and has made an annual contribution. A Member is someone who can vote at Amnesty Members Meetings (AGM)

A Supporter is non-voting and does not have to advise Head Office in Ottawa.

If you are technically a Member, but do not contact Amnesty International Canada, you will be designated a Supporter.

Write to AI Canada at 312 Laurier Ave E. Ottawa ON K1N 1H9 or email [members@amnesty.ca](mailto:members@amnesty.ca)

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### **YOUR VOICE NEEDS TO BE HEARD.**

#### **Amnesty International Canada Vision Consultation 2014/2015.**

The Consultation being held at the AI Edmonton November meeting is part of a Canada wide consultation Amnesty is doing consultations across Canada because AI Canada and AI are facing a time of change and we want our AI Members and Supporters to assist in deciding the vision and priorities for the next four years.

## In Memoriam

### Mary Trumpener

1932 - 2014

Mary passed away at the Edmonton General Palliative Care Unit after a long battle with melanoma.

She is mourned by her loving husband of 60 years Ulrich, children Katie, John and Betsy and son-in-law Charlie Scheifley, two grandchildren, other family and her many friends.

Mary was born in Portland Oregon into a pioneer family. She earned her B.A. at the University of Oregon where she met her husband who was an exchange student. Mary worked as a secretary in Eugene, San Francisco, Berkeley and at a NATO base in France before moving to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada in 1966.

After raising their three children Mary worked tirelessly to help others.

She worked to bring refugee families to Edmonton through her church, taught English to Chinese immigrants and was instrumental in saving the Strathcona Public Library. Mary was a devoted and active member of her church St. George's Anglican.

Mary was an active member of Amnesty International for over 35 years and was a fieldworker with our Edmonton Group. She fought for the release of prisoners around the world and worked on the refugee committee in our group. Mary was a tireless campaigner and a wonderful example to all members of our group and other groups in our region. She held a variety of offices. She worked on many action files within our group and most recently for the release of Qin Yongmin a Chinese dissident. She also assisted his family. Mary is dearly missed by all her Amnesty friends.

Donations may be made in Mary's name to  
[www.amnesty.ca/donate](http://www.amnesty.ca/donate)

# Edmonton Group 12/26

Edmonton Groups 12/26, Box 52060, Garneau Post Office, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2T5  
Meetings are held at 7.30 p.m. in the Knox Metropolitan Church Hall on 83 Ave at 109 Str the fourth Tuesday of each month except July, August and December.

Amnesty International is a worldwide voluntary, activist movement that works impartially to prevent violations of people's fundamental civil and political human rights by governments and opposition groups. We campaign to free all prisoners of conscience: people detained anywhere for their beliefs or because of their ethnic origin, sex, colour, language, national or social origin, economic status, birth, or other status, provided they have not used or advocated violence; ensure fair and prompt trials for political prisoners; abolish the death penalty, torture, and other cruel treatment of prisoners; end political killings and "disappearances".

**National Information Line, 1-800-AMNESTY**

**National Website** [www.amnesty.ca](http://www.amnesty.ca)

**Edmonton Group Website** <http://edmontonamnesty.org/>

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