

An aerial, high-angle photograph of a massive crowd of people, densely packed and filling the entire frame. The individuals are seen from above, creating a complex, textured pattern of heads and shoulders. The color palette is primarily black, white, and grey, with a prominent yellow horizontal band across the center. The overall effect is one of a vast, unified group.

# **Amnesty International Volunteer Handbook**

# What's in your handbook

WELCOME TO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

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OUR HISTORY

OUR STRUCTURE

HOW WE CREATE CHANGE

WHAT WE CAMPAIGN FOR

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TRICKS & TIPS

ACRONYMS

“

To be free is not merely to  
cast off one's chains but to  
live in a way that respects  
the freedom of others.

”

Nelson Mandela

# Welcome to Amnesty International

We are so excited to have you on board- there is a lot to look forward to as we launch into a new era of growth, campaigning and human rights wins for Amnesty International South Africa.

Over the past year, we have welcomed a new team of staff, interns and now volunteers into the organisation.

The more people power we have, the greater impact our work will have in working alongside communities, individuals and partner organisations to achieve the change we want to see.



**With a membership of over 7 million people worldwide, the collective voice of the movement is our most powerful asset and why Amnesty International has been so effective in defending human rights globally. Our activists and volunteers on the ground, supported through experienced staff in the areas of lobbying, research and campaigning, make Amnesty International an unstoppable force!**

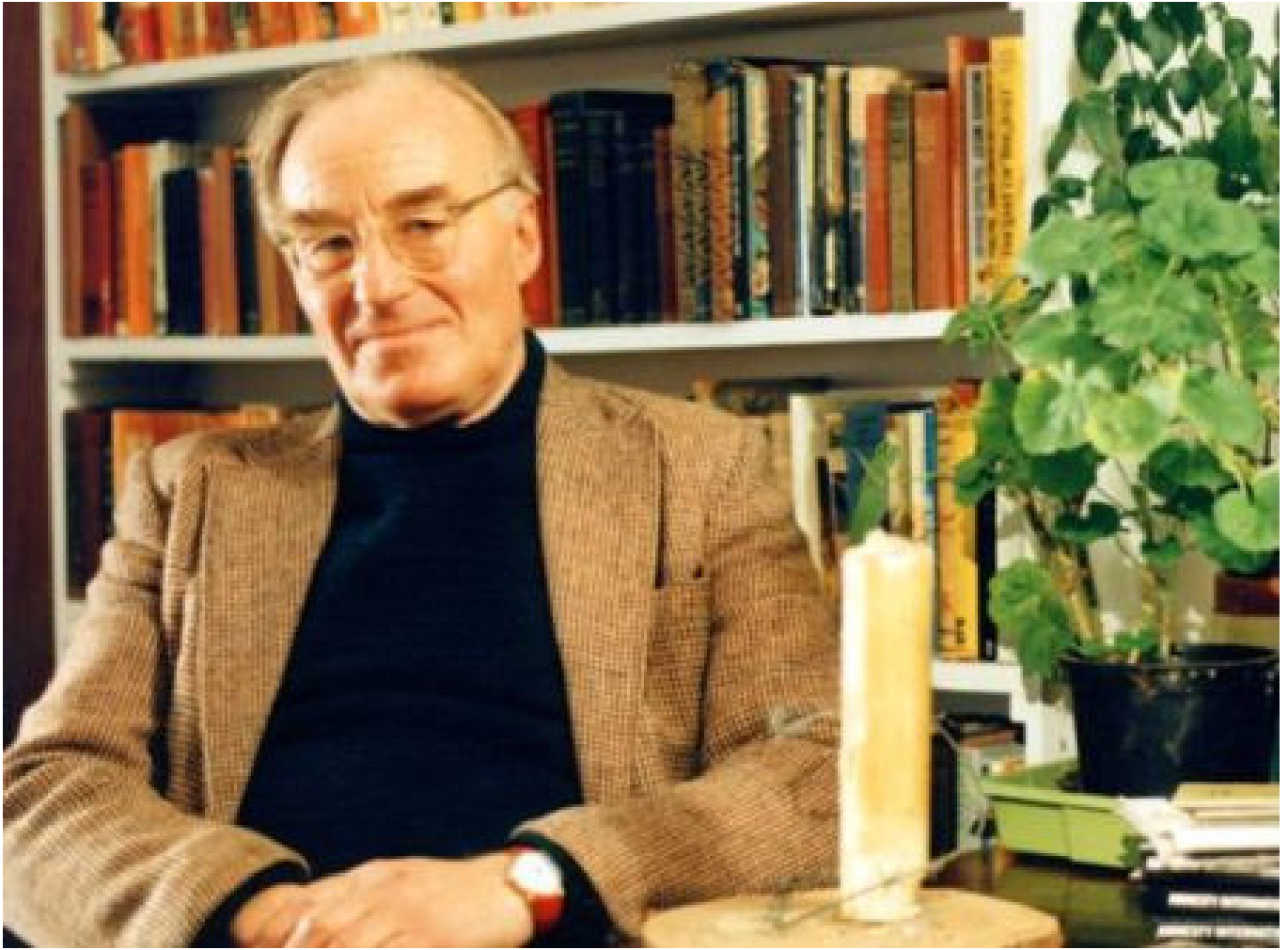
**Being a grassroots movement, our focus in the National Office is to grow people's capacity to act through education, knowledge, empowerment and clear pathways to join the movement.**



**OUR**

**STORY**

# Where we come from



Amnesty International began as the result of one man's outrage.

In 1961, British Lawyer Peter Benenson was outraged when two Portuguese students were jailed for raising a toast to freedom. He wrote an article in The Observer newspaper and launched a campaign that provoked an incredible response.

Peter Benenson's call to action sparked the idea that people everywhere can unite in solidarity for justice and freedom. This inspiring moment didn't just give birth to a global movement of human rights defenders but was the start of extraordinary social change.

Amnesty International is now the world's largest human rights organisation, made up of 7 million global supporters and a presence in over 150 countries.

We campaign for justice wherever it has been denied and protect people, defending their right to freedom, truth and dignity.

# Where we're going

We are the human rights defenders.

The unsung heroes who tirelessly and fearlessly stand up and speak out where human rights abuses are happening.

The warriors who stand up for women's rights.

We are the future leaders of South Africa holding our government, companies and influencers to account.

We are our LGBTQI community because we know that love is love.

We are our ancestors, reminding us to be better, to be kind and to be fair in the face of uncertainty.

We are our history, healing our wounds with the common destiny of building a future where all people have access to their rights.

We are one community, acting in unison for gender equality, greater access to education, refugee rights and for the individuals who have been unjustly persecuted.

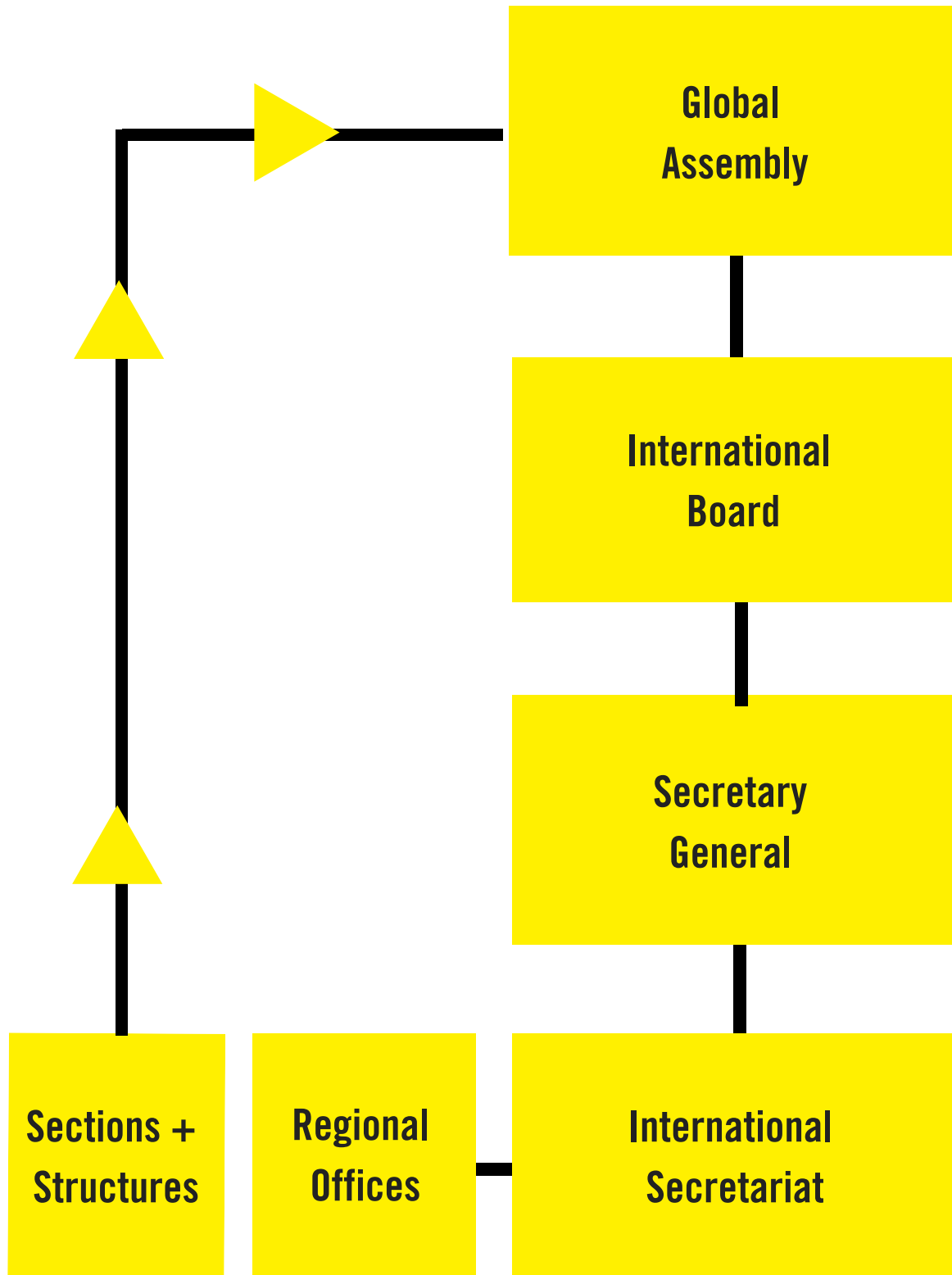
We are about people from every walk of life, taking a stand in their own way, wherever there are human rights concerns.

Amnesty International South Africa is building a movement of people committed to ensuring that human rights are protected, respected and fulfilled by all.

We will continue to SPEAK. TO MOTIVATE. TO ACT. TO INSPIRE.



# Our Structure





**HOW CHANGE HAPPENS**

## RESEARCH

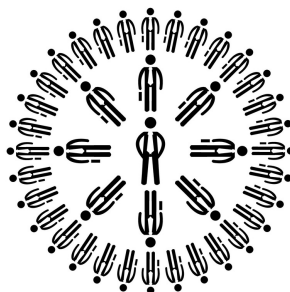
Our experts do accurate cross-checked research into human rights violations by governments and others worldwide.

## ADVOCACY & LOBBYING

We use our analysis to influence and press governments, companies and decision-makers to do the right thing.

## CAMPAIGNS & ADVOCACY

We mobilise our 7 million supporters to take grassroots action.



# WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE FOR GROWTH & MEMBERSHIP?

With the aim of mobilising activists across South Africa, we need to build the capacity of our human rights defenders, members, activists and supporters so we are a stronger and more diverse movement with the people power to achieve human rights impact.



## Capacity Building

We will continue to create spaces where our community of supporters can access resources that allow increased interaction and engagement with our campaigns and the people we are working alongside. This means our human rights defenders, partners, activists and rights-holders, including young people and women are inspired and empowered by increased knowledge, skills and attitudes to claim their rights and campaign for the rights of others.



## Diversity & Inclusion

We are engaging more and more diverse people for human rights impact, with the aim of long-term sustainable engagement. This means we will make our work and work spaces and events accessible. The language we use, including jargon will not be a blocker for joining the movement and we will be inclusive of all people, no matter their gender, age, race, culture, religion or political affiliation - human rights are for everyone.



## Action

Our activists, volunteers and supporters hit the streets and raise awareness of human rights and Amnesty International. We have important conversations with community members, inspiring them to take action so we have the people power to shift power. Our activists feel confident to set up meetings with their local members of parliament to let them know human rights must remain on the agenda.

# WHAT WE CAMPAIGN FOR

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948 after the international community decided the atrocities of World War II were never to be repeated again. The declaration is a set of rules about how human beings should treat each other. Ultimately, Amnesty International campaigns to hold governments to account for upholding the declaration.

Below are some of our key areas of work.



## **Individuals at Risk (IAR):**

Individuals at risk are at the heart of our work at Amnesty International South Africa and around the world. Individuals at risk are denied the basic freedoms we all value. Our activists write letters, hold events and take action on the behalf of these individuals to hold the state accountable for violating their rights.



## **Crisis response**

Amnesty International immediately responds to human rights crises as they occur and works tirelessly to prevent situations reaching crisis point.



## **Priority campaigns**

Campaign areas change depending on what is happening globally and within our region. Amnesty International South Africa will continue to focus on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, such as the right to education, workers rights and the right to practice your culture. Additionally, we will continue to ensure discrimination of any kind is eradicated and people are treated with dignity and respect.

The background of the slide is a photograph of a sandy beach with scattered dark pebbles and shells. A solid yellow horizontal band is positioned across the middle of the image, containing the title text.

# **Volunteer Program Overview**

# Our values

## RESPECT

We treat everyone, including ourselves with respect and consideration. We appreciate that we come with different perspectives and experiences, and we value this.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

We maintain a strong ethic of accountability and transparency to the team and to ourselves. We are clear about our roles and responsibilities and are committed to delivering our objectives to the best of our ability.

## INNOVATION

We are committed to using creativity and innovation to deliver high quality work in all our focus areas. We are adaptable, always looking for new and better ways of working that inspire us.

## DECISIVENESS

We are clear about our work and make sound judgments within these areas. We feel empowered to make decisions and seek clarity where we are not confident or clear.

## INCLUSIVITY

We understand the importance of teamwork and collaboration in achieving the objectives of One Amnesty. We are committed to having a team that is diverse and inclusive and reflects our commitment to human rights, equality and social justice.

# Your rights

- Clear overview of roles and responsibilities.
- Accessible information on the training and support available to help you carry out your role.
- Provide fair, honest and timely feedback.
- Updates on how your contribution has made a difference.
- Effective supervision.
- Full involvement and participation.
- Be given meaningful tasks that both challenge you and feed into your skills and expertise.

## **Access to training**

We want to ensure that during your time with us, you feel equipped and confident to carry out your role as well as providing various opportunities for professional development.

As you start your volunteering journey with Amnesty International you will be invited to an Induction workshop that will go over key information so you can get started straight away.

Throughout your time with us, we will provide you with bimonthly training, as well as on-the-go training where necessary.



# Your responsibilities

Always treat your peers, staff and Amnesty community with respect and consideration.

Always act in a professional manner, whether you are volunteering in the office or in the field.

Always act in a way that is inclusive of your fellow peers, staff members and Amnesty community.

Always communicate to your supervisor in a timely manner if you are unable to fulfill your volunteering commitment, if you no longer want to be on a specific project or no longer want to volunteer with Amnesty.

When representing Amnesty International, always uphold our core values, including being impartial and independent of all political and religious bodies. Whenever in doubt, please chat to your supervisor.

Ask questions! If you are not clear on your roles and responsibilities, please organise a time with your supervisor or team leader to go through your position description.

# **NUTS & BOLTS**

# Tips & Tricks

## Know your skills

Ask yourself what you have to offer - what skills do you have and how can they translate into action for the protection and defence of human rights.

## Learn something new

We know you have awesome and important skills to offer but what else can you get out of this experience aside from giving back.

## Get involved

Get involved in events or any opportunities you think may be interesting. This allows you to learn more about the organisation and how different teams work together to create change.

## Ask questions

Don't be afraid to ask questions. If something doesn't make sense or seem right, let us know! Or if you are simply curious about something, even better!

## Be yourself and have fun!

## **Office security**

Doors must be shut at all times.  
The alarm automatically comes on at 8PM.  
Basic security training will be included as part of your induction.

## **Mail**

On occasion our Chapters will request materials for upcoming events. We use PostNet to ensure the materials arrive safely and on time.

## **Fire & Emergency Evacuation**

In case of an emergency our fire wardens James and Cynthia will direct you to our meeting point.

## **Volunteer sign-in sheets**

Our insurance requires a record of attendance for all staff and volunteers. This record is also needed to account for all people when having to evacuate the building in case of an emergency.

Please sign the attendance book at the front desk when you arrive and when you leave.

## **Wifi**

Please ask your supervisor for the WiFi username and password.

## **Reimbursement**

Please speak to your supervisor for instructions on reimbursement for money spent on behalf of Amnesty International

# ACRONYMS

AI: Amnesty International

AISA: Amnesty International South Africa

DP: Death Penalty

ED: Executive Director

GA: Global Assembly

HR: Human Rights

HRD: Human Rights Defenders

HRE: Human Rights Education

IAR: Individuals at Risk

ICC: International Criminal Court

ICM: International Council Meeting

IS: International Secretariat

M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

RO: Regional Office

SARO: Southern African Regional Office

SMT: Senior Management Team

UA: Urgent Actions

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UN: United Nations

W4R: Write for Rights