

# PHOTOGRAPHING ACTIONS AND EVENTS

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL



This is a brief guide to documenting events and activities organised by Amnesty International. It offers tips on how to photograph activities, considerations for participants/general public and gives examples of successful images. Photography is an essential part of Amnesty's communications work, and any activity arranged by the organisation is an opportunity to illustrate our work, generate support and engage new audiences.

## PLANNING

When planning what you will photograph, think:

- Is it visually interesting – what's in the background of the picture, think of the best angles which show the event and the number of people there.
- When is the best time to document your event? -- When the most participants are present, and when there is suitable light to make for good pictures, e.g. in late afternoon sun.
- Will it be possible to easily photograph people while they are taking part in events?
- Are participants happy to be photographed?

## Consent

Consent for photography is vital; please do not assume that everyone is happy to have their picture taken. If you are photographing at a school or a location where children/young adults

are present, ensure that you have consent and full agreement from the school and parents/guardians of those present. [See below for links to consent forms on ADAM]

- When photographing groups or individuals always ask before taking a picture.
- For an event with large numbers e.g. a concert, where there is an audience, it's best practice to put up signs making all attendees aware that the event will be photographed for Amnesty purposes and for anyone who wishes not to be photographed to make it known to the photographer.
- It is generally acknowledged that by taking part in an event, members of the public will be in agreement with Amnesty's core principles and values. In countries where the political situation may be more sensitive to Amnesty's work it is important to ensure that the safety and well-being of those participating is protected.
- For single portraits of non-Amnesty staff and members it is advisable to obtain written consent from the subject, consent forms can be found on ADAM in a range of different languages: <https://adam.amnesty.org/asset-bank/action/viewContent?index=1&showTitle=true#Subjectrelease>

## **GENERAL NOTES ON PHOTOGRAPHY**

### **What camera?**

The camera is not important; it's how you use it that matters. A good mobile phone is fine to document activities with. If you have access to a decent quality camera, please use this and record as high a resolution version of the image as possible. If using a phone always make sure you shoot in landscape orientation, so the picture is wider than it is tall!

### **Take a variety of shots**

Think about taking a variety of different shots at your event. Try to tell a story through your images. Here is a useful checklist of the different types of shots you can take:

- General establishing shots, wide angles showing the location.
- General shots of activities, pictures of people doing things are far more interesting than static images.
- Close-up details of things which inform people of the main focus of the event.
- Portraits of key people at the event – speakers, activists, participants (remember to get consent if necessary) – try to photograph from the same eye level as the subject and choose an interesting background, for instance, colourful graffiti or artwork.
- Group shots of participants – Maybe from a high vantage point so everyone is visible in the group.

- Pictures of participants with Amnesty branding – any Amnesty signage, posters, T-shirts. We are often looking for images which shout Amnesty! Get people to do things rather than stand statically holding signs.
- Pictures which reflect the cultural and social environment, aspects of the event/place which are typical to the locality.
- Vibrant/colourful pictures make positive and striking illustrations of Amnesty's work.
- Different angles, take a number of different angles of a subject/view, edit the best!

### After the event

- Write short, specific captions for your photos detailing the 4 W's – Who, when, what, where (name of person in picture, date, nature of event, location).
- Share your pictures – add pictures to ADAM, so the rest of the movement can see, use and share the experience of your event.
- Select the best images from a sequence, less is more.
- Include a copyright notice with all images.

Photography is an incredibly important and effective way for Amnesty to promote itself as an organisation, communicate and celebrate the valuable work of our staff, members and supporters.

### EXAMPLES



Letter Writing Marathon Amnesty Netherlands. © AI Netherlands

Good lighting, the figure is central in the composition and looking straight to camera with a positive expression.



Street action in Lima, Peru. © Juan Pablo Azabache

Great action picture, shows Amnesty actively engaged with the general public, clearly visible Amnesty branding, with a very natural feel.



Write for Rights 2018 event in Thailand. © Amnesty International Thailand  
Interesting, fun and creative portrait. Activists engaging with case materials.



Amnesty Korea letter writing event in Seoul, 2018. © Amnesty International  
Image taken from eye level of subjects, showing interaction between people.



Supporters of free speech, Paris. © Amnesty International  
Powerful group portrait, the picture is taken from a high angle and so faces in the crowd are clearly visible.



Flash-mob in Berlin. © Amnesty International / Foto: Christian Ditsch  
Positive image of activism, lots of movement and a very positive active feel to the image.



Write for Rights – Paraguay. © Amnesty International  
Great close up of people engaged in Write for rights activities



Write for Rights at AI Togo. © Amnesty International Togo  
Different pose! With an interesting and vibrant background – always think of what is behind your subject!