

HOW TO PLAN A “MY TIANANMEN” EVENT

Groups and individuals are encouraged to plan events around June 3-4, 2009 to commemorate the Tiananmen anniversary. The events should be planned around the themes of keeping the memory of Tiananmen alive 20 years after the crackdown and publicly expressing what the Tiananmen anniversary means to you and your community. Below are some helpful tips and ideas for activities to help you plan your Tiananmen event. For more ideas and information, please email iar@aiusa.org

Steps for Planning a “My Tiananmen” Event

- Obtain permission from local authorities or your school administration. A permit is often required to use a public outdoor space. Start early and give yourself adequate time; depending on the venue, it could take some time for a permit to be issued.
- Present a resolution to your city council calling for a public square to be renamed “Tiananmen Square” on June 3-4. For in-depth steps on how to introduce a city council resolution, visit www.amnestyusa.org/tiananmen
- Plan the program for your event. Decide how your community could best commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Tiananmen crackdown. For example, a vigil is typically a silent and solemn gathering held in a public square in the evening. In contrast, a rally is typically held during the day and features a more spirited crowd voicing their demands.
- Consider inviting not only students and community members but other civil society or religious organizations as well. Please contact your Regional Office regarding groups in your area with which it would be appropriate to partner. Contact information can be found at www.amnestyusa.org/contact.
- To get your message across, be sure to have clearly worded signs that demonstrate your purpose. Incorporate photos if possible.
- Designate spokespersons to stand apart from the event to distribute action materials (such as petitions or sample letters) and to talk to passersby who want to know what your group is doing.
- As with any event, bring a sign-in sheet and clipboard to pass around or to greet people with. Remember to follow-up with newcomers and encourage them to become members of Amnesty International USA.

Activity Ideas for Tiananmen Events

Rename a local square “Tiananmen Square”

Submit a resolution to your city council asking them to rename a public square “Tiananmen Square” on June 3 or 4 (a sample resolution can be found on page 6). If you cannot submit a resolution, you can create a “Tiananmen Square” sign to hang near the name of the square. Take a photo of your sign and send it to us at iar@aiusa.org

Hold a poetry reading

Several poems written by members of the Tiananmen Mothers as well as Western authors are available to read at your “My Tiananmen” event. You can also write your own poems about what the anniversary of Tiananmen means to you. For a copy of these poems in English, please visit www.amnestyusa.org/tiananmen

Lay bouquets of red and white flowers

A Chinese student who participated in the 1989 demonstrations has a private annual ritual of preparing a bouquet of six white (symbolizing purity) and four red (symbolizing passion) roses to mark the anniversary of the crackdown (representing the number 6 and 4 of June 4th). She hopes that one day she will be able to place such a bouquet in Tiananmen Square to publicly commemorate the victims of the crackdown without risking reprisals from the authorities. You can create your own bouquets of flowers, or have a flower laying ceremony at your “My Tiananmen” event.