**Guidelines for Volunteers Representing Amnesty International USA**

Amnesty International has built an excellent reputation for being impartial and nonpartisan over more than 55 years, which gives significant credibility to what we do and say. Therefore, it is important to stay within these guidelines and the policies, procedures and traditions of Amnesty International USA.

***1.*** ***Speaking at events, writing in the press, giving interviews or posting on social media***

* Whenever possible **prepare messages in advance**, utilizing online resources ([www.amnestyusa.org](http://www.amnestyusa.org) or [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)). Do not guess or speculate about the position of Amnesty. If in doubt, check with your Area Coordinator, Student Activist Coordinator, Field Organizer, or Legislative Coordinator. If needed, they will refer to those with specialist knowledge (e.g. campaign staff or Country or Thematic Specialists) and inform you.
* Amnesty is non-partisan, so members do not support or oppose political parties, candidates or government officials. Avoid attacking or praising individuals. Criticism should focus on **policies and tactics** as in “Public officials should stop fear-mongering and recognize the rights of refugees,” (**not individuals** as in: “We oppose government official X because he wants to keep refugees out of the country”)
* If your personal opinion differs from Amnesty International’s position (e.g. on protecting Syrian civilians by enforcing a “no-fly” zone), please share your personal ideas within AIUSA in online forums or at AI meetings. Avoid criticizing AI policies in a public arena. If you feel it essential to speak contrary to AI’s policy, you must make it clear that you are expressing your personal opinion and are not speaking as a representative of the organization.

***2. Basic guidelines for when participating in actions, protests or demonstrations***

(Detailed instructions are available: “Right to Protest kit” and “Safely During Protest.”)

You may chose to act as an individual or as a member of Amnesty International.

Members are encouraged to organize actions or join an action organized by others if:

* it has been established that AI has a specific policy position consistent with the core issues being addressed at the action
* actions and protests are organized to be non-violent
* participation will not entail civil disobedience, civil resistance or otherwise deliberately breaking the law and risking arrest (e.g., participating in sit-ins or blockades)
* members have agreed to follow police instructions.

***Guidelines prepared by Area Coordinators Steering Committee, March 2017***

1. Please do not rely on materials from other Amnesty Sections since they may have nuances and differences across the Sections.