



Wearing Your Amnesty Hat

As an Amnesty International member, you are a representative of the global movement and are responsible for representing the organization accurately and with care. This includes correctly conveying AI's positions on any number of issues, as well as maintaining a non-partisan, non-political position centered solely on human rights. Although there's always the chance of finding yourself in a sticky situation, follow these guidelines to be an ambassador of Amnesty International.

1. Be prepared.

Before you start your action or event you need to be well versed in Amnesty International's key positions as well as AI's general information on how AI works. Make you sure you and your friends go over Amnesty materials and toolkits. Each campaign has main talking points and campaign goals you should be aware of before interacting with a potential activist. Your Field Organizer can help you find AI's position on any issue you are working on.

2. Wear one hat at a time

You are certainly encouraged to be part of as many activists groups as possible, but when you petition or table for Amnesty, be sure to wear your Amnesty hat and no other. This means that you can't table for the Democrats and Amnesty concurrently – choose one or the other. This is needed to help people know exactly what Amnesty does and doesn't stand for, and to remain impartiality.

3. When in doubt, ask

When you are representing Amnesty at an event or while tabling, you will inevitably be confronted with difficult questions about the organization. If you don't know the answer, don't panic! If you don't know, say so – don't make anything up on the spot. Tell the person you will find out and get back to them, and then do. Your Field Organizer can help you find the answer to any question, so don't be afraid to ask.

Here are answers to frequently asked questions about how to represent Amnesty International.

What is Amnesty's position on the Iraq war?

Amnesty International is not an anti or pro war organization. However, Amnesty is always concerned about human rights violations that come from armed conflict. In Iraq specifically, Amnesty International is concerned about rights violations such as suicide bombings, persecution of religious minorities, the refugee crisis, and continued disappearances and detentions.

What is Amnesty's position on abortion?

Amnesty International does not have a position on whether abortion should be legal or whether it is right or wrong. We do not counsel as to what position to take. However, we do believe in a limited access to abortion in circumstances of rape, sexual abuse, or grave risk to the pregnant woman. Abortion should be decriminalized and governments should see that there should be



access in certain cases. Amnesty opposes imprisonment and other criminal penalties for abortion, whether seeking one, having one, or being informed about or performing an abortion. Finally, Amnesty supports access to comprehensive medical care, including a safe termination of pregnancy, and urge governments to ensure access to health and other services to women who have complications from unsafe abortions.

Can I wear green at an AI event on human rights in Iran?

Amnesty is a non-partisan organization, and green was the color used in opposition candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi's presidential race. Although it has come to represent the larger movement for human rights in Iran, Amnesty activists should not wear green at their events for Iran.

When lobbying my representative, should I do so as an individual constituent or as an Amnesty International member?

Lobbying as one united voice is often more effective, especially if you are lobbying on a particular Amnesty campaign pushing for a bill such as the Maternal Health Accountability Act. If you want to push for bill but you are not sure what Amnesty's position is, ask your Legislative Coordinator or Field Organizer about it.

Are there groups Amnesty shouldn't partner with on events or actions?

There are some groups Amnesty does not partner with, such as those promoting violent means of change or partisan groups. However, there are many groups you can work with even if you don't see eye-to-eye on every issue. We work with religious groups, cultural organizations, and many others. Contact your Field Organizer to ask about a particular group.

Can I represent Amnesty at a political group on campus?

Most activists are part of many different groups, and that is not in itself a problem. Some Amnesty members serve as "human rights experts" to other groups. You should use caution representing Amnesty within a political group, however. Amnesty is a separate, independent group and should be seen as such.

As an Amnesty activist, can I reach out using social media with an Amnesty pseudonym?

Your group may have an Amnesty page on Facebook or another social media site, and you can represent the organization (i.e. Douglass High School Amnesty) as long as you do so responsibly. Promote your events as Amnesty events as long as they are true to these guidelines and rule. Never use your Amnesty profile to promote partisan or other events not affiliated with Amnesty, such as your personal birthday party or yard sale.