

## 2019 AGM Decisions Implementation Report

**This memorandum contains the three binding decisions from the 2019 Annual General Meeting in Chicago, Illinois. There were a total of eight resolutions submitted but only three passed the voting plenary due to time limitations and loss of quorum. As you know, the AIUSA Bylaws require that the Board implement all binding decisions unless they are overturned by a two-thirds majority.**

**Decision 1 (Healthcare as a Human Right)** passed without any changes as all proposed amendments were defeated.

**Decision 2 (IT Policy)** passed as amended.

**Decision 3 (Right to Privacy)** passed without any amendments.

The resolutions not passed included Communications, Shared Leadership and Conference Planning, Improving the Consultation Process, Drafting Committee and Submission Deadlines. The board determined that while these resolutions did not pass the voting plenary, it was not due to lack of membership interest, only a lack of time and quorum. In that nature, the board is continuing to keep member communications under review and reaffirming its commitment to shared leadership and consultations and has created a working group on membership empowerment to further these ideals.

For the resolutions on creating a drafting committee and changing the submission deadline of resolutions, these require changes to the Standing Rules on the Membership Resolution Process and will need to be resubmitted.

The NRC will be glad to address any questions that may result from your discussion of these resolutions. The language of the resolutions that passed, as amended, follows.

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### **Decision 1: Healthcare as a Human Right**

*Passed by the 2019 AGM Voting Plenary by a vote of 115 in favor, 14 opposed, with 12 abstentions*

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**[A] WHEREAS** Article 25.1 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that the right to health care is, indeed, a human right, statistics from the September 12, 2017 US census show that 28.1 million people in 2016 are uninsured. It is estimated that by 2019 there will be an extra 9 million people without insurance in the U.S.

**[B] WHEREAS,** according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a group of 34 nations – mostly with industrialized economies -only two, the US and Mexico- do not offer universal health coverage. All others provide coverage for more than 90% of their people

**[C] WHEREAS,** of the 25 richest countries in the world, the United States is the only one without universal health coverage.

**[D]WHEREAS,** The United States spends 17.1% of Gross National Product on the health care system, 40% higher than the average of high-income countries, with 1/3rd of health expenditure being spent on administrative costs and not patient care

[E] **WHEREAS**, The United States has a higher maternal mortality rate than Kazakhstan, and the infant mortality rate is higher than in Europe

[F] **WHEREAS** while the Affordable Care Act was a step in the right direction, over 28 million people do not have access to health care, “giving priority to a single-payer, publicly-funded system.”

[G] **WHEREAS** on November 9, 2017 world leaders including the former UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon met in New York in a major unprecedented international intervention in the US healthcare debate, and Ban Ki-moon called on Americans to pass universal health coverage and said the current healthcare system ultimately functions to prioritize profit over care. It is believed to be the very first time that the global community has engaged so directly with the US healthcare debate.

[H] **WHEREAS** In a 2016 poll, conducted by The New York Times and the Kaiser Family Foundation, roughly 20 percent of people under age 65 with health insurance nonetheless reported having problems paying their medical bills over the last year. These financial vulnerabilities reflect the high costs of health care in the United States, the most expensive place in the world to get sick

[I] **WHEREAS** November 9, 2017 ex-President Jimmy Carter has stated in his *Time* Op-Ed that the lack of a Universal health plan is a national scandal representing a violation of basic human rights, and this was echoed by Ban Ki-Moon in September 2018

[J] **WHEREAS** According to a 2015 Harvard study, medical expenses account for approximately 62 percent of personal bankruptcies in the US, and seventy-two percent of those who filed for bankruptcy due to medical expenses had some type of health insurance,

[K] **WHEREAS** Amnesty International USA is built on defending the inherent worth, and dignity of all human beings, and has not yet undertaken a national campaign regarding this issue

[L] **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Amnesty International USA affirms the decision of the international body to declare access to health care to be a fundamental human right, and that all people in the United States should have guaranteed access to good quality healthcare, regardless of income, race, gender, sexual orientation or immigration status.

[M] **THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a broad national action be undertaken on this issue that will include member leaders, Legislative Coordinators and grassroots activists, as well as collaboration with other organizations; that this action shall be taken for the common purpose of achieving a system of universal, equitable, non-discriminatory health care, giving priority to a single-payer, publicly-funded system, so as to guarantee access to comprehensive, quality care as a human right and public good.

[N] **THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that action to promote health care that is equitably financed and equitably meets communities’ needs be strongly considered for prioritization as AIUSA develops its next strategic plan in 2020.

#### Actions Taken

Amnesty has long held health care to be a fundamental human right, and that all people in the United States and all other places should have guaranteed access to good quality healthcare, regardless of income, race, gender, sexual orientation or immigration status. Staff collaborated with the sponsor of the resolution, Georgina, to post a web page to the AIUSA website that includes introductory information, a national action, and an email that directs to Georgina for people who want to get more involved:

<https://www.amnestyusa.org/healthcare/>. The capacity to do more on healthcare right now is limited due to the focus on the human rights issues already prioritized in the current Board-approved strategic plan. As we are in the process of formulating our next strategic plan, we have given priority to exploring healthcare as potentially being a fundamental part of our strategy over the next few years.

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## **Decision 2: IT Policy**

*Passed by the 2019 AGM Voting Plenary by a vote of 103 in favor, 1 opposed, with 3 abstentions*

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**[A] WHEREAS** AIUSA is potentially liable for misuse of information technologies and therefore all users have the responsibility to employ organizational resources in a professional, ethical and lawful manner;

**[B] WHEREAS** AIUSA works with information about people around the world who are potentially vulnerable to governments and organizations who may want to harm or otherwise defame them, and AIUSA has a responsibility to maintain vigilance in protecting that information from unauthorized access.

**[C] WHEREAS** while all staff communication technology and devices remain AIUSA property and are to be used for the performance of job duties, and as such may be monitored by the organization, the same cannot be said of Member Leaders;

**[D] WHEREAS** a strong IT Policy needs to include, for both staff and Member Leaders, a clear definition of the improper use of technologies, including, but not limited to, gaining unauthorized access to internal or external computer systems and contents; utilizing AIUSA's technology and devices in connection with sexual, ethnic, harassing, discriminatory or otherwise offensive jokes or material; making financial solicitations of AIUSA employees or volunteers for non-AIUSA purposes without proper authorization; writing or forwarding chain letters for non-AIUSA purposes; making defamatory statements; and disclosing private and confidential information about individuals or organizations, including AIUSA;

**[E] WHEREAS** there are customs and conventions regarding email use (e.g. Bcc vs Cc, Reply-all vs Reply-one, sharing and forwarding, etc.), but AIUSA has not overtly adopted these conventions as an organization;

**[F] THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board ensure that AIUSA develops an IT security analysis, policy and procedures that will encompass Members in accordance with AIUSA's inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility principles and its shared leadership principles.

**[G] THEREFORE BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED** that the Board ensure that AIUSA develop a plan for digital security risk analysis and basic training in secure communications for Member Leaders, especially the Country Specialist program. All analysis, policy, procedures and training will be developed after consultation with relevant stakeholders and in accordance with AIUSA's inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility principles and its shared leadership principles.

### Actions Taken

The IT unit has focused on developing security best practices, awareness, and basic training and, in collaboration with the MLT team, deployed self-paced online training modules during the week of Feb 24 to identified country specialists and co-group leaders. The intent is to first provide this initial set of trainings for foundational knowledge. The business partner and security training content provider were

selected so that these trainings would be ongoing and become a resource for continued learning. Just as security threats and secure communication requirements evolve, our training(s) will be a continuous effort with new/updated modules being made available quarterly.

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### **Decision 3: Right to Privacy**

*Passed by the 2019 AGM Voting Plenary by a vote of 106 in favor, 6 opposed, with 1 abstention*

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**[A] WHEREAS** Article 12 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* includes protections against “arbitrary interference in [one’s] privacy... or correspondence”;

**[B] WHEREAS** privacy decisions largely rest in the hands of corporations relying upon surveillance capitalism and governments that have used these means to surveil their citizenry, highlighting a fundamental conflict of interest that warrants a more powerful grassroots response;

**[C] WHEREAS** at this time the People’s Republic of China is using the most technologically advanced surveillance system in human history to aid in abuse of human rights, and governments from Egypt to Chechnya use voluntary disclosure on apps as a means of arresting LGBTI citizens; WHEREAS human rights defenders have been frequently targeted by state security apparatus across borders and eras;

**[D] WHEREAS** increased surveillance chills the access to and use of the most foundational aspects of Freedom of Expression, through which Amnesty International and other human rights organizations protect all other human rights;

**[E] WHEREAS** the free flow of information across nations in a move towards a truly global community requires global safeguards advocated by a global movement;

**[F] WHEREAS** Amnesty International provides a theoretical space for rights that is driven by global citizenry at the grassroots, and therefore serves as a counterbalance against the institutions of government and private enterprise that otherwise will seek to define privacy;

**[G] THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that AIUSA recognizes the necessity of the protection of the right to privacy as essential to ensure the protection of all other human rights;

**[H] THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that AIUSA membership directs the AIUSA Board to write a letter to the Law and Policy Programme at the International Secretariat requesting a consolidated privacy policy and explanatory note regarding the consolidated policy.

**[I] THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that AIUSA reaffirms the centrality of privacy as a dimension of analysis to be considered in the development of all Amnesty International policies.

#### Actions Taken

Amnesty International has had long-held beliefs that the protection of right to privacy is an essential human right. AIUSA has sent a letter to the Law and Policy team at the International Secretariat requesting for information on the right to privacy but, due to financial issues at the IS, do not expect to receive a response soon. We will consider the right to privacy as we discuss the upcoming new strategic plan.