

Amnesty International UK DIARY NOTICE:

FRIDAY 11 JUNE

WOMEN, MATERNAL HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS (PANEL DISCUSSION)

Hosted by Amnesty International UK, the Royal College of Midwives Scotland and Oxfam Scotland

Around the world, one woman dies every minute from pregnancy, childbirth and related complications. These deaths are not inevitable, but stem from conditions of poverty, discrimination and human rights abuse.

In March 2010, Amnesty International, Oxfam GB, the Royal College of Midwives and others produced the [Manifesto for Motherhood](#), a pre-election call to the UK government to:

- support a global increase in financing for maternal, newborn and child health
- place maternal, newborn and child health at the heart of strengthening health systems
- realise its international commitments on sexual and reproductive health and rights

All of the main political parties gave their support to the Manifesto for Motherhood, including the now governing parties, the Conservatives, the Liberal Democrats and the Scottish National Party. At the end of June, the new UK government will attend the G8 summit in Canada, where the world's most powerful countries will create a global strategy for addressing maternal mortality. It is vital that Prime Minister David Cameron and Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg honour their party's commitments to the Manifesto for Motherhood, ensure that the G8 strategy is fair and effective, and that it tackles the human rights abuses that underlie the problem.

Scotland has a vital role to play in ensuring the UK government upholds these commitments, which is why we are hosting a panel discussion event on maternal health and human rights: to understand maternal health as a human rights issue, to hear the views of civil society and the public, and to inspire action.

Maternal health is a human right, and Scotland can help to protect it.

EVENT DETAILS

Time: 13:00 – 15:30

Venue: Reading Room, Glasgow University Union, 32 University Avenue, Glasgow, G12 8LX

Cost: Free

Lunch and refreshments will be served.

Speakers: **Naomi McAuliffe**, Poverty & Human Rights Campaign Manager, Amnesty International UK

Gillian Smith, Scotland Director, Royal College of Midwives
Oxfam Representative (TBC)

If you would like to attend, please register for free at: <http://bit.ly/a5gZcJ>

If you have any queries, or specific access or dietary requirements, please contact Graeme McGregor (graeme.mcgregor@amnesty.org.uk)

MORE INFORMATION

Maternal Mortality Around the World

In the world, one woman dies every minute from pregnancy, childbirth and related complications. These deaths are not inevitable; the main medical causes are unpredictable, but treatable.

These deaths are fuelled by poverty, discrimination and the violation of human rights. 99% of maternal deaths worldwide are in developing countries, and more than half are in countries in sub-Saharan Africa, such as Malawi. Those most likely to die in pregnancy or childbirth are the poorest, the youngest, and the least educated, with health resources disproportionately provided to the urban-dwelling, affluent and powerful.

Discriminatory laws and practices reinforce the low status of women in society, and deny them the power to make vital decisions about pregnancy and childbirth, or grant that power to men. The situation is significantly worse for women who already face discrimination, on grounds of income, gender, race, ethnicity, language or disability.

Girls denied education are less likely to know about health and nutrition, how to access sexual, reproductive and maternal healthcare, and the importance of delaying pregnancy after childbirth. Violence against women and girls restricts their ability to make decisions about their own health, and places them at greater risk of complications during pregnancy.

Maternal mortality is a human rights issue. Under International Law, states have a duty to ensure that women can enjoy their right to life; their right to education; their right to physical and mental integrity; their right to health; their right to determine the number and spacing of their children, and to ensure that they live free from discrimination.

What We Can Do

All of the main political parties gave their support to the Manifesto for Motherhood, including the governing Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and the Scottish National Party.

At the end of June, the new UK government will be attending the G8 summit in Canada, where the world's most powerful countries will create a global strategy for addressing maternal mortality. It is vital that Prime Minister David Cameron and Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg honour their party's commitments to the Manifesto for Motherhood, ensure that the G8 strategy is fair and effective, and that it tackles the human rights abuses that underlie the problem.

More information: <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=11178>