



Amnesty International members only  
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# 2021 GLOBAL ASSEMBLY MEETING: DECISIONS REPORT<sup>1</sup>

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**Summary:** This document contains all the decisions of the 2021 Global Assembly meeting, which met virtually on 11&12 September 2021.

It also includes the Chair's Statement, a summary of the meeting's discussions. The full report of the 2021 Global Assembly meeting will be shared within 60 days from the end of the meeting (Global Governance Regulation 11.1.1).

**How to use this paper:** This is an internal document which is being sent to all standing representatives and Global Assembly meeting participants. Please share this document with your board, members and staff so that they are aware of the Global Assembly's decisions. As mandated by Global Governance Regulation 6.2.3, all parts of the movement are required to implement Global Assembly Decisions.

All the papers for the 2021 GA meeting can be found on the [2021 GA meeting website](#).

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is being re-issued to align language across Decisions 2021/07 and 2021/11 and to reflect language changes already made to the Global Strategic Framework. The original version of this paper was issued on 13 September.

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## **CHAIR'S STATEMENT**

The online 2021 Global Assembly (GA) meeting process started at the beginning of July with the International Treasurer webinars and culminated with the GA meeting on 11&12 September.

This year's meeting took place in Amnesty's 60<sup>th</sup> year and represented a moment to reflect on our Movement's many great achievements, such as the adoption of the Convention against Torture, the creation of the International Criminal Court and the Arms Trade Treaty. Our Secretary General (SG) Agnès Callamard reflected on these wins in her opening session and also on the intractable challenges that point to the weaknesses of the human rights (HR) regime and constrain our impact.

The first day of our meeting gave us an opportunity to hold our leadership to account during the accountability session where questions were asked on a range of topics from governance to ways of working. For the first time in Amnesty's history, we discussed and approved motions in a non-physical format. The voting on motions session was the culmination of a protracted process which began with the release of proposals for a motion in April followed by two rounds of online discussion groups for a total of 48 discussion hours, in mid-July and mid-August. This was an intense process for all involved and, although there are many learnings to take forward, we have demonstrated that our global governance processes can work online.

On Day 2 of our meeting, we heard about the important work on anti-racism. Colleagues from the IS and various regions bravely shared the challenges they had faced in their entities and the initiatives they are taking to move forward to change the culture, and the leadership confirmed their commitment to this issue over the next years. The penultimate session of the meeting was an inspirational panel discussion kicking off our new strategy. We heard from Human Rights Defenders and external partners from South-East Asia, MENA and the Americas sharing their thoughts on what Amnesty needs to do to be more impactful. It is important for us to step out of our comfort zone so that we can continue to be at the forefront of the human rights agenda for the next 60 years and beyond.

We ended the day by saying farewell to 10 volunteer governors across the International Board, PrepCom and the International Nominations Committee. While this represents significant turnover in our volunteer leadership, it also represents an opportunity for a new start for the implementation of the Global Strategic Framework, what promises to be a new era for our global governance and for the ongoing fight for human rights.

In the words of Peter Benenson in the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration video that was shared in the meeting, "Open your newspaper any day of the week and you will find a report from somewhere in the world of someone being imprisoned, tortured or executed because [their] opinions or religion are unacceptable to [their] government. In many ways, these words are as true now as they were then."

In solidarity,

Ann Burroughs,  
2021 Global Assembly and PrepCom Chair

## 2021 GLOBAL ASSEMBLY MEETING: DECISIONS

These are the decisions of the 2021 Global Assembly meeting. As mandated by the Global Governance Regulations:

- All parts of the movement are required to implement Global Assembly decisions (Regulation 6.2.3).
- At the next Global Assembly Regular Meeting, there will be a presentation in plenary for approval of a report on the implementation of the Global Assembly decisions (Regulation 10.1.2 (f)).

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### Decision 2021/01: Reforming Amnesty International's Global Governance

The Global Assembly

**Instructs** the International Board to urgently start a process to evaluate and simplify our global governance model and propose relevant changes to the Statute and Global Governance Regulations.

**Further instructs** that the International Board develop, in consultation with membership entities, a proposal/s on a reform of Amnesty's global governance model to be brought for decision at the 2023 Global Assembly meeting, based on this comprehensive evaluation.

The guiding principle will be to make our governance less resource intensive in terms of ecological, human and financial resources, while safeguarding the democratic nature of the Movement. To do this, the scope of the evaluation, based on verifiable data, will include:

- Reviewing the 2017 governance reform and associated governance cycle.
- Reviewing the advantages and disadvantages of different meeting models (virtual, in-person and hybrid).
- Reviewing the frequency and role of the Global Assembly meeting and related bodies
- Analysing the financial and ecological costs of different meeting models.
- Analysing the digital divide and its impact on participation, inclusion and democracy, as well as possibilities to remedy this divide.
- Examining the impact of the governance cycle on well-being of staff and volunteers.

*Arising from motion 1.1*

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### Decision 2021/02: Core Standards

The Global Assembly

**Instructs** the International Board to review the Core Standards and present a simplified, revised set of Core Standards and assessment process for approval at the 2022 Global Assembly

meeting

- recognising that entities operate in diverse contexts with differing capacities which need to be taken into account to make the standards inclusive, accessible, and meaningful for all;
- ensuring the Core Standards serve to motivate all Amnesty entities to aspire to organisational excellence;
- recognising that collective responsibility for full implementation of the Core Standards will improve governance and strengthen mutual accountability across the Movement;
- noting the changing global context and increased demands for better accountability from non-governmental organisations (NGOs);
- identifying opportunities for alignment with existing accountability and reporting mechanisms to support the delivery of Amnesty International's mission and strategy;
- recognising that a review of the Core Standards is a collaborative and integrated endeavour between the International Secretariat (IS), Amnesty International entities and the International Board, which will include a consultation with the Movement;
- giving practical recommendations to build and strengthen the capacity of Amnesty International entities and ensure they receive appropriate support and feedback from the IS, Amnesty International entities and the International Board to successfully learn and track progress in implementing the Core Standards.

*Arising from motion 1.2*

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## **Decision 2021/03: Equitable Distribution of Financial Resources**

The Global Assembly

**Instructs** the International Board (Board) to form a multidisciplinary working group to discuss the Movement's income and investment in the context of a broad analysis that includes an assessment of our human rights impact, issues worked on, transparency and accountability. This working group should be made up of national entities, Board and International Secretariat (IS) representatives and of specialists in feminist finance and economics, with diverse experiences beyond the models used by the Movement to date. The decision of the final composition of this working group will be taken by Board, and will need to include sufficient representation from funded entities as well as self-sufficient entities. It should carry out an analysis of the distribution of resources in the Movement, the increase of Resource Allocation Mechanism (RAM) budget presented in annual percentage of total Movement income, the decision-making process, based on a financial analysis and the establishment of rules to ensure transparency regarding resources and accountability on an equitable basis. The working group will be presenting scenarios and recommendations to the Board who will present a motion to the 2023 Global Assembly meeting.

In the interim, the Board is charged with increasing the percentage of the RAM in relation to the total income of the international Movement in order to strengthen the impact of our Movement by the 39 totally or partially funded entities. The increase should consider the

following principles:

- a. The Board should significantly increase the RAM percentage as a proportion of the gross income of the Movement from the current level of 4.2%.
- b. The Board should increase the RAM budget in line with Movement Income increases but should not decrease from current levels.
- c. The significant increase in RAM should begin by 2022 and continue progressively, based on the findings from the working group combined with an assessment of funded entities' financial needs, with the aim of guaranteeing our impact on the implementation of the Global Strategy. The final percentage will be established by the Board, informed by the recommendations of the multidisciplinary working group.

These two measures - (1) establishment of a working group and (2) increasing the RAM budget - must be adopted immediately with regard to the approval of the next Global Strategy. It is essential that the entities that face the greatest inequalities and challenges in the implementation of human rights are able to ensure the strategic goals are fulfilled. This means stopping seeing ourselves as an unequal Movement, in light of transforming Amnesty into an anti-racist organisation and being a Movement that makes the necessary decisions focused on effecting change in people's lives without worrying about survival.

*Arising from motion 2.1*

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## **DECISION 2021/04: THE DISTRIBUTION MODEL**

The Global Assembly

Decides to amend the Distribution Model (the assessment system for the movement) with effect from 1 January 2023 as follows:

- (i) Introduce a cap on the amount of fundraising expenditure that can be deducted in the assessable income calculation used to determine assessment contributions. Deductible fundraising expenditure is capped at 35% of all gross income generated in the current financial year. This cap to be referred to as "fundraising cost cap"
- (ii) Fundraising Investment Fund grants or loans are excluded from the fundraising cost cap.
- (iii) In exceptional circumstances entities can apply for an exemption to the fundraising cost cap if their entity is leveraging extraordinary fundraising growth opportunities, or to recover from or prevent poor financial health of a national entity. Impartial evaluation of these exemption requests will be reviewed by the International Secretariat (IS) Global Fundraising and IS International Finance and approved by the RAM Committee, and details shared with the Movement.

Note: Full details of the exemption process are provided in the paper "Exemption Process for Fundraising Cap - appendix to GA Motion on Distribution Model - Sep 2021" FIN60 4515 2021

An evaluation of the impact of the 35% fundraising cap should be presented to the 2025

Global Assembly. The evaluation should assess how the Distribution Model change has impacted Movement Finances as well as Amnesty's ability to deliver on the Strategy.

All other elements of the Distribution Model remain as per the original decision at the 2015 ICM (Decision 7) and the Distribution Model decision at the 2019 Global Assembly (Decision 4).

*Arising from motion 2.2*

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## **Decision 2021/05: Developing a policy on taxation, inequality and human rights**

The Global Assembly

**Instructs** the International Board to start developing a policy on taxation, inequality and human rights. The policy should be developed incrementally with high-level principles being made available for discussion and decision at the 2022 Global Assembly meeting, as well as a plan and timeline for the further development of the policy. The policy should be grounded in existing and developing human rights standards.

The policy should address, at the minimum, regressive tax regimes, loopholes, harmful international tax competition and lack of transparency of tax systems, and link to other human rights policies. With the focus being on tackling rising economic inequality, we also need a position to talk about tax revenue nationally and globally.

*Arising from motion 3.1*

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## **Decision 2021/06: Policy on Amnesty's engagement in civil disobedience**

The Global Assembly

**Affirms** that civil disobedience is an important tool for Amnesty to campaign for human rights change, while recognising that individual national entities will determine whether and when it is appropriate in their national context. Such acts are public, non-violent and involve the intentional breach of a domestic law (which may or may not itself infringe international law) undertaken with the aim of bringing about human rights change.

**Recognises** the organisation's responsibility to those acting on its calls for civil disobedience and the need to mitigate potential reputational, financial, legal, personal safety and other risks to our supporters and to the organization.

**Welcomes** the revised interim policy (POL 30/3532/2021) on Amnesty's engagement in civil disobedience and the consultations on previous versions of this policy.

**Instructs** the International Board to adopt a final version of the policy on Amnesty's engagement in civil disobedience to accord with the text of this decision by the end of 2021.

**Requests** the International Board to ensure that the policy defines the circumstances in which it may be appropriate for Amnesty International to organize, facilitate, participate or endorse an act of civil disobedience, and establishes the minimum standards under which to carry out a thorough assessment of the risks to participants, to others, and to the organization.

**Calls on** the International Board to ensure the policy is grounded on the following key principles:

1. **Commitment to non-violence and in line with Amnesty's core values.** All acts of civil disobedience in which Amnesty engages must be in line with the organisation's core values, including our commitment to not using nor advocating violence or discrimination. Amnesty's engagement in civil disobedience must in all cases be consistent with international human rights law and standards.
2. **Strategic, necessary and calculated risk.** Civil disobedience should be used strategically, in conjunction with other approaches and tactics, when the anticipated benefits of the action outweigh its risks and only when necessary and proportionate in the specific circumstances.
3. **Based on Amnesty's assessment of the human rights situation.** Decisions to engage in civil disobedience must be rooted in research and documentation of human rights violations and the particular context where civil disobedience may take place.
4. **Responsibility to the participants.** Amnesty must take all appropriate measures to mitigate against the risks entailed by acts of civil disobedience and put in place the required mechanisms to respond to such circumstances.
5. **Due diligence towards partners and rights holders.** Consideration must be given to the risks that may arise for those who Amnesty is partnering with in an act of civil disobedience, including when organized with or on behalf of rights holders.
6. **Prior and informed consent.** Amnesty must obtain the prior and informed consent of all participants engaging in an act of civil disobedience and make sure that all those involved are aware of and understand the full extent as well as the potential risks of a planned act of civil disobedience. Particular attention should be paid to the way in which informed consent is obtained with regards to specific groups whose participation in an act of civil disobedience may require additional safeguards, such as children or staff.
7. **Adequate and appropriate training.** Amnesty should ensure to all those participating in an act of civil disobedience that it organises have access to adequate and appropriate training, including on safety, security and legal issues. Participation in the training is a key element for the preparation and success of the act of civil disobedience. In the fulfilment of Amnesty's responsibility to participants and depending on the risks entailed by the act of civil disobedience, people without proper training may be prevented from taking part in an Amnesty-organized act.
8. **Responsibility for acts of civil disobedience.** Amnesty must own the consequences of an act of civil disobedience and should not deny nor avoid these in the aftermath of an action. Before engaging in an act of civil disobedience, the organization should consider in advance the level of support that may be offered to participants and communicate this clearly to all of them.

**Further calls on** the International Board to ensure the policy includes clear guidance as to Amnesty's possible engagement in international civil disobedience (civil disobedience that takes place in multiple countries concurrently) and mass civil disobedience (civil disobedience on a scale where an Amnesty entity is unable to provide direct training and gain informed consent in writing from all participants).

**Decides** that if an entity is considering the participation of people below the age of 18 in an act of civil disobedience, they must first have in place a child safeguarding policy that specifically addresses civil disobedience by children, mitigates against the specific risks of children's participation and includes a process to obtain children's informed consent in line with their evolving capacities.

**Requests** the International Board to ensure that the policy includes a global process for the planning and authorization of high-risk acts of civil disobedience to allow Amnesty to comply with its responsibilities to participants and ensure that risks can be mitigated and adequately handled. The process should take into account the differing levels of risk for the organisation, the individuals engaging in the act and to others.

**Also requests** the International Board to establish a Civil Disobedience Task Force for the facilitation and implementation of the policy. The Task Force will be convened for each high-risk proposal and will ensure equal representation from relevant national entities and the IS in its composition. The Task Force should be composed of a Senior Director at the IS, at least one other IS staff member with regional or thematic expertise, Section leadership where the act of civil disobedience will take place, legal and security staff from the IS or relevant Section, and a youth representative with strong activism roots. The Task Force must guarantee equitable and diverse representation, including on gender, race, disability and geographic location.

**Asks** the International Board to consider the different options to ensure funding for civil disobedience across the movement and avoid lack of resources becoming an obstacle to some entities engaging in acts of civil disobedience, including by setting up a new specific fund with additional Movement funding.

*Arising from motion 3.2*

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## **Decision 2021/07: Amnesty International's Global Strategic Framework (2022 – 2030)**

The Global Assembly

### **Approves**

Amnesty International's Global Strategic Framework (POL 50/3639/2021) that will guide the work of all National Entities and the International Secretariat from 2022 to 2030. The Strategic Framework highlights what we will prioritise as a movement, keep track of and hold ourselves accountable to.

### **PRIORITY 1 - FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND CIVIC SPACE**

Outcome 1.1. Strengthening freedom of expression and association

Outcome 1.2. Securing the right to peaceful assembly for all

### **PRIORITY 2 - EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Outcome 2.1. Promoting gender and intersectional justice (see note 1 below for proposed changes to the GSF)

Outcome 2.2. Strengthening enjoyment of rights to health, housing and social security

Outcome 2.3. Securing climate justice

Outcome 2.4 Protecting the rights of refugees and migrants and rights of people on the frontlines of crises

**Flexible areas of work**

In addition to work on Global Priorities 1 and 2, Amnesty International entities may work on long standing human rights issues and/or in response to other pressing local human rights concerns, and always in compliance with Amnesty International’s policies.

**Common lenses**

Individuals and communities at risk (see note 2 below for proposed changes to the GSF)  
Intersectionality and gender-mainstreaming  
Corporate accountability, including for the technology sectors

**Investment of Resources**

The entire Amnesty movement (national entities and the International Secretariat) will commit to work on both priorities. 80% of each entity’s resources for human rights work will be invested in the two priorities on work relevant to their context and globally, including by sustaining and developing capabilities in such areas as campaigning, advocacy, communications and human rights education (HRE).

In addition, each entity will devote up to 20% of its resources for human rights work to the flexible areas of work and pressing issues most relevant to their context – always in compliance with Amnesty’s policies.

**Monitoring progress, measuring impact and being accountable**

We will assess our human rights impact under the 2022-2030 Strategic Framework by monitoring our progress against concrete targets on an annual basis in line with 2021 GA Decision 11. This will allow us to see how close we are from achieving the ambitions laid out in our Strategic Framework and identify key insights and learnings that will inform our further implementation.

**Growing our resources and income**

Major shifts in Amnesty’s culture, such as opening the access to multilateral sources for other areas of work than HRE, must be approved by the GA.

This motion should be read in conjunction with “Amnesty International’s Global Strategic Framework” (POL 50/3639/2021).

*Arising from motion 4.1*

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**Decision 2021/08: Feminist Leadership**

The Global Assembly

**Instructs** the International Board to initiate a time-bound process to identify key principles of feminist leadership that Amnesty will adopt in line with the commitment to “invest in

feminist leadership and build trust and power sharing between and across generations” as stated in the Global Strategic Framework. This process will involve consultations across the movement and with external experts, respecting differences and building on commonalities of conceptions of feminist leadership across women’s rights and other feminist movements in different parts of the world, and among those addressing intersectional discrimination. It will keep issues of sex, gender, race, social class, sexual orientation and ability at the forefront, bringing marginalized voices to the centre of the conversation and focus on micro- and macro-level social justice concerns. The process will also address operationalisation including resource allocation. The International Board will present the proposed key principles on feminist leadership for Amnesty International to the Global Assembly in 2022.

*Arising from motion 4.2*

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## **Decision 2021/09: Anti-Racism**

The Global Assembly

**Instructs** the International Board to establish a more explicit commitment to racial justice and anti-racism in the AI Global Strategic Framework.

This should include, but not be limited to these changes:

1. Page 6. Priority 2: Outcome 2.1. Add “racial” after “gender” in the heading, so that reads

“Outcome 2.1. Promoting gender, racial, and intersectional justice.

2. Add the following footnote to heading Outcome 2.1 so that it reads

“Outcome 2.1. Promoting gender, racial<sup>2</sup>, and intersectional justice.

3. Make the following changes (deletions in strike through and additions in italics) to the substance of Outcome 2.1 so that it reads

“States have laws, policies and practices in place that advance ~~equality of opportunity~~ *substantive equality* and public participation for those otherwise subjected to multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination, *and dismantle systems of oppression and promote justice for those who have been historically affected*; non-discriminatory enjoyment of sexual and reproductive health and rights is increased ...

4. Page 6. Priority 2: Outcome 2.1 Add “racism” after “protections from” in the text so that it reads

...prevention of and protections from racism, gender-based violence and other hate

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<sup>2</sup> The term “race” should be understood in a broad and inclusive manner, in line with the definition of racial discrimination in international standards.

crimes...

5. Page 8. Part VII: Common lenses: Add “and anti-racism” at the end of the second “Common Lens”, so that it reads

“Intersectionality, gender-mainstreaming, and anti-racism”.

6. Page 10. Section VIII.A. (Strengthening our core capabilities). Add “racial justice” in bullet 3 after “thematic areas such as” so that it reads

“methods of research into corporate actors, economic and social rights, and in the newer thematic areas such as racial justice, digital technologies”

7. Page 10. Section VIII.A. (Strengthening our core capabilities). Add “anti-racism” in bullet point 4 “meeting our commitments to” so that it reads

“meeting our commitments to intersectionality, gender mainstreaming, and anti-racism”

8. Page 13. Section VIII.C. (Enhancing our work with partners). Under the subheading “Diversity”, add “racial” between “gender” and “social” and “intersectional” between “climate” and “justice” after “working for” so that it reads

Specifically with those working for equality, non-discrimination and for gender, racial social, climate, and intersectional justice.

*Arising from motion 4.3*

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## **Decision 2021/10: The distribution of resources over Amnesty International’s Global Priorities and its flexible areas of work**

The Global Assembly

### **Decides:**

- To delete from the Global Strategic Framework 2022 -2030 (POL 50/3639/2021; page 9):  
The entire Amnesty movement (national entities and the International Secretariat) will commit to work on both global priorities. 80% of each entity’s resources for human rights work will be invested in the two Global Priorities including by sustaining and developing capabilities in such areas as campaigning, advocacy, communications and Human Rights Education.

And replace it by the following text:

The entire Amnesty movement (national entities, and the International

Secretariat) will commit to work on both global priorities. Each entity will dedicate 80% of its resources for human rights to the two Global Priorities, including by sustaining and developing capabilities in such areas as campaigning, advocacy, communications and Human Rights Education, or explain why it does not comply with this commitment and indicate a clear time frame regarding the non-compliance (the process for that has to be manageable for entities with very limited resources).

- To delete from the Global Strategic Framework 2022 – 2030 (POL 50/3639/2021; page 9):  
Any and all restricted income will need to align with 80/20% two-tier approach. Priority will be given to raising restricted income which corresponds to Global Priorities. In addition, any restricted income raised for flexible areas will need to respect the 20% threshold.

And replace it by the following text:

Restricted income will be aimed to align with the 80/20% two-tier approach. Priority will be given to raising restricted income which corresponds to Global Priorities. Entities that do not comply with this commitment will explain their reasons and indicate a clear time frame regarding the non-compliance (the process for that has to be manageable for entities with very limited resources).

*Arising from motion 4.4*

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## **Decision 2021/11: Review of the implementation of the next Global Strategic Framework**

The Global Assembly

### **Decides that**

- It will review the implementation of the Global Strategic Framework 2022 – 2030 (GSF) in 2025 and 2028
- These reviews will be based on implementation review reports timely provided by the International Board to the Global Assembly (GA), respectively covering the period 2022 – 2024 and 2025 – 2027
- The implementation review reports shall, *inter alia*, include
  - (i) an assessment of progress on the outcomes under the Priority Goals in the GSF
  - (ii) an assessment of progress in the flexible areas of work as mentioned in the GSF
  - (iii) a progress report on strengthening core capabilities as identified in the GSF

- (iv) major or emerging external and internal trends and developments that result in new opportunities or threats for the further implementation of the GSF
- (v) recommendations to the GA for adjustments of the GSF, including Priority Goals and flexible areas of work, and their budgetary consequences and operationalization
- The implementation review reports shall, wherever possible, distinguish between progress made by the movement as a whole and progress made by the IS.

**Instructs** the International Board to

- Present, at the latest well before the GA's regular meeting in 2023, draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the 2025 review to the GA for approval
- Ensure adequate representation of sections and structures in the review process
- Ensure adequate involvement of external independent expertise in the review process.

*Arising from motion 4.5*