

## **AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**

31 January 2019

### **Independent review into the tragic loss of Rosalind McGregor, Amnesty International's Advocacy Programme Intern in the Geneva Office**

The Amnesty International movement is deeply saddened by the tragic death by suicide of Rosalind McGregor in July 2018, who had been an intern in the International Advocacy Programme in Geneva for five months and previously volunteered with our Mexico office.

An independent review was commissioned to assess Amnesty International's discharge of its duty of care under Swiss law, and to take a wellbeing lens to the circumstances preceding and following Roz's tragic death.

The review was undertaken by Kavita Avula, PsyD, of the KonTerra Group, and Romain Félix, Esq., of Sulmoni & Félix, LL.M. It has been shared with Roz's family and Amnesty International staff today.

Kumi Naidoo issued the following statement in response to the review:

London, 31 January 2019

Dear colleagues, dear friends,

I have now received the report by Kavita Avula, PsyD of the KonTerra Group, and Romain Félix, Esq., of Sulmoni & Félix, LL.M. on their review into the circumstances preceding the tragic death of our colleague Rosalind McGregor. I welcome the report, accept its findings and recommendations and believe it will contribute to the ongoing important reflections and learnings within Amnesty International.

On behalf of the International Board and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), I would like to express our deepest sadness about the tragedy that occurred, and the pain suffered by Roz's family, friends and colleagues who held her dear.

I would like to acknowledge what a difficult time it has been for all of us in Amnesty International, and especially for our colleagues in the Geneva office, in the Mexico Regional Office and in the International Advocacy Programme. The report reminds us with striking clarity of the urgent need to be alert and be prepared to act swiftly in the face of personal circumstances and illness.

I am comforted to learn that Roz received personal and professional support from her supervisor and her colleagues. The report finds that Roz's working situation did not play a significant, if any, role in her tragic decision. However, we need to ask ourselves what we can and should do differently in future, in a situation where an individual is vulnerable and in need of support. Likewise, I accept the criticisms voiced in the report regarding some aspects of our employment relationship.

Having had the opportunity to discuss the review's findings with Roz's family, I would like to confirm my commitment to them and to the Amnesty International movement that the wellbeing of our colleagues will be at the heart of our internal culture and management practice.

As announced previously, and further developed based on the findings from the James Laddie investigation in 2018, we commissioned an extensive assessment of our policies and procedures regarding enhancing the support to our staff and their wellbeing. This report, undertaken by the KonTerra Group, will be published today. It provides us with specific recommendations for evolving the approach to staff wellbeing at the International Secretariat, building on important initiatives that have already been launched.

Let me assure you that the International Board, the SLT and I will work together to implement the recommendations in full, not only to rebuild your trust, but to create a supportive, safe and compassionate working environment in Amnesty. Much more work is needed to improve our internal culture in these difficult times, where many of our colleagues and volunteers already feel the pressure from the hostile environments they operate in. We will only succeed if we stand together and seek to learn from the past.

I ask Section Directors to share this review, the KonTerra report and our responses with your Boards and your staff. As always, the International Board, the SLT and I are relying on your feedback and input as we assess our priorities and respond to the recommendations we have received now, and over the past months.

I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to Dr. Kavita Avula and Romain Félix for conducting the review and to Natasa Posel (Amnesty International Slovenia), Wies de Graeve (Amnesty International Belgium, Flemish) and Elisabeth Rasmussen (Amnesty International Sweden), who formed the Oversight Group for the review process.

I stand with you in solidarity, as we progress our campaigns for freedom, justice and equality for all.

Sincerely,

Kumi Naidoo  
Secretary General  
Amnesty International