



Amnesty has released a report that condemns several gender-critical organisations as 'anti-rights' Credit: Amnesty International



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In December 2022, a former Amnesty employee told me I should come up to Edinburgh to see a secret project she was working on.

As that person was JK Rowling, I hopped on a train. What she wanted to show me was the freshly painted Beira's Place, a fine Edinburgh town house she had bought to set up a support service for women who had suffered sexual violence. I had tea and biscuits with the incredibly experienced team she had assembled to run it, and left deeply impressed that Rowling had made sure this rape crisis centre would be funded. Forever. What a gift she had given.

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Up until that point, Edinburgh had only one rape crisis centre and it was oversubscribed. It was also controversial as it was run by Mridul Wadhwa, a biological male who had given interviews saying that survivors of rape needed to be educated about trans rights and have their trauma reframed.

Rowling was determined to provide a single-sex space where women were cared for and counselled by other women. Beira's Place has been busy ever since it opened.

Now four years down the line, this place of sanctuary has been described in a report by Amnesty as an "anti-rights group". Anti whose rights?

Beira's Place is but one of the organisations that Amnesty has chosen to smear with this slur. The report – strangely, temporarily not available – is called *A Growing Threat: The Anti-rights Movement in the UK*, and it names others: For Women Scotland, Sex Matters, the policy group Murray Blackburn Mackenzie, gender-critical feminist charity Filia and many small organisations.

These groups all refuse establishment gender ideology. It is establishment dogma in all our institutions – from the BBC to the NHS – that sex is changeable, that if a man says he is a woman, he just magically is one.



Beira's Place, the JK Rowling-founded support service for female victims of sexual violence, was labelled an 'anti-rights' organisation by Amnesty (pictured: the organisation's board) Credit: Nicole Jones

The rejection of this foolishness by grassroots feminists has led to Britain being called “Terf island”, and it is clear that Amnesty, a charity supposedly devoted to human rights, does not have a clue about what has gone on here.

Those of us who reject gender-identity ideology, who argue for single-sex spaces and against the mutilation of children, have achieved a lot. Huge organisations like Amnesty cannot stand this fact and are too lazy to ask why this has happened. They have argued for “trans rights”, which mostly turn out to be men’s rights at the expense of women.

This is a real “Are we the baddies?” moment. This is the famous Mitchell and Webb 2006 sketch in which they play two Nazi SS officers waiting for the Red Army to attack. They increasingly become aware that they are the villains and not the heroes of the film they are playing in their heads. The skulls on the caps provide them with a clue.

Amnesty is so blinded by its self-image of goodness that it cannot see that it is choosing to attack mostly Left-leaning feminist grassroots organisations. It has become the establishment it thinks it is fighting.

As usual, the accusations it makes against gender-critical people are incorrect in multiple ways. Those of us who abhor trans ideology do so because it is based on such regressive stereotypes of femininity and masculinity. Dresses and fishnets, beards and tats. Feminists have always wanted to break down these stereotypes, not reinforce them by telling anyone that their bodies are somehow wrong and need fixing through hormones and surgeries. We would like everyone to be able to express their gender as they see fit. No, we are not anti-abortion or part of that movement. No, we are not funded by the far-Right.

But it is indeed incredible that a few determined women have been able to get the law clarified: the Supreme Court decision reiterated that sex in the Equality Act referred to biological sex. Amnesty lost its argument to that in the Supreme Court, but has weirdly not added that to its weird list of “hate groups”.

It is astonishing that so many brave individuals have had to fight so hard to stop men being put in female prisons. It is almost miraculous that despite so many attempted cancellations, we have kept insisting on our sex-based rights.

Amnesty – who had already lost some of its reputation because of its position on Israel – simply conforms to NGO wisdom on the trans issues, often contradicting itself. At certain points, Amnesty has argued for women-only spaces for traumatised Syrian refugees, but it so often beclowns itself by talking of the dire situation in Afghanistan affecting those who “identify as women”. To undermine itself even more, certain corners of Amnesty are distancing themselves from the report. Amnesty International’s Secretariat – the global organisation’s central hub – has stressed that the UK arm is just one of its 72 national entities: a spokeswoman for the International Secretariat has said it was not involved in the development of the anti-rights briefing and supported the decision for the report to be withdrawn.

As I have always said, such defenders of “trans rights” live in an elitist bubble. They have no way of making their ideology make sense in most parts of the world. We now hear that Iran is gearing up to make more money than ever from its thriving “sex change” industry. Are we really

going to classify this as any kind of liberation when it is forced upon gay men?

What this battle has always been about is balancing the rights of both women and trans-identified people.

This can be achieved, but what we are witnessing are the cracks in the establishment. Those who perceive themselves to be radical turn out in fact to be absolutely conservative on gender, confusing femininity with femaleness. They have also confused the ability of women who say no and insist on our boundaries with some imagined evangelical conspiracy against trans people. The truth is much harder for them to understand. Human rights mean nothing without women's rights, and if we can no longer define women, then women lose what little we already had. In defaming women's organisations as "anti-rights", you defame so many ordinary women, who just happen to be extraordinary. Amnesty may join all the other mystified self-harming institutions that no longer hold sway. Or Amnesty UK, anyway, as the organisation's International Secretariat has distanced itself from this crazy report and sinister list.

We will look back at this time and wonder how such out-of-control ideologues ever had so much power in the first place.

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