



Name of organisation: SAMM Abroad
Website: www.SAMMAbroad.org

Description of organisation:

SAMM Abroad exists specially for people in the UK whose loved ones are the victims of murder or manslaughter abroad. They are a support group for families, partners and friends of the victims of murder and manslaughter abroad. They are also an action group, working for change in the support received in the UK after a murder abroad.'



Details of Project/Visit/Results:

I was invited by Hazel and Pete Kouzaris to attend a special meeting of SAMM Abroad organized by Priti Patel, Peterborough MP.

The meeting was organised to allow families to tell their stories and difficulties faced, after experiencing the murder of a loved one overseas, to a representative from the Foreign Office.

Members of the group are permitted to invite friends to attend – I was made extremely welcome and was struck by how friendly everyone was but also how quickly people wanted to know why you were there and to share their personal incident with you. There was support in just talking and listening.

Hazel and Pete had told me that after attending some of the SA meetings they realized that 'there were people worse off than themselves' – I found that so hard to believe – how could anything be worse than losing a son to murder? However, not only did this demonstrate what compassionate people they are, but indeed some families experienced additional difficulties which fortunately the Kouzaris family did not have to go through e.g. delays and even refusal regarding repatriation of the body, waiting for a trial for several years, huge financial outlay over an indefinite period to name but a few.



The one thing that I felt all the families I heard needed was an immediate advocate as soon as the tragedy was announced. Someone from the foreign office to provide an advocate to take charge and help them to know what to do next, who to call and how to get themselves home if they too are away from home .

Always a chance has donated a relatively small sum of money to SAMM Abroad and hope to continue to do so – your money has helped AAC to support meetings such as the one at the Houses of Parliament – providing refreshments to families who travelled from all over the country to try to make a difference so that other families might be supported more effectively than some of these families were.

I was pleased to say that the Foreign Office representative did listen and has offered to research some of the issues and then meet with the families again. Priti Patel, MP, took up the case of a family in her constituency and brought it to the attention of Parliament.

It was a privilege to attend the meeting – I was overwhelmed by the dignity with which all the speakers presented their own cases despite the emotions that were evident with every single contribution.

Please continue to support Always A Chance to support worthwhile causes

Report by: Jeanne Barczewska
Date: March 2013

