

TAKE ACTION



Real lives

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This supplement to *Amnesty Magazine* is produced for readers and local groups wishing to write more letters in support of individuals at risk.

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Amnesty

HRAC

17-25 New Inn Yard

London EC2A 3EA

The Peace
Community of
San José de
Apartadó
Colombia



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Peaceful people in danger

The Peace Community of San José de Apartadó refused to bear arms or take sides in Colombia's armed conflict, a decision that met with hostility and suspicion from the warring parties. Despite a recent peace agreement between the government and one of the country's guerrilla groups, community members still live under constant threat.

Guerrillas accuse them of siding with the government, while government forces and their paramilitary allies accuse them of being subversive. Heavily-armed paramilitaries continue to threaten community members, even though the government claims that all paramilitaries have demobilised. Government soldiers have also issued threats.

Since the Peace Community was formed in 1997, more than 170 of its members have been disappeared or killed; others have been threatened or sexually assaulted. The community has repeatedly called on the Colombian authorities to halt paramilitary activity, investigate the human rights abuses, and guarantee the safety of witnesses. But little progress has been made in investigating any of the abuses.

APPEAL Call on the Colombian government to ensure that protection measures agreed by the San José de Apartadó Peace Community itself, that are in line with the recommendations and ruling of the Inter-American Commission and Court of the Organisation of American States, are put in place immediately to ensure their safety

► Señor Presidente Juan Manuel Santos
Presidente de la República
Palacio de Nariño
Carrera 8 No.7-26
Bogotá
Colombia

Salutation: Your Excellency
Postage: World

► His Excellency Mr Nestor Osorio
Embassy of Colombia
3 Hans Crescent
London SW1X 0LN

Salutation: Your Excellency

The Ayotzinapa 43
Mexico



© Al/Sergio Ortiz Borbolla

No justice for missing students

On the evening of 26 September 2014, around 80 students from the Ayotzinapa rural teacher training college, travelling in five buses to a demonstration in Mexico City, were confronted by local police who opened fire. Three students and three by-standers were killed. Several students were seriously wounded: one is still in a coma. Forty-three students were arrested and loaded on to police buses. They were never seen again.

More than 100 people, mostly local police officers and gang members, have been charged, but the investigation of the students' disappearance was inadequate. The person in charge of the police on the night of the attack has been detained, but the students' legal representatives have not been allowed to question this officer thoroughly.

More than 28,000 people have disappeared or gone missing in Mexico in the last decade. Relatives and survivors urgently need answers and compensation. The Mexican authorities must find these missing students and bring all those responsible to justice.

APPEAL Urge the President to continue the search for the 43 missing students, with the help of relatives, until all leads have been exhausted; carry out an urgent, thorough and impartial investigation, publish its findings and bring all those responsible to justice; ensure a general law on disappearances, which fulfils all international standards, is put in place.

► Enrique Peña Nieto
Presidente de la República
Residencia Oficial de los Pinos
Casa Miguel Alemán
Col. San Miguel Chapultepec, CP 11850
México, DF, México

Salutation: Your Excellency
Postage: World

► His Excellency Mr David Najera Rivas
Deputy Head of Mission Embassy of Mexico
16 St George Street
London W1S 1FD

Salutation: Your Excellency

Rania Alabbasi,
Abdulrahman
Yasin and their
six children
Syria



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Family missing without explanation

Rania Alabbasi, her husband Abdulrahman Yasin and their six children aged between three and 15 years, were arrested by the Syrian authorities in March 2013. They have been missing ever since. Despite requests from relatives, no reason has been given for their arrest or information given about where they are.

When the uprising started, the family had visas to leave the country whenever they wanted but thought they were safe because they had not participated in any political activities. Rania is a well-respected dentist who provided free treatment to those who couldn't pay. She also represented Syria in chess competitions.

In February three years ago, the UN Security Council Resolution 2139 called for an end to indiscriminate and direct attacks against civilians in Syria and demanded the release of all those arbitrarily detained, starting with women, and the sick, wounded and elderly.

APPEAL Call on the Syrian authorities to reveal what has happened to the family and give them access to their relatives and lawyer. Immediately release the six children and, unless charged with an internationally recognisable offence and given a fair trial, their parents Abdulrahman Yasin and Rania Alabbasi.

► President Bashar al-Assad
c/o Permanent Representative to the UN
Bashar Ja'afari, Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
820 Second Avenue, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10017, USA

Salutation: Your Excellency
Postage: World

► Ambassador to the UN
Permanent Representative to the UN
Bashar Ja'afari, Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary (address above)

Salutation: Your Excellency
Postage: World

Trần Huỳnh Duy
Thức
Vietnam



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Jailed for championing political reform

Trần Huỳnh Duy Thức, entrepreneur, author, blogger and human rights defender, was arrested in 2009 and tried in January 2010 on charges of attempting to overthrow the state.

Fifty-year old Thức is co-author of The Path of Viet Nam which makes recommendations on political reform. He reports being tortured in detention before his trial to make him confess to the charges. He refused to confess and was sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment with five years' house arrest on release.

He was moved to a second prison camp in May 2016, perhaps because he refused to be relocated to the United States as a condition for early release. He began a two-week hunger-strike in May 2016 to demand rule of law and a referendum on Vietnam's political system. He went on another hunger strike in October 2016 in support of people in the central coastal region after toxic waste from a Taiwanese steel company ruined the livelihoods of around 270,000 people.

APPEAL Call on the authorities in Vietnam to immediately and unconditionally release Trần Huỳnh Duy Thức as a prisoner of conscience who was peacefully exercising his rights to freedom of expression. Ask them to apply the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, including regular access to family and appropriate medical care, to all political prisoners.

▶ President Truong Tan Sang
Office of the President
Ba Dinh District
Ha Noi
Vietnam

Salutation: Your Excellency

Postage: World

▶ His Excellency Mr Thao Van Nguyen
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
12-14 Victoria Road
London W8 5RD

Salutation: Your Excellency

Kalpana
Chakma
Bangladesh



© Ittukgula Chakma

Still missing after 20 years

Twenty-three-year-old Kalpana Chakma was abducted from her home in Lallyagona village, Bagaichhari, Rangamati district, in June 1996 with her two brothers. Her brothers managed to escape despite being shot at, but she has never been found.

Kalpana was the organising secretary of the Hill Women's Federation, an organisation that campaigns for the rights of Indigenous peoples in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh.

Although Kalpana's brothers identified the kidnapers as security personnel from a nearby army camp, the Bagaichhari Police ignored their testimony. An inquiry by Bagaichhari Police and the Home Ministry reported that no specific witness or evidence was found. Kalpana's brother challenged this in the courts. But in November 2016, the police asked a court in Rangamati to close the investigation, citing a lack of evidence. Kalpana is still missing and justice has not been done.

APPEAL Call on the Minister of Home Affairs to ensure the Rangmati District police carry out a thorough and independent re-investigation of Kalpana Chakma's case. Ask for them to include the three main suspects that were identified, make sure perpetrators are brought to justice, and protect investigators and witnesses from reprisal.

▶ Minister of Home Affairs
Sheikh Hasina Wajed
Prime Minister's Office
Old Sangsad Bhaban
Tejgaon
Dhaka-1215
Bangladesh

Salutation: Dear Minister

Postage: World

▶ His Excellency Mr Nazmul Quanine
High Commission for Bangladesh
28 Queen's Gate
London SW7 5JA

Salutation: Your Excellency

Hakan Yaman
Turkey



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No arrests for brutal attack

Hakan Yaman, a 37-year-old father of two, was viciously beaten by police and left for dead while returning home from work as a minibus driver on the evening of 3 June 2013.

While walking home a couple of streets from his parked car in the Sargazi district of Istanbul, riot police at a nearby demonstration sprayed him with water cannon and beat him to the ground. Five police officers hit him repeatedly around the head and one of them gouged out an eye. When he was lying on the ground not moving, he heard one say: 'Let's completely finish him off.' They threw him onto a fire and left him unconscious.

He survived but with horrific injuries to his face and head. He lost one eye completely and 80 per cent of the sight in his other eye. His skull was fractured, and his back had second degree burns. Hakan filed a police report for attempted murder, but the police officers denied involvement and no arrest has been made.

APPEAL Call on the Minister of Interior to ensure security directorates and police officers provide full information to an effective and independent investigation into the brutal assault on Hakan Yaman. The investigation should take place without delay, given the severity of his injuries.

▶ Minister of Interior
Mr Suleyman Soylu
İçişleri Bakanlığı
Bakanlıklar
Ankara
Turkey

Salutation: Dear Minister

Postage: World

▶ His Excellency Mr Abdurrahman Bilgiç
Embassy of the Republic of Turkey
43 Belgrave Square
London SW1X 8PA

Salutation: Your Excellency

Hadidiya and Humsa hamlets Israel/Palestine



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Villages under constant threat

The Palestinian residents of Hadidiya and Humsa hamlets in the occupied West Bank face constant risk of being evicted from their homes by the Israeli army. Their movements are restricted and they live in fear of having their homes demolished and being forced out. They are also denied access to the water and land they need to survive.

Some residents from Hadidiya were forced to move to Humsa, one kilometre away, in 2007, when the army threatened their homes. Residents of both villages were given a military order to leave. Two houses in Humsa, homes to 40 people, mostly children, were destroyed. A tractor and water tank vital to the villagers' livelihoods were confiscated. The residents are too afraid to move to larger villages in the scorching hot summer as they usually do, in case their houses are destroyed.

Residents of Humsa and Hadidiya have brought international delegations to visit the area, but attention is diminishing and threats increasing. Further and sustained action is vital.

APPEAL Call on the Prime Minister to cancel the demolition and eviction orders of the Hadidiya and Humsa hamlets, for confiscated property to be returned, and to allow residents access to water, electricity and other basic goods needed for their survival.

▶ Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu
Office of the Prime Minister
3 Kaplan Street
Hakiryia
Jerusalem 91950
Israel

Salutation: Your Excellency

Postage: World

▶ His Excellency Deputy Ambassador Eitan Na'eh
Embassy of Israel
2 Palace Green Kensington
London W8 4QB

Salutation: Your Excellency

Saman Naseem Iran



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Teenager sentenced to death

Saman Naseem, a member of Iran's Kurdish minority, was sentenced to death at the age of 17 for allegedly taking part in an armed rebellion against the state which led to the death of a Revolutionary Guard. Following a worldwide appeal from Amnesty, he was given a retrial – but this time we must make sure it is fair.

The court used Saman's confession obtained under torture. He was also forced to put his fingerprints on a document while blindfolded. After a grossly unfair trial, his sentence was overturned by the Supreme Court and his case was sent to a lower court for retrial because he was under 18 at the time of the crime. However the lower court, once again, used the confession obtained under torture. Saman, who has no lawyer, was sentenced to death again. This decision was upheld by the Supreme Court.

In July 2015 Amnesty received the good news that Saman Naseem's request for judicial review was granted by the Supreme Court. His conviction has been quashed and he is entitled to a retrial.

APPEAL Welcome Saman Naseem's judicial review and call on the Iranian authorities to ensure that his retrial is fair, and that confessions obtained under torture are not used as evidence in court. Remind them that executing anyone for crimes committed while they were under 18 is strictly prohibited by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, both ratified by Iran.

▶ Supreme Leader of Iran
c/o HE Hamid Baeidinejad
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran
16 Princes Gate
London SW7 1PT

Salutation: Your Excellency

▶ His Excellency Hamid Baeidinejad
(address above)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Liu Xiaobo and Liu Xia China



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Nobel Peace Prize winner still in prison

Activist and scholar Dr Liu Xiaobo is serving 11 years for 'inciting subversion of state power'. He was taken from his home in Beijing in 2008, two days before he was to launch a pro-democracy manifesto with a group of other activists called Charter 08.

In 2010, Liu Xiaobo became the first Chinese citizen to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his long and non-violent struggle for fundamental human rights. He has been involved in the 1989 pro-democracy movement, HIV/AIDS prevention and human rights, and was president of the Independent Chinese PEN Centre in 2003-2007.

Immediately after the prize was announced, Liu Xiaobo's wife Liu Xia, a poet and artist, was placed under house arrest, trapped in her home under constant surveillance, without visitor rights or access to phones or the internet.

Liu Xia has suffered a serious heart condition and severe anxiety and depression, sometimes without adequate medical attention. An Amnesty campaign helped draw attention to her situation in 2014. She was given very limited rights to visit family, see a doctor, talk to friends by phone and buy groceries.

APPEAL Call on the Chinese Government to release Liu Xiaobo immediately and unconditionally, and to lift surveillance and all restrictions on Liu Xia's freedom of movement, expression and association.

▶ Premier Li Keqiang
The State Council General Office
2 Fuyoujie, Xichengqu
Beijingshi 100017
People's Republic of China

Salutation: Your Excellency

Postage: World

▶ His Excellency Liu Xiaoming
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London W1B 1JL

Salutation: Your Excellency