

# BRAVE CAMPAIGN

Stand up for Human Rights Defenders



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As part of the BRAVE Campaign we are calling for the increased protection and recognition of Human Rights Defenders (HRD) around the world.

This is in response to the increase in attacks, arrests, harassment and even killings of human rights activists around the world with 2017 being the deadliest year yet with over 300 HRDs killed according to the organisation Frontline Defenders. Brazil was the deadliest country in 2017 to be an HRD with 57 people in the country alone being killed as a result of their human rights work.

Amnesty consider this to be a global crisis and that the UK Government need to act as a matter of urgency to ensure that those standing up for Human Rights around the world are protected and recognised for their crucial work.

To ensure that the UK play it's part to support HRDs around the world, we are calling on the UK Government **to prioritise its work to support human rights defenders in response to the unprecedented surge and global scale of attacks. This would include developing a coherent strategy. The prioritisation and strategy need to have:**

- 1. Ministerial leadership*
- 2. Prioritisation in-country, through UK Embassies and High Commissions*
- 3. Significant funding*
- 4. A focus on defenders who experience particular challenges, including women human rights defenders (WHRDs)*

Such action would build on the UK Government's existing work in this area, ensure more consistency in how they support Human Rights Defenders and that their efforts help counter the widespread repression and shrinking of civil society space that Amnesty and others have documented.

**To achieve this, we need cross parliamentary support and a wide support from MP's across parties. We are therefore asking you to contact your MP urging them to call for action from Jeremy Hunt, Foreign Secretary.**

**TAKE ACTION:** Call on the UK government to prioritise its support for Human Rights Defenders.

Over the next months we have a key window of opportunity to build parliamentary support to add pressure on the new Foreign Secretary including as part of the upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UN HRD Declaration and 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

There are 4 ways you can engage with your MP over the next months to ask for their support for our Brave Campaign and call for UK Government to prioritise HRD's. Depending on what engagement your group had with your MP on the issue previously you choose one of the below- the important things is that we are encouraging as many MP's as possible to support our calls over the next months.

### **1) Meet or write to your MP**

If you haven't already engaged with your MP on this issue of Human Rights Defenders and the Brave Campaign, please – as a priority – ask to meet with them. If you aren't able to meet with them, you can write a letter to them instead.

*Key points to raise with your MP in meeting or via letter.*

- ✦ Raise awareness of Amnesty's BRAVE campaign – why we launched this campaign – and the case of Women Human Rights Defender Azza Soliman (Egypt) and the case of Marielle Franco (Brazil).
- ✦ Highlight to your MP the unprecedented nature and scale of the current threats and attacks of human rights defenders. Amnesty sees this as a global crisis which requires a renewed response from the UK government.
- ✦ Write to the Foreign Secretary calling on him to prioritise the UK government's work to support human rights defenders

More information on cases and background to the shrinking space and attack on Human Rights Defenders in attached MP briefing.

### **2) Ask your MP to speak in debate in Parliament on the topic of Human Rights Defenders**

If you have already recently engaged with your MP on this issue and have received a response, you could follow up and ask them to support our campaign in Parliament by asking them to speak during debates in Parliament on the topic of Human Rights Defenders.

There will be debates taking place in November in parliament on the topic of Human Rights Defenders. Ask your MP to speak during the debate and call for the UK government to prioritise it's work to support human rights defenders. Our advocacy office will send out a briefing to a wide list of parliamentarians ahead of the debate.

### **3) Invite your MP to a local group event**

Beyond writing to your MP or meeting them in their constituency office a good way to engage them is through organising an event with focus on the Brave Campaign.

This provides a good opportunity to talk to them about our campaign, key cases such as Azza Soliman and Marielle Franco but also Amnesty's call on UK government to prioritise it's support to HRDs in their work.

A nice way to invite your MP to one of your group meetings can be to host an AmnesTea with Brave actions. For more information and to order AmnesTea kit please go here; [www.amnesty.org.uk/amnestea](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/amnestea)

### **4) Invite your MP to our Human Rights Day event in Speakers House**

As part of launching this year's Write for Rights campaign and to mark the Annual Human Rights Day (10 Dec), we will be hosting a launch event in parliament to introduce the campaign and related cases to members of the parliament. Attending is a great way for MP's to be introduced not only to the cases but the wider campaign and issues and threats facing Human Rights Defenders (HRD) around the world but also to increase the understanding of the role HRDs play in achieving social change and upholding and furthering human rights for all.

Please Write to your MP and ask them to drop into our Annual Human Rights Day reception any time between 12:30-2pm on *Wednesday 12 December*, at Speakers House and take action on some of our cases. This year's event will have a focus on Women's Rights Defenders and will provide opportunities for Parliamentarians to take action in support of one of our Write for Rights cases.

### **Write for Rights 2018**

This year's write for Rights have a focus on 10 Women's Rights Defender cases (including the case of Marielle Franco) and have a big cross over with the Brave Campaign. If you are planning on arranging a Write for Rights event and invite you MP this is a great opportunity to talk about the issues facing HRDs more widely.

Write for Rights campaign will be launched on 1 November and end on 31 December. Materials will be ready by mid-October. However you can [place your orders in now](#) and join this global campaign

### **Keep us in the loop!**

We would love to hear from you. For further advice on how to take this action and engage with your MP contact [Advocacy Team](#). Please also forward any information and responses from your MP's to us.

## Human Rights Defenders cases

### Azza Soliman, Egypt

Azza Soliman, a lawyer and long-standing WHRD, who is the founder of an Egyptian NGO that works to prevent violence against women, was arrested at her home in Cairo in December 2016. Three weeks after her arrest, the authorities - without a court hearing - froze her personal and organisational assets and prevented her from travelling to Jordan to participate in a training session on women's rights and Islam. The asset freezes were ordered by judges overseeing a criminal investigation into the activities and funding of Egyptian human rights organisations, in a case officially known as Case 173 of 2011. The assets of seven HRDs were frozen and at least 12 HRDs have been barred from travelling abroad. The moves have raised fears that the authorities are preparing to try human rights defenders on charges such as operating unregistered organisations, accepting funding without government permission and damaging Egypt's 'national interests' – an offence which carries a lengthy prison sentence. Amnesty International calls on Egyptian authorities to drop the charges and lift the travel ban and asset freeze ordered against Azza Soliman immediately and unconditionally.

### Marielle Franco, Brazil

On the 14th of March 2018 Women Rights Defender Marielle Franco was killed with no one to this date held to account for the assassination. Marielle Franco was a black bisexual woman and young mother living in favelas of Rio de Janeiro. She worked and campaigned tirelessly for the rights of LGBTI and young people in the favelas and other marginalized communities in Rio de Janeiro. Marielle also stood up for exposing and denouncing violations committed by security forces, including extrajudicial executions in Brazil. The killing of Marielle Franco is part of a wider pattern in the country where in Brazil, dozens of human rights defenders (HRDs) are killed every year. In 2017, at least 67 HRDs were killed in the country, an increase from previous year where 61 killings were recorded. There is also a continued pattern of lack of investigation of killings of HRDs in the country and when perpetrators face trial it is often the shooters and not the intellectual authors of the crime. Amnesty International calls on the Brazilian authorities to ensure an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the assassination of Marielle Franco and that those responsible are brought to justice in a fair trial.

### Good news! Tep Vanny is free

On 20 August Cambodian land rights activists received a royal pardon and is free from prison! She was jailed just for protesting the destruction of her home to make way for a luxury development. Thank you so much to all who took action and campaigned for her release. Watch the [video](#) of her release on Facebook.

### Sakris Kupila, Finland

There has been some positive development in the case of Sakris Kupila who is no longer deemed a HRD at risk. This is due to positive impact as a result of Brave campaigning which have meant more visibility and protection for Sakris who now feels safer and able to carry out his work defending transgender rights in Finland. If you are interested in carrying on working on this case, please contact [LGBTI Network](#).

## RESOURCES

### BRAVE Campaign Materials & new BRAVE T-shirts

Materials	Product Code
BRAVE Campaign leaflet	HRD006
Azza Soliman action card	HRD001
<b>Placards:</b>	
'Free all Human Rights Defenders' Placard	HRD007
'Stand with Human Rights Defenders' Placard	HRD008

To order, please call **01788 545553** making sure that you have the product codes to hand.

### BRAVE T-shirts

We also have a limited number of T-shirts available free to groups. Order from the [Community Organising Team](#).

