



WRITE

FOR

RIGHTS

2018

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**





'The messages have helped me realise that I'm not alone in this fight and that my efforts campaigning for trans rights in Finland are not in vain. I now know that all the sacrifices I've made on this journey have been worth it.'

Sakris Kupila. Nearly 350,000 people took action for him during Write for Rights 2017.

WRITE A LETTER CHANGE A LIFE

For all of us there comes a time when we have to stand up for what is right: for ourselves and our families, for neighbours and colleagues, sometimes for people we don't even know. All of us can do it. But it is hard to do it alone.

For some people, to stand up for freedom, justice and equality is to put themselves at personal risk – of humiliation, imprisonment, violence, even death. Sending a letter or a card shows them – and those who would silence them – that we support and value their courage, and their determination to build a fairer world.

In this year's Write for Rights campaign we support women all around the world who do extraordinary things to protect human rights. They are human rights defenders in danger and they need all of us to stand up for them. And when thousands of people unite for what is right and fair, humanity wins.



'The letters reminded me of the importance of my work – it has made our personal struggle for justice a global struggle. Kindness reminded me that I was broken, not destroyed.'

Shackelia Jackson

Letter writing works

People in **208** countries and territories – from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe – took part in Write for Rights 2017. Collectively we sent more than **5.5 million** letters, cards, emails and social media posts. And they had a real impact:

- **More than 430,000** helped to protect Chinese housing activist **Ni Yulan** and her family from assaults, harassment and eviction
- **Over 500,000 people** echoed **Shackelia Jackson's** call for protection of human rights defenders like her, who are pursuing justice for their relatives killed by the Jamaican police
- **Almost 875,000** demanded the release of **Taner Kiliç, İdil Eser** and nine other human rights activists in Turkey – all are now free on bail.



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This year's campaign

This booklet tells the stories of 12 people or groups who have been attacked or threatened for defending human rights. We've suggested actions you can take for each including:

- Sending a message of solidarity to let them know you're thinking of them
- Writing a letter appealing to those with the power to stop the abuse
- Going digital and using social media to show your solidarity online or contact the authorities
- Getting creative to make your voice heard.

New to Write for Rights?

Getting involved in our unique global letter-writing campaign is easy, but we know the first time can seem a bit daunting. Here are some tips:

- You don't have to take action on all 12 cases in the booklet – anything you do to support one or two of them will make a real difference.
- Personalise your solidarity messages as much as possible – this has a real impact on recipients. If you're unsure what to write, we've provided some suggestions.
- When writing to presidents, ministers or others in positions of authority, include your name and country, and if you're comfortable (and the case information says it's OK), your address. This shows that the letter is genuine and personal. Write as one human to another and keep requests clear and polite.
- For each case, we say whether to include your name and address in solidarity letters and cards. Where we ask you not to, it is to ensure that recipients are not overwhelmed by the feeling that they have to reply to every message.
- If there's anything else you're unsure of, check out our Frequently Asked Questions section on page 19.

DATES TO REMEMBER

The Write for Rights 2018 campaign runs from **1 November to 31 December.**

International Human Rights Day is **10 December.**

- You don't have to do this alone: you can ask your friends and family to join in.

Stay up to date

During the campaign, the circumstances of some cases may change. When this happens, it is important for us to be able to update you, so please let us know which cases you're working on by contacting us at:

Individuals at Risk programme
Amnesty International UK
Human Rights Action Centre
17-25 New Inn Yard
London EC2A 3EA
Tel: **020 7033 1636**
Email: iar@amnesty.org.uk

Postage rates

Rates correct at time of writing. For the latest guidance on pricing and to buy postage online, visit royalmail.com

Weight (up to and inc.)	Europe	Rest of the world
10g	£1.25	£1.25
20g	£1.25	£1.45
100g	£1.55	£2.25

RESOURCES

Printed materials

Want to order more materials? Please call us on **01788 545 553** or order online at amnesty.org.uk/write

Booklet

WFR 030: Right for Rights Campaign Booklet 2018

Posters (A3)

WFR 031: Poster of Nonhle Mbuthuma

WFR 032: Poster of Geraldine Chacón

WFR 033: Poster of Marielle Franco

WFR 034: Poster of Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh

Action cards

WFR 036: Action card for Nonhle Mbuthuma

WFR 037: Action card for Geraldine Chacón

Stickers

WFR 038: Write for Rights sticker sheet (15 stickers per sheet)

Online

Go to amnesty.org.uk/write for the latest information on Write for Rights 2018.

You can download pdf versions of the printed materials and additional resources, including:

- Case sheets with solidarity and appeal actions (useful to print out for events and stalls)
- Translations of suggested solidarity messages
- Address labels for individuals or appeal targets
- Updates on cases
- Case sheets written especially for younger audiences
- Tips for organising a Write for Rights event
- Good news from previous campaigns
- Photo galleries of cases

If you have any questions about the campaign, please contact our Supporter Care Team on **020 7033 1777**.



WOMEN DEFENDING HUMANITY

Write a letter, change a life

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Case 3. IRAN
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Case 10. UK
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Case 9. UK
SEYI AKIWOWO page 14



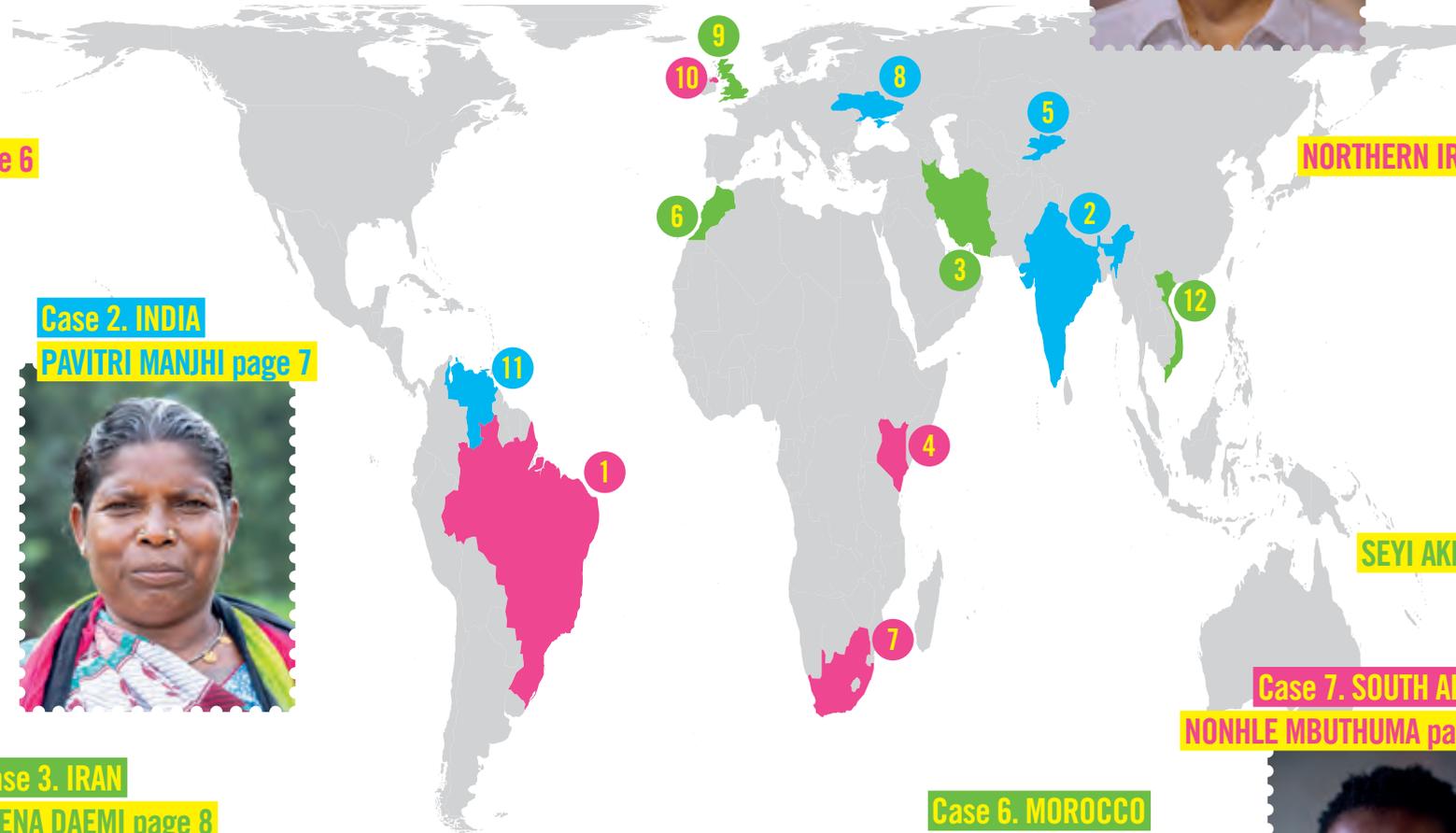
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BRAZIL

MARIELLE FRANCO

Killed for defending the people of Rio

Marielle Franco dedicated her life to defending the rights of women, black, LGBTI and other marginalised people in Rio de Janeiro. A well-known city councillor who grew up in a favela, she also fearlessly denounced police abuses and extrajudicial killings. 'Marielle embodied the rights she stood up for,' says her partner Monica.

On the evening of 14 March 2018, Marielle and her driver, Anderson Pedro Gomes, were shot dead as they drove home from a public debate. The killings appear to have been carried out by skilled professionals, and experts say the bullets belonged to the federal police. However, there has been no independent investigation, and no one has been brought to justice.

Brazil is one of the deadliest countries in the world for human rights defenders – at least 70 were killed in 2017. The perpetrators are rarely brought to justice.



© Midia Ninja

'I will not be interrupted.' Marielle Franco

INDIA

PAVITRI MANJHI

Harassed for standing up to big business

Pavitri Manjhi is defending the rights of her indigenous Adivasi community to remain in their ancestral home and keep their farms and livelihoods. Two companies want to drive the community off the land to make way for power plants. As head of the village council, Pavitri has filed nearly 100 formal complaints against the companies, whose agents have allegedly defrauded villagers of their land.

Local 'strongmen' have repeatedly pressured Pavitri to withdraw the complaints. They visited her home and told her: 'Everyone who helped you file the complaints are outsiders. They will not be able to save you and we will silence them.' They returned the next day to make more threats. Pavitri reported the harassment to the police but little has been done.

For decades, Adivasi people have been forced from their land and had their rights trampled on to make room for business developments.



© AI

EVERY MESSAGE COUNTS Together we can get justice for Marielle, her family and her partner

SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

Write to Marielle's parents Marinete and Antonio, her sister Anielle and her partner Monica.

Marinete da Silva and Antonio Francisco da Silva Neto, Anielle Franco and Monica Benício
c/o Amnesty International Brazil
Rua da Glória,
344 (3rd floor),
Glória - CEP 20241180
Rio de Janeiro (RJ)
Brazil

Language English or Portuguese
Suggested message Your [partner/daughter/sister] fought tirelessly to defend and promote human rights. She stood up for a fairer

world. Now we stand together for her. In solidarity. A Portuguese translation of this message is available at [amnesty.org.uk/write](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write)

CAN I

- Send a religious card or message? **Yes**
- Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **Yes**
- Include my name and address? **Yes**

SEND AN APPEAL LETTER

Urge President Michel Temer to bring Marielle Franco's killers and those who ordered her assassination to justice.

Write to

Presidente Michel Temer
Praça dos Três Poderes, Palácio do Planalto
Brasília/DF
70150-900
Brazil

Salutation Dear Mr President
In your letter call for

- An immediate, impartial and independent investigation into the killings, with all those responsible brought to justice in a fair trial
- Protection, psychological support and reparations for Marielle Franco's family and the witnesses of the killings
- Greater protection for Brazil's human rights defenders.

SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

Pavitri Manjhi Ji
c/o Sri. Degree Prasad Chouhan, Convenor, Adivasi Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Sangharsh
Near Lata Sadan, Puri Bagicha, Madhuban Para, Raigarh, District Raigarh, Chhattisgarh
India – 496001

Language Chhattisgarhi and Hindi

Suggested message Dear Pavitri Manjhi Ji and human rights defenders in Raigarh, I stand in solidarity with your work to defend indigenous peoples' land rights. I wish

strength and success to you and your brave colleagues in your fight for justice.

CAN I

- Send a religious card of message? **No**
- Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **Yes**
- Include my name and address? **Yes**

SEND AN APPEAL LETTER

Tell Director General of Police of Chhattisgarh State to protect Pavitri Manjhi from threats, harassment and intimidation.

Write to:

Director General of Police, Chhattisgarh
Police Headquarters, Naya Raipur
Chhattisgarh
India – 492001

Salutation Dear Director General of Police

In your letter tell him to

- Protect Pavitri Manjhi from threats, harassment and intimidation so she can continue to campaign for the rights of her indigenous Adivasi community.

IRAN

ATENA DAEMI

Jailed for speaking out against the death penalty

Atena Daemi criticised capital punishment on social media, handed out leaflets, and took part in a peaceful protest against the execution of a young woman. The authorities claimed these activities were evidence of criminality, and Atena is now serving a seven-year prison sentence. Her sham trial lasted just 15 minutes.

Since being jailed in November 2016, Atena has been beaten, pepper sprayed and placed in solitary confinement. Earlier this year, she went on hunger strike in protest against her transfer to the notorious Shahr-e Rey prison, a former industrial chicken farm. Atena is now back in the women's ward of Evin prison, but her health has deteriorated alarmingly.

Dozens of human rights activists have been imprisoned in Iran amid an intense crackdown by the authorities. Many others face surveillance, interrogations and drawn-out prosecutions.



'I will defend the rights of my sisters until my last breath. I would rather die than be a slave of oppression.' Atena Daemi

© Private

KENYA

SENGWER INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Indigenous people forced from their ancestral home



© AI

The Sengwer people have lived in the Embobut Forest for centuries and have a deep spiritual bond with the land. But this indigenous community of beekeepers and cattle herders faces forced eviction from their ancestral home.

In the name of 'conservation', the forestry services and the police have burned an estimated 2,600 houses since 2012, making some 4,600 people homeless. One man was shot dead and another seriously injured in 2018. The violence directly violates repeated court orders that should protect the community.

The Sengwer people are losing their homes, livelihoods and cultural identity. Some now live outside the forest in crushing poverty, with women often the hardest hit. The government says it wants to reduce deforestation, but there is no evidence the Sengwer people have damaged the Embobut Forest. They should be recognised as its owners and natural custodians.

'I went to school, I left my home intact and when I came back, my home had been burned down.' Janet Cheserek, evicted from her home in the forest in 2014

EVERY MESSAGE COUNTS Together we can help bring Atena home

SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

It is not safe to send letters to Atena or her family, but we will ensure your messages reach them. Alternatively, show your support on Twitter or Instagram.

Atena Daemi, c/o Iran Team
Amnesty International
1 Easton Street
London WC1X 0DW

@AtenaDaemi
 instagram.com/atenadaemi

Language English, Persian or your own language

Suggested message Atena loves nature, spending time outdoors,

and travel, so try to include these things in your message.

CAN I

- Send a religious card or message? **No**
- Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **No**
- Include my name and address? **Yes**

SEND AN APPEAL LETTER

Urge Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to immediately and unconditionally release Atena Daemi from prison.

Write to Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif
c/o Permanent Mission of Iran to the United Nations in Geneva

Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28
1209 Geneva, Switzerland
Salutation Dear Foreign Minister
In your letter call for

- The immediate, unconditional release of Atena Daemi as she has been imprisoned solely for her peaceful human rights activities, including her work to end the death penalty
- Immediate and ongoing access to any adequate specialised medical care she needs outside prison.

When possible send letters on their own, or in batches of no more than 20, as large packages are often rejected by the Iranian authorities.

SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

Sengwer Indigenous Peoples
c/o Naomi Barasa
Amnesty International Kenya
PO Box 1527-0606 Nairobi
Kenya

Language Sengwer, Swahili or English

Suggested message Dear family of Robert Kirotych Kibor, I'm sincerely sorry for your loss. My thoughts are with you, and I will continue to demand justice for Robert and the Sengwer people. Or: Dear David Kosgei Kiptilkesi, I hope you're recovering from your injuries. My thoughts are with you, I will continue to demand justice and support the

Sengwer people's struggle. *Please do not try to replicate or wear Sengwer traditional costumes in stunts or solidarity actions. Avoid calling for the Sengwer people to be able to 'return' to their forest. Many still live there.*

CAN I

- Send a religious card or message? **Yes**
- Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **Yes**
- Include my name and address? **Yes**

SEND AN APPEAL LETTER

Urge President Uhuru Kenyatta to allow the Sengwer people to live freely and peacefully in the Embobut Forest.

Write to Uhuru Kenyatta
President of Kenya
Harambee House
PO Box 62345 - 00200 Nairobi
Harambee Avenue, Nairobi,
Kenya

Salutation Your Excellency
In your letter urge him to

- Allow the Sengwer people to live freely and peacefully on their ancestral land in the Embobut Forest
- End the house burnings, arrests and forced evictions
- Talk to the Sengwer and get their consent for a new approach to conservation that recognises their role as owners and custodians of the forest
- Recognise them as partners in protecting the environment.

KYRGYZSTAN

GULZAR DUISHENOVA

Campaigning for the rights of disabled people

Gulzar Duishenova fights for the rights of people with disabilities in Kyrgyzstan to live with dignity and move around freely. This is something she understands from her personal experience. She lost the movement in her legs after a car accident involving a drunk driver in 2002. The next year her husband died suddenly, leaving her as the sole carer for her two young children.

When Gulzar met other people living with disabilities in the capital, Bishkek, she realised they faced common problems. It is hard to find jobs when workplaces are not adapted for wheelchairs and relying on other people to lift you on to a bus feels embarrassing and intrusive.

Gulzar meets officials, has organised training for bus drivers, and campaigns on social media. But she still faces barriers and daily discrimination in a society where women are not meant to speak out and people with disabilities are seen as 'invalids' with an incurable disease.



'If people see that people with disabilities are pushing for the right to work, views change and with that conditions change.'
Gulzar Duishenova

MOROCCO

NAWAL BENAÏSSA

Hounded for demanding change

Nawal Benaïssa campaigns for social justice and better health services in Rif, a region where many people feel forgotten by the government. A leading voice in the popular Hirak movement, she went on peaceful protests and spoke out on social media.

But the authorities have harassed Nawal every step of the way. In the space of four months, she was arrested and held in custody four times and ordered to close her Facebook account, which had 80,000 followers. Eventually, in February 2018, she was fined and given a 10-month suspended sentence for 'inciting to commit an offence'. Nawal is appealing against the ruling, but the intimidation continues.

The authorities have launched a major crackdown on the Hirak movement. Security forces have arrested hundreds of peaceful protesters, some for merely expressing their support on Facebook.



EVERY MESSAGE COUNTS Together we can defend the rights of people with disabilities

SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

Gulzar Duishenova
c/o Amnesty International
Ukraine
POB 40
04050
Kyiv
Ukraine
Gulzardujsenova@gmail.com

Language Russian, Kyrgyz
Suggested message We support you, Gulzar. We hope that your activism will lead to ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

CAN I

- Send a religious card or message? **Muslim only**
 - Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **Yes**
 - Include my name and address? **Yes**
- Gulzar enjoys needlework and crocheting and would love to receive any arts and crafts pieces or supplies.*

SEND AN APPEAL LETTER

Urge Speaker of Parliament Jogorku Kenesh to support Gulzar Duishenova's fight for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Write to Speaker of Parliament
Jogorku Kenesh
Chui prospekti, 205
Bishkek
Kyrgyzstan 720000
Salutation Dear Speaker
In your letter tell him

- To support Gulzar Duishenova and other activists as they campaign for the rights of persons with disabilities
- To ensure Kyrgyzstan ratifies and implements the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

Nawal Benaïssa
c/o Amnesty International
Morocco
20 rue Ouargha appartement 5
Agdal
10000 Rabat
Morocco

Language Riffian dialect, Arabic, basic English and French
Suggested message Dear Nawal, You are a great example of women's strength in Morocco and around the world. Don't give up!

Please avoid any mention of the independence of the Rif region, and anything related to religion, atheism, alcohol, God or nudity. Nawal loves all types of music, from classical to modern. She loves the Amazigh musician from Algeria Idir, as well as the singer Bryan Adams.

CAN I

- Send a religious card or message? **No**
- Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **No**
- Include my name and address? **No**

EVERY MESSAGE COUNTS Together we can help Nawal stay free to fight for her community's future

SEND AN APPEAL LETTER

Tell Morocco's Head of Government to stop the harassment of Nawal Benaïssa.
Write to Head of Government, Prime Minister Saad Dine Al Othmani, Department of the Head of Government, Palais Royal Touarga, Rabat, Morocco
Salutation Your Excellency
In your letter tell him

- To stop the harassment of Nawal Benaïssa
- That she is a peaceful protester and human rights defender who just wants a better life for people in her region.

SOUTH AFRICA

NONHLE MBUTHUMA

Death threats for protecting her community

For over a decade Nonhle Mbuthuma has led a peaceful struggle against a company that wants to mine on her community's ancestral land. As a result, she has faced intimidation, harassment and death threats. A fellow campaigner has been killed.

Nonhle is a member of the Amadiba traditional community, which has communal land rights in the Eastern Cape. Around 5,000 Amadiba people face forced eviction and the loss of their homes, livelihoods and way of life if Mineral Resource Commodities is granted a licence to mine titanium on their land.

Nonhle co-founded the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC), an organisation that defends the community's land rights. In March 2016, ACC chair Sikhosiphi 'Bazooka' Radebe was shot dead outside his house. Shortly before his murder, Sikhosiphi was told that his and Nonhle's names were on a 'hit list'.



© AI

'This land was my grandmother's, who inherited it from her grandparents... what am I going to leave for my children?... mining is not an option.' Nonhle Mbuthuma

UKRAINE

VITALINA KOVAL

LGBTI activist attacked by the far right

Vitalina Koval is a high-profile member of Ukraine's LGBTI community. She co-founded a community centre that provides a rare safe space for LGBTI people, and fearlessly speaks out against hate. But Ukraine has seen a surge of far-right violence, and Vitalina has been repeatedly threatened and attacked.

In March 2017, Vitalina was attacked by young men during an International Women's Day march. She filed a complaint with the police, but they never got back to her. Vitalina refused to be silenced and organised a peaceful demonstration for women's and LGBTI rights to mark International Women's Day in 2018. The police said they would provide protection, but at the end of the march members of a far-right group shouted insults and threw red paint over Vitalina, chemically burning her eyes.

Her attackers were detained briefly but released within hours. Vitalina has since received further threats, and two fellow activists say they were beaten up.



© AI

'There are many people in the LGBTI community in Ukraine who are afraid. I wish that they weren't feeling under direct threat.' Vitalina Koval

EVERY MESSAGE COUNTS Together we can demand protection for Nonhle

SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

Nonhle Mbuthuma
c/o Amnesty International South Africa
97 Oxford Road
Saxonwold, 2196
Johannesburg
South Africa

Language Xhosa, Zulu, Isimpondo or English

Suggested message

Dear Nonhle, Thank you for your strength and courage in the fight for the rights of your community. We stand in solidarity with you and the Xolobeni people.

A Xhosa translation of this message is available at [amnesty.org.uk/write](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write).

CAN I

- Send a religious card or message? **No**
- Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **Yes**
- Include my name and address? **Yes**

SEND AN APPEAL LETTER

Urge President Cyril Ramaphosa to protect Nonhle Mbuthuma and investigate the harassment and intimidation against her.

Write to Cyril Ramaphosa
President of the Republic of South Africa
Union Buildings
Private Bag X1000
Pretoria, South Africa
0001

Salutation Your Excellency
In your letter urge him to

- Protect Nonhle Mbuthuma and other human rights defenders, and ensure they are not harassed or intimidated
- Immediately investigate the threats and intimidation against her, make the results public, and bring those responsible to justice in fair trials.

SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

Vitalina Koval
Amnesty International Ukraine
Office – postal box address
POB 40
04050
Kyiv
Ukraine

@VitalinaKovalUA

Language Ukrainian, Russian and English

Suggested message We support you Vitalina! *A Ukrainian translation is available at [amnesty.org.uk/write](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write)*

Vitalina would be happy to receive homemade artworks and accessories featuring LGBTI rainbow symbols.

CAN I

- Send a religious card or message? **Yes**
- Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **Yes**
- Include my name and address? **Yes**

SEND AN APPEAL LETTER

Urge Minister of Interior Arsen Avakov to deliver justice to Vitalina and protect LGBTI activists from future attacks.

Write to Minister of Interior
Arsen Avakov
vul. Akademika Bohomoltsa, 10
01601 Kyiv
Ukraine

Salutation Dear Minister
In your letter urge him to

- Bring Vitalina Koval's attackers to justice in a fair trial, taking the discriminatory motive for the attack into account
- Acknowledge the growing problem of violence by far-right groups that advocate hatred
- Protect LGBTI activists from attack.

UK

SEYI AKIWOWO

Bombarded with online abuse for speaking up

Seyi Akiwowo defends the right of women to express themselves freely on social media, without fear of threats and abuse. She herself received a wave of online abuse after a video of her speaking at the European Parliament went viral. Seyi, a local councillor in London at the time, reported more than 75 instances of abuse – most of which was misogynistic and racist – to social media companies, including Twitter. But Twitter failed to acknowledge or respond to her reports at the time.

Frustrated and disillusioned, Seyi decided to speak out about the abuse in the media, and eventually Twitter suspended some of the accounts targeting her. She went on to launch Glitch, an organisation devoted to ending online abuse.

Violence and abuse against women online is widespread in the UK, stifling freedom of expression. One in five women polled by Amnesty and Ipsos MORI earlier this year said they had suffered abuse or harassment on social media. Despite the scale of the problem, companies like Twitter are failing to act.



© Carmen Valino

'Online abuse is not about robust debate. It's about the intentional harassment of women to force them to leave the internet.'
Seyi Akiwowo

EVERY MESSAGE COUNTS Together we can get Twitter to stop the abuse

SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

Seyi Akiwowo
c/o Amnesty International UK
Human Rights Action Centre
17-25 New Inn Yard
London EC2A 3EA

Language English
Suggested message

Dear Seyi, Thank you for your work tackling online abuse and for encouraging a safer and more equal Twitter for all. I stand in solidarity with you.

CAN I

- Send a religious card or message? **Yes**
- Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **Yes**
- Include my name and address? **Yes**

SEND AN APPEAL LETTER

Urge Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey to make Twitter a safe space for all users by enforcing its own rules on hateful conduct and abuse.

Write to Jack Dorsey, Twitter CEO
c/o Amnesty International UK

Human Rights Action Centre
17-25 New Inn Yard
London EC2A 3EA

Salutation Dear Mr Dorsey
In your letter urge him to

- Make it easier to report violent and abusive tweets
- Ensure responses are timely, consistent, transparent and have meaningful information
- Raise awareness about Twitter's security and privacy features that help women have a safer and less toxic experience
- Educate users about the issue.

UK

NORTHERN IRELAND ABORTION RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

Solidarity with activists for reproductive rights

Northern Ireland is the only place in the UK where women can face up to life in prison for having an abortion. Its laws are outdated, discriminatory and in breach of the UK's own human rights obligations.

Approximately 1,000 women and girls from Northern Ireland travel to England and Wales for abortions every year. Some of those who cannot travel buy abortion pills online and are then put at risk of prosecution.

In Northern Ireland, abortion is illegal in almost every circumstance. Its laws are among the

most restrictive in Europe, and with the harshest criminal penalties. Amnesty is working with reproductive rights activists and organisations to campaign for reform of this dangerous and degrading law.

'Women in Northern Ireland are still persecuted by a Victorian-era abortion ban. It's time women and girls were given control over their bodies and lives.' Grainne Teggart, Amnesty's campaigns manager for Northern Ireland



© REX / Shutterstock

EVERY MESSAGE COUNTS Together we can show support for women's rights

SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

We will distribute your solidarity messages through partner organisations to people affected by the law across Northern Ireland.

Write for Rights
Amnesty International Belfast Office
397 Ormeau Rd
Belfast BT7 3GP

Language English
Suggested message

We stand with you in your campaign for all women in Northern Ireland to have access to free, safe and legal abortions without having to travel.

CAN I

- Send a religious card or message? **No**
- Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **Yes**
- Include my name and address? **Yes**

VENEZUELA

GERALDINE CHACÓN

Persecuted for youth work

Geraldine Chacón always wanted to defend other people. Aged nine she dreamed of being a lawyer. At 14 she stood for her local youth government. And at university she started a network of Amnesty activists. Geraldine went on to work for the Community Ambassadors Foundation, an organisation that empowers young people in deprived areas of the capital, Caracas. 'Any injustice she saw, she fought against,' says her mother.

On 1 February 2018, the 24-year-old was arrested at her home in Caracas by armed intelligence officers. It was part of a widespread crackdown on government critics and human rights activists.

Geraldine spent four months in prison in appalling conditions: she could not even get a drink of water when she needed it. She was conditionally released on 1 June, but her case remains open and she cannot leave the country. She could be re-arrested at any time.



© Fabiola Ferrero / VII Mentor Program

'I've campaigned for Write for Rights cases before. I never imagined I'd be on the other side of the campaign' Geraldine Chacón

VIETNAM

ME NAM

10 years in prison for blogging

Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh is one of the most influential bloggers in a country where dissent is often a crime. Known online as Me Nam or 'Mother Mushroom', she reposted articles and called for action on police brutality and environmental issues, including a toxic spill that killed thousands of fish. She also co-founded an independent network of more than 1,000 bloggers. Because of this, Me Nam has faced constant harassment.

In June 2017, she was sentenced to 10 years in prison for 'conducting propaganda' against the state. The flimsy evidence against her included participating in public protests, producing a report on deaths in police custody, and possessing poetry collections deemed critical of the state.

Since then Me Nam's health has deteriorated, and she has gone on hunger strikes in protest against her desperate conditions. Her harsh sentence is part of a wider attempt to silence people who speak out in Vietnam.



© 2015 Jonas Grätzer

'My daughter has done a normal thing in an abnormal society.' Lan, Me Nam's mother

EVERY MESSAGE COUNTS Together we can get Venezuela to drop the case against Geraldine

SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

There is no functioning postal system in Venezuela at present.

By normal post:

c/o Amnesty International Perú, Calle Manuel A. Fuentes 894, San Isidro 15046, Lima, Perú
By international courier service: c/o Amnesty Venezuela, Torre Phelps piso 17, oficina 17 A, Av. La Salle, Plaza Venezuela Los Caobos, Caracas 1050, Venezuela

Language Spanish, English or French

Suggested message Tell Geraldine that she's not alone

and has your support and solidarity. Her birthday is 25 Dec. *Geraldine is recovering from a traumatic experience so please be discreet and tactful about her detention. Given the current situation in Venezuela, please avoid political issues altogether.*

CAN I

- Send a religious card or message? **Yes**
- Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **Yes**
- Include my name and address? **Yes**

SEND AN APPEAL LETTER

Urge Attorney General Tarek William Saab to immediately

and unconditionally close the case against Geraldine Chacón. Write to Attorney General Tarek William Saab, c/o Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 1 Cromwell Road, London SW7 2HW

Salutation Dear Attorney General/Estimado Fiscal General In your letter urge him to

- Drop the case against Geraldine Chacón immediately and unconditionally
- Remove the restrictions against her leaving the country
- Launch a prompt, independent and impartial investigation of her alleged ill-treatment in prison, with those responsible brought to justice in a fair trial.

EVERY MESSAGE COUNTS Together we can bring Me Nam home

SEND A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

Nguyen Thi Tuyet Lan
South East Asia and Pacific Regional Office
Room 1604, 16th Floor, M Thai Tower, All Seasons Place
87 Wireless Road
Phatumwan, Bangkok, 10330

Language Vietnamese or English
Suggested message Dear Me Nam, I wish you all the best. I know the prison will not be able to stop you from pursuing your dream of making Viet Nam a better country. Or write to Me Nam's mother, Lan: Dear Lan,

I just want you to know that I admire your daughter Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh.

A Vietnamese translation of these messages are available at [amnesty.org.uk/write](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write)

CAN I

- Send a religious card or message? **Catholic only**
- Send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty? **Yes**
- Include my name and address? **Yes**

SEND AN APPEAL LETTER

Urge Prime Minister Nguyen Xuân Phúc to ensure Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh is immediately and unconditionally released.

Write to Prime Minister Nguyen Xuân Phúc
Prime Minister's Office
Hà Nội, Viet Nam

Salutation Dear Prime Minister

In your letter urge him to

- Release Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh immediately and unconditionally.

WRITE FOR RIGHTS EVENTS

Every year, groups across the UK host Write for Rights events. Here are some ideas if you'd like to do the same.

- Write for Rights is a good way for people new to human rights action to get involved. You could hold an event at work at lunchtime and ask people to sign action cards or write letters.
- Human Rights Day is on 10 December 2018 and can be used as a hook to attract people to the campaign.
- November and December are the season of goodwill: host a celebration with mulled wine, mince pies and all the trimmings, and invite your local community to sign cards.
- Amnesty has made films about some of the cases. Host a screening in your local cinema and ask attendees to sign cards and/or a petition when they leave.
- Piggy-backing on other events can help you to collect signatures without having to organise events yourself, so look into what's going on in your local area. In 2017, for example, the Glasgow West Amnesty group had a stall at the Langside Church Christmas Fair, while the Bristol and North Norfolk groups took part in local Christmas tree festivals.
- Sending hundreds of cards and letters individually can be expensive. If it is cheaper and easier to send them in one envelope, please do so.
- Look for links between a particular case and your local community. For example, if there is a local diaspora community from the country you are focusing on, you could work together on the case.

Fundraising tips

There are plenty of activities you can add onto your Write for Rights event to cover costs and raise funds for Amnesty. Here are some ideas:

- **Partner with a local café, restaurant, caterer or street food stall and ask them to donate a percentage of their takings on the day.** If you partner with a café or restaurant, you could hold your Write for Rights event there. Alternatively, a street food stall could be placed outside your venue with customers invited inside to finish their meal and write some letters or cards. You could even link the food to the cuisine of the country in one of the case studies.
- **Combine the event with an AmnesTea.** Selling cups of tea, coffee, hot chocolate or mulled wine or cider. And if you know any budding bakers, why not ask them to make some cakes for the event?
- **Invite a local choir to sing carols outside your venue.** Organise a public collection while they perform.
- **Set up a present-wrapping stall.** Approach local shopping centres and shops as soon as possible to check if they have space. You could direct customers to your Write for Rights event or ask them to write a card while they wait.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why can't I send religious cards to some people or mention Amnesty?

It is for the safety of the recipient, as in some cases association with a particular faith or our human rights work could put them at greater risk.

What counts as a non-religious card?

Cards illustrated with things like snowy scenes, fir trees or robins. The message 'Season's greetings' is non-religious.

Can I send cards produced by other organisations?

Yes, as long as their work cannot be considered 'political' and the card follows the general guidance on the case.

What if the email address for the appeal letter doesn't work?

Please send a letter or card instead. The email may have been switched off because the addressee has been overwhelmed by appeals or the inbox is full.

What if I receive a reply?

Please send a copy to the Individuals at Risk programme. It will help us assess the impact of the campaign. iar@amnesty.org.uk
IAR Programme, Amnesty International UK,
17-25 New Inn Yard, London, EC2A 3EA

Why is feedback important?

Understanding how many people took part in the campaign, and on which case(s), shows us whether our tactics are working. It also enables us to provide updates about an individual's changing circumstances. Please use the feedback form that was included in your pack, or go online at [amnesty.org.uk/writefeedback](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/writefeedback)

Can I work on these cases after Write for Rights finishes?

Yes, in most cases. If you would like to work on a case long-term, please let us know so we

can make sure you have the most up to date information: iar@amnesty.org.uk

What else can I do on the cases of individuals at risk?

You can join our Urgent Action network, which throughout the year protects people from torture, helps free people who are wrongly detained and secures access to medical treatment or legal counsel for prisoners. As a member of the network, you will be sent requests – how many is up to you – to take action urgently on behalf of individuals at risk. Find out more at [amnesty.org.uk/urgent](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/urgent)

Do our letters really make a difference?

Yes, solidarity is effective. When authorities receive thousands of letters about a particular person, they know that the world is watching them. Any victims of human rights abuses tell us that our solidarity letters have a huge impact. Jewher Ilham, whose father Ilham Tohti featured in Write for Rights 2016, said: *'It really is heart-warming to have so many people support my family and it brought me to tears to see all the letters that Amnesty International had collected. It makes me feel stronger.'*

Is it risky to sign my letters and give my address? Will the country refuse to let me visit in the future?

We have no record of this happening. Thousands of Amnesty supporters sign their letters without experiencing any problems. However, if you have business or other close links with a country or have concerns, then you can choose another case to write about, or not give your full name or postal address (eg send a letter 'from Jane, Manchester').

■ Human rights defenders are under unprecedented attack with more than ever being attacked, harassed and even killed for their work. This is why Amnesty UK is calling on the UK government to protect human rights defenders around the world. Find out more at [amnesty.org.uk/brave](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/brave)

EVERY ACTION

COUNTS

WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2017

Last year, hundreds of thousands of people joined in our global Write for Rights campaign, resulting in more than **5.5 million messages** – letters and cards of support and appeals to the authorities. Here is some news on what happened during and after the campaign.

TURKEY

The Istanbul 10 and Taner Kılıç

In June 2017, Amnesty International Turkey's then chair Taner Kılıç was detained on baseless terrorism charges. The following month Amnesty Turkey's director İdil Eser and nine other human rights activists – the Istanbul 10 – were also arrested. The Istanbul 10 were freed on bail in October 2017, and Taner was released on bail in August 2018.



'I want to thank everyone for the international solidarity they have shown towards me. Around the world – from Benin to Norway – people have taken action under the hot sun, beneath the rain and in the freezing cold. While in prison these actions lifted my spirits and reminded me of the importance of international solidarity in the struggle for human rights.' Taner Kılıç

ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Issa Amro and Farid al-Atrash

Palestinian human rights defenders Issa Amro and Farid al-Atrash face prison sentences for peaceful campaigning against illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank. They told us the Write for Rights 2017 campaign helped to protect them, provided them with greater legitimacy, and deterred the Israeli authorities from hindering their work. The spurious charges against them, however, remain in place.



'We never knew how much support we had from all over the world. People stood with us in order to pressure the Israeli authorities to drop all the charges against us and to stop harassing human rights defenders in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.' Farid al-Atrash

CHINA

Ni Yulan

Housing activist Ni Yulan has defended Beijing residents against forced eviction for nearly 20 years, despite harassment, surveillance, restrictions on her movements, detention and physical attacks. Her situation has improved since Write for Rights 2017, with no further threats of eviction.



'Due to the international attention [on my situation], the police have reduced their assaults, verbal abuses and violations of my rights. Thank you to those of you who wrote to me, your generous support has not only helped me but also advanced China's human rights.' Ni Yulan



BANGLADESH

Xulhaz Mannan

In 2016, LGBTIQ activists Xulhaz Mannan and his colleague were killed by Ansar al-Islam, an armed group linked to Al Qaeda. The pair helped to set up Bangladesh's first and only LGBTIQ magazine, Roopban. Xulhaz's family and former colleagues say the solidarity messages have had a huge impact on them.



'I have just received the packs and opened one or two to find the cards and letters – amazing... so much care and love for Xulhaz, can't believe my eyes, thanks to all of you for this.' Minhaz (Xulhaz's brother)

FINLAND

Sakris Kupila

Sakris Kupila is being denied legal gender recognition because he refuses to undergo a humiliating process that involves an enforced sterilisation. He is fighting for a change in Finland's transgender recognition law. He says the support he received during Write for Rights 2017 helped to protect him from harassment and raise his profile as a trans rights activist.

'I received thousands of kind messages; so many that I'm still reading through them all now. The thought that all these people have taken the time to write to me is overwhelming. Some of the letters are happy. Some of them have moved me. Some of them have made me laugh. Some have been deeply personal and full of emotion. Others are from people who are being oppressed themselves. It means a lot to know that what I'm doing is also giving those people strength: that we are a community, even if we're miles apart.' Sakris Kupila



© IN LIGHTING

EGYPT

Azza Soliman

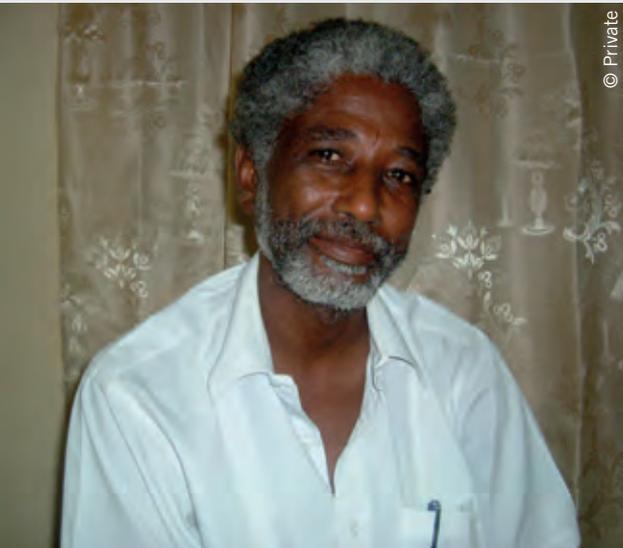
Human rights lawyer Azza Soliman defends victims of torture, arbitrary detention, domestic abuse, and rape. She faces trial on three trumped-up charges, and faces imprisonment if found guilty.

'In the last two days I received two boxes packed with cards and letters from Amnesty supporters. The last one weighed about 20 kilos. It was lovely, amazing... They tell me this: "Azza, you are not alone, a lot of people think about you and stand with you."' Azza Soliman

SUDAN

Dr Mudawi Ibrahim Adam

Award-winning activist Dr Mudawi Ibrahim Adam has dedicated his life to exposing human rights violations, providing humanitarian support and working on development projects. Because of this work, he has been repeatedly targeted by the authorities. Dr Mudawi says the Write for Rights messages he received were inspiring.



© Private

'This feeling that you are not alone, that people are behind you, it's really a very good feeling. It helps you survive torture, survive all the bad treatment you get.' Dr Mudawi Ibrahim Adam

IRAN

Esmail Abdi

Esmail Abdi, leader of the Tehran branch of the Iran Teachers' Trade Association, was given a six-year sentence in 2016 after organising peaceful protests. After being temporarily released, he is now back in prison. In April, Esmail won the NASUWT International Solidarity Award 2018. Later that month he went on hunger strike in protest against his imprisonment and the treatment of teachers and workers in Iran. He ended the hunger strike at the end of May, owing to poor health.

UK

UK immigration detainees

Tens of thousands of people are held in immigration detention in the UK every year, often in terrible conditions and without a fixed time-limit. Write for Rights solidarity messages were distributed to detainees by partner organisations, who tell us they were much appreciated.



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JAMAICA

Shackelia Jackson

Along with other Jamaican families, Shackelia is fighting for access to truth and justice for all those killed by the police. She travelled to Europe for a speaker's tour during the campaign, and while she was there her grandmother called her to say that the house was flooded with letters,

and that some postal workers and their supervisor had called to find out what was going on. Shackelia was buoyed by the news: 'It showed me the campaign was really well received and that people connected with the issue and were genuinely compelled to act.'



JOIN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL TODAY TO DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS

020 7033 1777

[amnesty.org.uk/join](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/join)

 **@amnestyUK**

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If you require this document in an alternative format please contact:

Telephone 020 7033 1777

Textphone 020 7033 1664

Email sct@amnesty.org.uk

Amnesty International UK,
The Human Rights Action Centre,
17-25 New Inn Yard,
London EC2A 3EA
T: 020 7033 1500
E: sct@amnesty.org.uk

