**Amnesty International Write for Rights (WFR)**

We are in the season of greetings which heralds one of AI’s most important campaigns which invites people to send messages of hope and solidarity to individuals or groups who have been attacked or threatened for standing up for human rights. It only takes a few minutes to write a card or letter, but those minutes can make all the difference to someone whose rights are being abused.

The campaign works – last year more than 5.5 million letters, cards, emails and social media posts were sent, and they had real impact. Mahadine in Chad was jailed just because he wrote a Facebook post that was critical of the Government. Nearly 700,000 people called on the Chadian Government to release him. He was freed in April 2018. Sakris Kupila also benefited from WFR 2017, he says ‘*The messages have made 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 made on this journey have been worth it.’*

This year’s WFR 12 cases support women human rights defenders, communities and activists around the world. Atena Daemi is serving a seven year sentence in Iran for speaking out against the death sentence. She criticised capital punishment on social media, handed out leaflets and took part in a peaceful demonstration against the execution of a young women. Atena’s trial lasted 15 minutes. She has been harshly treated in jail and is one of many activists who have been imprisoned due to an intense clamp down on human rights defenders by the authorities. Her health has deteriorated and AI is asking for her release and ongoing access to any medical care she needs.

Another 2018 case focuses on the Sengwer indigenous people in Kenya who have been forced to leave their ancestral homes in the name of ‘conservation’. The Forestry Services and Police have burned down an estimated 2,600 homes since 2014 meaning that 4,600 people have lost their livelihoods and cultural identity. “*I went to school, I left my home intact and when I came back my home had been burned down”* reports Janet Cheserek.

If you would like to take part in WFR, the Warrington Amnesty Group is holding an event at the NewChurch Parish Church hall in Culcheth (opposite Sainsbury store) on Saturday 8 December (10.30 am – 1.30pm) and would love as many people as possible to come along and sign a card which we will then send to the nominated individual or group. Amnesty provides the cards and everything needed, including suggested messages you can write, and will post them after the event. There will also be lots of information on the cases so all you need to add is a bit of your time! Not easy at this very busy time of year.

For more information please contact Gill Hardy on 01925 267001 or at gill.hardy2610@gmail.com or visit [www.amnesty.org.uk/write](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/write).

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