

TAKE ACTION



Real lives

Letter-writing changes lives.

A letter from you could help free a prisoner, stop an execution or help a bereaved family receive justice.

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

It is sent to all Amnesty local groups in the UK, and is also available to individual members on request, in print or by email. The supplement is printed on A4 paper to make it easier to photocopy for group letter-writing sessions.

To order more copies, call **020 7033 1777** or email sct@amnesty.org.uk

Postage Rates

World (Zones 1 and 2)

10 gram letter **£1.35**

20 gram letter **£1.55**

Europe

Up to 20 grams **£1.35**

For a copy of our free letter-writing guide send an SAE to:

The Editor

Amnesty International UK

HRAC

17-25 New Inn Yard

London EC2A 3EA

Supplement to **AMNESTY** Magazine
Issue 202 Autumn 2019

Rachad Maman Togo



© Private

Teenager killed at peaceful protest

Two years on from the killing of 14-year-old student and pro-democracy protester Rachad Maman, his family are still waiting for justice.

On the morning of 20 September 2017, Rachad and his father took part in a peaceful demonstration in the city of Bafilo calling for constitutional reforms and the resignation of President Faure Gnassingbé. After the protest started at around 9am, Rachad's father lost sight of him. According to eyewitnesses, the protesters then came face to face with soldiers, gendarmes and police officers. At approximately 9.30am, the security forces started firing tear gas and live ammunition without any warning at the protesters. Rachad was shot in the chest and, despite being taken to a hospital, died two days later from his injuries.

In an attempt to seek justice and reparations, his family filed a lawsuit in October 2017. But to date no one has been held to account.

APPEAL Urge the authorities to conduct a prompt, thorough and impartial criminal investigation into Rachad Maman's death, bring those responsible to justice, and provide his family with reparations. Call on them to ensure that military armed forces are not deployed in public order situations and that the policing of demonstrations and laws regulating the use of force meet international standards.

▶ President Faure Gnassingbé
Présidence de la République du Togo
Lomé
Togo

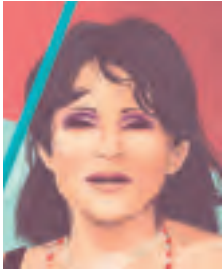
Salutation: Dear President

Postage: World

▶ The Chargé d'Affaires
Embassy of the Republic of Togo
Unit 3, 7 & 8 Lysander Mews
Lysander Grove
London N19 3QP

Salutation: Your Excellency

Alejandra USA



© AI

Trans rights activist faces deportation

Trans rights activist Alejandra could at any moment be deported to El Salvador, where she would be at grave risk of transphobic attacks.

Alejandra campaigned for trans rights in El Salvador for more than a decade. But after suffering repeated transphobic attacks, sexual assaults and extortion by criminal gangs and the Salvadoran military, she fled in November 2017. When she appealed for asylum at the US-Mexico border, the US authorities locked her up in a private prison.

Alejandra's appeals for asylum have been rejected and she had been repeatedly denied parole. In April, her latest request for parole, a motion to reopen her asylum case with the Board of Immigration Appeals, and a request for a stay on her deportation were all denied. She is now no longer protected from removal and could be deported at any time.

According to LGBT and refugee rights organisations, three trans women were murdered in El Salvador in the first two months of 2019 alone, including one who was killed within weeks of being deported from the USA.

APPEAL Urge the authorities not to deport Alejandra (A# 216-269-450) to El Salvador, and instead grant her international protection and immediate humanitarian parole. Call for them to ensure asylum seekers are not detained, unless it is necessary and proportionate in the individual case and other non-custodial measures are unavailable. Also urge them to grant humanitarian parole to asylum seekers whenever possible.

▶ Mr Corey A Price
Field Office Director, ICE-ERO El Paso
11541 Montana Ave
Suite E
El Paso, TX 79936
USA

Salutation: Dear Mr Price

Postage: World

▶ His Excellency Robert Wood Johnson IV
American Embassy
33 Nine Elms Lane
London SW11 7US

Salutation: Your Excellency

Emir-Usein Kuku Russia



© Meriem Kuku

Crimean Tatar human rights defender detained

After almost three and a half years in pre-trial detention, Crimean Tatar human rights defender Emir-Usein Kuku is due to be sentenced in August or September.

The Crimea in southern Ukraine was annexed by Russia in 2014. A member of the Crimean Human Rights Contact Group, Emir-Usein peacefully opposed the new regime, documenting the wave of human rights violations that swept the region in the wake of the occupation.

In February 2016, Emir-Usein was arrested and charged with 'membership of a terrorist organisation'. This relates to an unfounded accusation that he is a member of Hizb ut-Tahrir, an Islamist movement banned in Russia but not in Ukraine. Amnesty considers him a prisoner of conscience.

Court hearings resumed on 4 April and Emir-Usein and his co-defendants are expected to be sentenced soon.

APPEAL Urge the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Emir-Usein Kuku and his co-defendants and drop the criminal charges.

▶ Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation
Yurii Yakovlevich Chaika
Prosecutor General's Office
ul. B. Dmitrovka, d.15a
125993 Moscow GSP-3
Russian Federation

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

Postage: World

▶ His Excellency Dr Alexander V Yakovenko
6-7 Kensington Palace Gardens
London W8 4QP

Salutation: Your Excellency

This case is classed as Russian because Emir-Usein Kuku is held in pre-trial detention on Russian territory and the case is being heard before a Russian court and within Russian jurisdiction. This classification in no way recognises Crimea as Russian territory or legitimises Russia's occupation of Crimea.

Monireh Arabshahi,
Yasaman Aryani and
Mojgan Keshavarz
Iran



© Private



© Private



© Private

Prison for protesting against forced veiling

Three women's rights defenders have been imprisoned for peacefully protesting against forced veiling laws. Monireh Arabshahi (top picture) and her daughter Yasaman Aryani (centre) have been sentenced to 16 years in prison. Mojgan Keshavarz (bottom left) was sentenced to 23 years.

All three were arrested in April after a video shot on International Women's Day showing them without their headscarves went viral. In the video, they distributed flowers to female passengers on a Tehran train and discussed women's rights.

The women were charged with offences including 'inciting and facilitating corruption and prostitution' through promoting 'unveiling', solely for their campaigning against the abusive forced veiling laws. They were also denied access to a lawyer of their choosing.

They say that at their indictment hearing in June the judge accused them of being drug addicts and told them 'I will make you all suffer'.

Their prosecution is part of a wider crackdown on women's rights defenders who campaign against forced veiling laws in Iran.

APPEAL Urge the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Monireh Arabshahi, Yasaman Aryani and Mojgan Keshavarz. Pending their release, call for them to be allowed regular contact with their families and a lawyer of their choosing. Urge the authorities to stop criminalising the work of women's rights defenders and abolish the forced veiling laws.

▶ Head of the Judiciary Ebrahim Raisi
c/o Permanent Mission of Iran to the UN
Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28
1209 Geneva
Switzerland

Salutation: Dear Mr Raisi

Postage: Europe

▶ His Excellency Hamid Baeidinejad
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran
16 Prince's Gate
London SW7 1PT

Salutation: Your Excellency

Jiang Tianyong
China



© Private

Lawyer unable to access medical care

Human rights lawyer Jiang Tianyong, under heavy surveillance following his release from prison earlier this year, is being prevented from accessing the medical care he needs.

Jiang's activism led to him being disbarred from the legal profession in 2009, but he has continued his work as a human rights defender, despite harassment, detention and beatings. In November 2017, he was convicted of 'inciting subversion of state power' and sentenced to two years' imprisonment and three years' deprivation of political rights for three years.

Jiang's health deteriorated rapidly in prison, where he says he was force-fed unknown medication twice a day. He was released from prison on 28 February, but is closely followed by a group of unidentified people everywhere he goes.

Jiang has needed a medical check-up since his release. But he has been unable to schedule an appointment because of concerns that the presence of the surveillance will influence the medical care he receives. Before his imprisonment, Jiang was incorrectly diagnosed at a hospital after the doctors allegedly received instructions from the authorities. A travel ban means he cannot seek medical care abroad.

APPEAL Urge the authorities to stop the surveillance of Jiang Tianyong and his family, end the restrictions on their freedom of movement, and ensure he has unrestricted access to medical care.

▶ Director of Luoshan County Public Security
Bureau Zhou Conggui
Xingzheng Dadao 16
Luoshan Xian
Xinyang Shi
Henan Sheng
China

Salutation: Dear Director

Postage: World

▶ His Excellency Liu Xiaoming
Embassy of the People's Republic of China
49-51 Portland Place
London W1B 1JL

Salutation: Your Excellency

Jorge Gonzalez
Nieva
Argentina



© AI

The forgotten prisoner of Buenos Aires

Jorge González Nieva, a 54-year-old taxi driver from Buenos Aires, has been held in pre-trial detention for the past twelve years.

In July 2006, Jorge was returning home after work when police officers arrested him, beat him up and tried to extort money. They threatened to accuse him of complicity in a bank robbery in which someone was killed unless he paid up. Jorge refused and was initially released. But he was detained again on 17 March 2007 and charged with grievous bodily harm resulting in death. He has been stuck in pre-trial detention ever since.

In 2010, after an investigation and trial mired in irregularities, Jorge was convicted and sentenced to 25 years in prison. Since 2015 he has waited in vain for the Supreme Court of Justice to rule on his appeal.

APPEAL Urge the Supreme Court to rule on the case against Jorge González Nieva and put an end to his arbitrary detention and the violation of his right to trial without undue delays.

▶ Dr Carlos Rosenkrantz
Corte Suprema de Justicia de la Nación
Talcahuano 550, CP 1013
Buenos Aires
Argentina

Salutation: Dear Mr President of the Court

Postage: World

▶ His Excellency Carlos Sersale di Cerisano
Embassy of the Argentine Republic
65 Brook Street
London W1K 4AH

Salutation: Your Excellency

Amade Abubacar Mozambique



© Private

Journalist charged for doing his job

Radio journalist Amade Abubacar faces criminal charges for documenting deadly attacks by armed groups on civilians in northern Mozambique. He was arrested by the police on 5 January while interviewing internally displaced people, and transferred to military custody, where he spent 12 days in incommunicado detention. During this period, he alleges he was ill-treated.

Amade was handed back to the police and spent more than 90 days in pre-trial detention, longer than is allowed under Mozambique law. He was held in an overcrowded cell, denied family visits, and reportedly suffered from a range of health problems.

On 16 April, he was formally charged with 'public incitement of a crime through electronic media', 'incitement' and 'injury against public officials'. He was granted provisional release from prison on 23 April, but his pre-trial hearing has since been postponed three times.

Violent attacks by a local armed group known as Al-Shabab have escalated since October 2017, with more than 100 people killed and hundreds forced to flee their homes. To suppress media attention, the authorities have arbitrarily detained journalists reporting on the story.

APPEAL Urge the authorities to immediately drop the charges against Amade Abubacar. If this does not happen, ask them to ensure his right to a fair trial is respected and he is tried within a reasonable time frame under international fair trial standards. Urge them to ensure the rights to freedom of expression and media freedom are fully respected in Mozambique and that journalists are able to work without fear of attack, intimidation or harassment.

▶ Minister of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs
Joaquim Veríssimo
Ministry of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs
Av. Julius Nyerere 33
Maputo
Mozambique

Salutation: Honourable Minister

Postage: World

▶ His Excellency Filipe Chidumo
High Commission for the Republic of Mozambique
21 Fitzroy Square
London W1T 6EL

Salutation: Your Excellency

Ho Duy Hai Vietnam



© Private

Tortured then sentenced to death

Ho Duy Hai, one of more than 600 people currently on death row in Vietnam, is at imminent risk of execution.

He was arrested in March 2008, convicted nine months later of theft and the murder of two young women in an unfair trial, and sentenced to death. Ho says he was tortured into 'confessing' and has not had access to his lawyers since his conviction and death sentence were upheld by the Court of Appeal in 2009. In 2012, his clemency petition was rejected.

The Committee on Judicial Affairs of the National Assembly, which investigates claims of miscarriages of justice, has concluded that both the courts of first instance and appeal had committed serious violations of criminal procedural law and urged for Ho's case to be reviewed.

Despite Ho, who has come close to execution twice already in the past decade and whose health has deteriorated dramatically, remains at serious risk.

Vietnam recently admitted executing 85 people in 2018 – only China, Iran and Saudi Arabia carried out more.

APPEAL Urge the authorities to quash Ho Duy Hai's conviction, which resulted from proceedings that did not meet international fair trial standards, and his death sentence. Call for the immediate establishment of a moratorium on all executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty.

▶ President of Viet Nam His Excellency Nguyen Phu Trong
2 Hung Vuong
Ba Dinh
Ha Noi
Republic of Viet Nam

Salutation: Your Excellency

Postage: World

▶ His Excellency An Ngoc Tran
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
12-14 Victoria Road
London W8 5RD

Salutation: Your Excellency

Zak Kostopoulos Greece



© Morikis Grigoris

LGBT rights defender killed

Almost a year on from the death of LGBT activist Zak Kostopoulos, his family are still searching for justice.

A tireless defender of the rights of LGBT and HIV-positive people, Zak died on 21 September 2018 in a violent attack. Video footage shows Zak was brutally beaten up by two men after entering a jewellery shop in Athens. It also shows police officers violently arresting him, as he lay dying on the ground. According to the forensic report, Zak died from the multiple injuries he sustained.

The investigations into his death have been marred by serious irregularities: the police made little effort to collect evidence, the crime scene was not sealed, and the assailants were not immediately arrested. Two civilians and four police officers have been charged for lethal bodily harm, but his family have filed a criminal complaint requesting manslaughter charges.

In April, the criminal investigation was dropped, despite an independent report revealing fresh evidence and further flaws in the police work.

APPEAL Call on the authorities to bring to justice in fair trials everyone involved in Zak Kostopoulos's death. Urge them to consider whether any of the actions of the perpetrators were motivated by hate, discrimination or other prejudice.

▶ Minister of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights Michalis Kalogirou
Ministry of Justice
96 Mesogheion Avenue
11527, Athens
Greece

Salutation: Dear Minister

Postage: Europe

▶ His Excellency Dimitris Caramitsos-Tziras
Embassy of Greece
1A Holland Park
London W11 3TP

Salutation: Your Excellency