

Write a letter, change a life

WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2020



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INTERNATIONAL





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‘Over the last few months I have been receiving messages of solidarity from all over the world and they have given me enormous strength and inspiration. This campaign made me believe in the importance of fighting for my rights. It showed me that my life mattered and that I was not forgotten. Thank you so much.’

Emil Ostrovko,
Write for Rights 2019

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YOUR WORDS HAVE POWER



This winter, you can stand in solidarity with **10 individuals at risk** in our popular annual **Write for Rights campaign**. Your messages of support and appeals to the authorities have real impact.

It only takes a few minutes to write a letter or a card, send an email or sign a petition. But for a prisoner of conscience, an activist facing threats and charges or a family member separated from their loved ones, a message of support is a powerful reminder that they are not alone.

Your message – combined with those of so many people around the world – can give them the strength to continue their fight for human rights. Past campaigns have shown how valuable it is for people to reach out, connect, and share hope.

Your actions can also put pressure on the people in authority to stop human rights violations. Appeals to presidents, governors, justice ministers and other decision-makers show them that you and a great many others care – and that the world is watching.

SOLIDARITY AND GLOBAL PRESSURE WORKS

The scale of human rights challenges in the world can seem overwhelming but there is so much to remind us how vital and effective our actions can be. In 2019, more than 6.5 million appeal letters and messages were sent during the Write for Rights campaign. They made a big difference

to the young people and communities confronting injustice and facing human rights violations.

- More than **458,000** messages demanding justice for Nasu Abdulaziz and his community forced from their homes were sent to the Governor of Lagos in Nigeria. The authorities are now talking to the community about a resettlement programme.
- Some **528,000** actions were taken for climate activist Marinel Ubaldo. The government acknowledged the appeals they received, and has turned its attention towards the needs of Typhoon Yolanda survivors in Marinel's community.
- More than **765,000** messages were sent in support of Magai Matiop Ngong, who was sentenced to death in South Sudan at the age of 15. Each one of these highlighted his case and the illegal use of the death penalty against children. In July 2020, his sentenced was quashed.
- More than **440,000** letters called for justice for Grassy Narrows First Nation, a community devastated by mercury poisoning. These contributed to the signing of an agreement to build a health care centre.



LETTER WRITING WORKS

THIS YEAR'S CAMPAIGN

Join our campaign and change lives this winter. From poets and journalists to environmental defenders, this booklet tells the stories of 10 individuals or groups whose rights have been abused and who urgently need your support. Global action and solidarity will raise their profile, and that momentum can bring about many benefits, everything from protection to justice.

Of these 10 cases, we have identified four where supporters in the UK can have a special impact. We know that concerted action on these can push authorities, officials and people with power to exert wider pressure for positive change and therefore achieve an added impact. There is a strong chance this can improve the situation of the people involved, and influence the deeper causes of the violation. We have highlighted these cases as 'Special UK Focus' in the booklet.

You can take action on some or, if you can give the time, all of the 10 cases. Every

action makes a difference. Whatever you do, please tell us about it using the form at [amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights)

DATES TO REMEMBER

**Write for Rights
2020 runs from**

**1 Nov to
31 Dec**

**International
Human Rights
Day is
10 Dec**

BEING CREATIVE

The focus of Write for Rights is positive human rights impact in the lives of the people we're working with. For this reason, during the planning stages of this campaign, we work closely with them or, when this

isn't possible, with their family members, colleagues and lawyers. Together, we identify effective creative ideas people can take to show their solidarity in a personal way and try to pressure the authorities to help that person. In some cases, we suggest actions other than letter writing – but don't worry if you can't do all of them as there are plenty of letters to do.

NEW TO WRITE FOR RIGHTS?

Getting involved in our global campaign is easy, but the first time can seem a bit overwhelming, so here are some tips.

- In the booklet, you will find information on each case and advice on how to take action.
- This year we have highlighted four cases as 'Special UK Focus', where supporters can have a special impact. You don't need to take action on all the cases – anything you do to support one or two individuals will make a real difference.
- Your message of support will have more impact if you make it personal. If you're unsure what to write, we've provided some suggested messages.
- When writing to the authorities, include your name and country, as this shows the letter or card is genuine and personal. Write as one human being to another, keeping requests clear and polite.
- Throughout this booklet we have stated whether you can include your full name and address in a solidarity card or letter. When we have said no, it is to ensure that the individual does not feel overwhelmed at having to reply to everyone. In these cases, you can just give your first name, with your town or country.

- If there is anything else you are unsure of, check out the Frequently Asked Questions section on page 20.

STAY UP TO DATE

Sometimes, during the campaign, the circumstances of the people featured may change. Please let us know which cases you'll be working on so we can update you. We can also answer any questions about the campaign. Contact us at: sct@amnesty.org.uk

POSTAGE RATES

Weight not over	Europe	Rest of the world
10g	£1.45	£1.45
20g	£1.45	£1.70
100g	£1.70	£2.50

Resources

PRINTED MATERIALS

Want to order more copies of this booklet? Please call us on 01788 545 553 or order online at [amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights)

ONLINE

Go to [amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights) for the latest on Write for Rights 2020.

If you have any questions about the campaign, please contact our Supporter Communications Team: sct@amnesty.org.uk



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1. ALGERIA
Khaled Drareni



© Private

SPECIAL UK FOCUS !

2. BURUNDI
Germain Rukuki



© Private

SPECIAL UK FOCUS !

3. CHILE
Gustavo Gatica



© Nubia Acosta

4. COLOMBIA
Jani Silva



© Al/Joanna Demarco

5. MALTA
The El Hiblu Three



1

4

3



10. TURKEY
METU Pride Defenders



9. SOUTH AFRICA
Popi Qwabe and Bangeka Phungula



8. SAUDI ARABIA
Nassima al-Sada



6. MYANMAR
Paing Phyo Min



7. PAKISTAN
Idris Khattak

Algeria

Khaled Drareni



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In prison for his journalism

Algerian journalist Khaled Drareni is in jail because of his coverage of the anti-government Hirak protest movement.

On 15 September, he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment by the Algiers Court of Appeal. Khaled was arrested in March 2020 after filming a demonstration on charges of 'inciting an unarmed gathering' and 'endangering national unity' despite the fact he was just doing his job. He had previously been sentenced to three years in jail in 10 August.

Since Hirak emerged in February 2019, Khaled was one of the first independent journalists to cover the weekly protests, and he shares the dream of democratic reform. In Algeria, independent press is limited and he made sure to document police violence and arbitrary arrests on his widely followed social media accounts. For this, he has been detained many times.

Reporting a protest should not be a crime. Khaled's conviction is part of a wider attack on press freedom and peaceful assembly in Algeria.

'Khaled is respected by everyone. He is empathetic and values others over himself even while in prison. He is the symbol of freedom and resistance.' Khaled's mother

Send a message of support and solidarity

Khaled Drareni
c/o Amnesty International
Algérie
70 rue Didouche Mourad, 2e étage
Alger centre
Algeria

Language French, Arabic or English

Suggested message We stand with you.

Creative action Khaled has a huge following on Instagram and Twitter. Before sending your message to him, take a photo of it and post it on your social networks, using the hashtags

#FreeKhaledDrareni and #DropAllChargesAgainstKhaled
Tag  @khaled.drareni
 @khaleddrareni
 @amnestyalgerie

Can I

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

Send an appeal letter

Urge the President of Algeria to immediately and unconditionally release Khaled Drareni.

Write to Abdelmagid Tebboune
President of the Republic

Présidence de la République
El-Mouradia – B.P
16000 Algiers
Algeria
Fax +213 21 69 15 95
 President@el-mouradia.dz
 @TebbouneAmadjid
 @TebbouneAbdelmadjid

Salutation Your Excellency
In your letter ask him

- Release Khaled immediately and unconditionally, and drop all charges against him.

Burundi

Germain Rukuki

Human rights defender jailed for 32 years

Germain Rukuki is serving a 32-year prison sentence for his peaceful activism in Burundi.

Early on 13 July 2017, he and his wife Emelyne Mupfasoni were woken by heavy footfall and banging on their door. Dozens of security forces had piled into their compound. Officers interrogated the couple, who are both NGO workers. They arrested Germain and transferred him to Ngozi Prison where he has been held ever since.

On 26 April he was found guilty of sham charges including 'rebellion' and 'threatening state security'. His previous association with the NGO Action by Christians for Abolition of Torture (ACAT-Burundi) was used against him. ACAT-Burundi was shut down in 2016 for allegedly 'tarnishing the image of the country'. The prosecution used an email Germain had written to them when they were still legal.



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Just weeks after his arrest, Emelyne gave birth to their third son, who Germain has never met.

'Thanks to all of you who are fighting for my freedom. I can feel the pain my little boys are feeling... the pain of my friends and wife. However, this pain which highlights a notable injustice was worth it. I'm not going to give up fighting for human rights.' Germain Rukuki

Send a message of support and solidarity

Amnesty International Regional Office for East Africa, the Horn and Great Lakes
c/o Burundi Team
Riverside Studios
Riverside Lane, Off Riverside Drive
PO Box 1527-00606
Nairobi
Kenya
✉ burunditeam@amnesty.org

Language French or English

Suggested message Write to Germain and/or his wife Emelyne Mupfasoni. End with the Kirundi words Komera Turikmwel (Stay strong, we are

together!)

Creative action Post photos of your actions on social media using the hashtags #FreeGermainRukuki #FreeDefenders

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 the President of Burundi to release Germain Rukuki immediately and unconditionally.

Write to President of the Republic of Burundi
Evariste Ndayishimiye
c/o His Excellency Mr Ernest Ndabashinze
Embassy of the Republic of Burundi

Uganda House Second Floor
58-59 Trafalgar Square
London WC2N 5DX

✉ presidence@burundi.gov.bi

🐦 [@GeneralNeva](#)

Salutation Dear Mr President

In your letter ask him

Release Germain Rukuki immediately and unconditionally.

Chile

Gustavo Gatica

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Blinded by police at protest

In November 2019, 22-year-old psychology student Gustavo Gatica was protesting against rising prices and inequality in Chile when police fired rubber and metal ammunition into the crowds. Gustavo was struck in both eyes and was blinded. He is still waiting for justice.

Commanders in charge didn't stop the police shooting. Instead, they had allowed this violence continue unchecked for weeks at other demonstrations where hundreds were hurt and dozens suffered eye injuries every day.

The attack made global headlines, and as demonstrations continued, protestors wore eye patches and chanted Gustavo's name at police. An internal police investigation after the shooting found that no one could be held responsible. It even suggested that the demonstrators themselves injured Gustavo. The National Prosecutor's Office is now investigating. Those who allowed the attack on Gustavo remain unpunished.

'I gave my eyes so people would wake up.'
Gustavo Gatica

Send a message of support and solidarity

Gustavo cannot read letters because of his sight loss. But he is a big music fan, so we are putting together a mix tape for him with Amnesty local group members and music artists in the UK. We will send it to him for his birthday. If you are in a local Amnesty group, you will be able to contribute.

You can find out about Amnesty local groups at [amnesty.org.uk/groups](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/groups)

Send an appeal online

Call on the National Prosecutor, Jorge Abbott Charme, to investigate those responsible for Gustavo's shooting, especially the commanders. They had a duty to avoid the misuse of force, but failed to fulfil it and Gustavo must live with the consequences of their failure forever. He deserves justice, truth and reparation.

Postage to Chile is unreliable at the moment, so the best way to reach the National Prosecutor is by email. Please take action on the Write for Rights website: [amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights)

Colombia

Jani Silva



© Nubia Acosta

Environmental defender in danger

Environmental defender Jani Silva was born in the heart of the Colombian Amazon. For decades, she has stood alongside the campesino farmers in the Putumayo region, defending the environment and natural resources.

She has been repeatedly followed, intimidated by unknown people with guns and received death threats by those who oppose her work.

Jani co-founded ADISPA or the Association for the Integral and Sustainable Development of the Amazonian Pearl in 2008 to preserve the peasant Amazon Pearl Reserve Zone and the rights of those living there.

This placed her and other members of ADISPA at loggerheads with the Ecopetrol oil company, which won a licence to operate in areas overlapping with the reserve in 2006. In 2009, the licence was transferred to the Amerisur oil company. Since then, at least two oil spills have poisoned the water sources that local communities

depend on.

Jani remains at great risk. Covid-19 has made matters worse, confining her and other ADISPA activists to their homes and limiting their protection.

'Because I defend my territory, people have put a gun to my head to kill me. However, I stay. We cannot run away or let ourselves be won over by fear.' Jani Silva

Send a message of support and solidarity

Oficina Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz
Carrera 37ª #25B – 42
Bogotá
Colombia

Language English or Spanish
Suggested message I support and admire your work. You are not alone. Thousands of people around the world are working so that you, your families and the community are protected. Thank you for defending our environment.

Creative action Complete one or more of these lines, and draw a picture that represents the ones

you've chosen: Nature is <<fill>> to me. Thank you for taking care of it. The river represents <<fill>> for me. Thank you for protecting it. Water means <<fill>> to me. Thank you for fighting for it.

Can I

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

Send an appeal letter

Urge the President of Colombia to protect Jan Silva and all ADISPA members so they can safely defend the natural resources.

Write to President of the Republic of Colombia Mr Iván Duque
Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No.7-26
Bogotá
Colombia

✉ contacto@presidencia.gov.co

🐦 @IvanDuque

Salutation Mr President

In your letter ask him

- Protect Jani Silva.
- Create and implement a collective protection plan for the peasants (Campesinos) that live in the peasants' reserve zone of the Amazon Pearl.

Malta

The El Hiblu Three

Young refugees face life sentences

In Malta, three African teenagers – one from the Ivory Coast, and two from Guinea – have been falsely accused of terrorism for opposing their return to suffering in Libya.

They were among a group of migrants who fled Libya on a dinghy to try to reach Europe on 26 March 2019. The dinghy ran into trouble, and 108 people were rescued by the crew of the cargo ship El Hiblu, an oil transporter. The crew sought to return the rescued people to Libya, where violence and torture cells await migrants.

A protest broke out. The three teenagers were asked to calm the situation. Acting as interpreters, they defended their right not to face torture again in Libya, and convinced the crew of the El Hiblu to turn the ship towards Europe. However, as the El Hiblu entered Maltese waters, the Maltese authorities stormed the ship and arrested the teenagers, claiming they had

hijacked the vessel.

They spent seven months in prison before being released on bail in November 2019 pending trial. If found guilty, they could be jailed for life, despite the lack of evidence to support the charges. They had simply tried to protect themselves, and those rescued with them, from danger in Libya.



© AI/Joanna Demarco

Send a message of support and solidarity

El Hiblu 3
PO Box 39
Hamrun
Malta

Language English or French

Suggested message Justice for The El Hiblu 3. We stand with The El Hiblu 3.

Creative action Share a photo of your message on your social media channels tagging it #ElHiblu3. The three teenagers are keen football fans so link any solidarity ideas with the game or a local team.

Can I

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

Send an appeal letter

Tell the authorities to drop the charges against the El Hiblu 3.

Write to The Attorney General
The Palace
VLT 1115 – Valletta
Malta

✉ ag@gov.mt

Fax: +356 21 240 738

Salutation Your Excellency

In your letter ask them

- Drop all the charges and close the case before trial.
- Drop terrorism and associated charges and go to trial on other less grave charges for which the Hiblu 3 should be acquitted because they acted out of necessity.

'If they take you back to Libya they put you in a room, they torture you, you eat only once per day. When they take women to prison, the Libyans choose the ones they like and take them by force.'

The El Hiblu 3

Myanmar

Paing Phyo Min



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Satirical poet locked up

22-year-old poet and student leader Paing Phyo Min, also known as De Ya, is serving six years in prison for taking part in theatre shows in Myanmar.

In April and May 2019, he and other members of the Peacock Generation, a satirical poetry troupe, were arrested after performing Thangyat – a traditional version of slam poetry. They were wearing military uniforms and criticised the military.

Paing Phyo Min was charged with offences including ‘incitement’ and ‘online defamation’ for sharing photographs and videos of their performances online.

‘We have been performing Thangyat every year since 2013,’ says Paing Phyo Min. ‘We have been directly communicating with the public, expressing... what is wrong in our society... including criticisms of the government. But in 2019, the military targeted us. They are undermining Myanmar’s democratic transition.’

His prosecution and other sentences handed

down to the Peacock Generation is an example of the army increasingly using its powers to silence a growing number of critics and to crack down on freedom of speech.

‘We may be imprisoned but we will not be deterred from speaking our minds as young people with love for our democracy and culture.’

Paing Phyo Min

Send a message of support and solidarity

President of the Student Union
Dagon University Students’
Union Office
Theatre (1), Cherry Street,
Dagon University
North Dagon Township
Yangon
Republic of the Union of
Myanmar 11422

Language Burmese or English

Suggested message Stay strong. You are not alone. I/we stand with you and your colleagues. I am/we are thinking of you and your colleagues. You can get through this. *A Burmese translation is available at*

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

Creative action Paing loves poetry so include lines of your favourite poem or write one, perhaps inspired by him.

Can I

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

Send an appeal letter

Urge the authorities to immediately release Paing Phyo Min.

Write to H E Aung San Suu Kyi
State Counsellor
Ministry of the State Counsellor
Office No. 20, Nay Pyi Taw
Republic of the Union of
Myanmar

Fax: +95 6740 9292

✉ compt.msco@gmail.com

✉ @MyanmarSC

✉ @aungsansuukyi

Salutation Your Excellency

In your letter ask her

- Release Paing Phyo Min and others who have been imprisoned for exercising their right to freedom of expression.
- Repeal or amend all repressive laws that violate the right to freedom of expression.

Pakistan

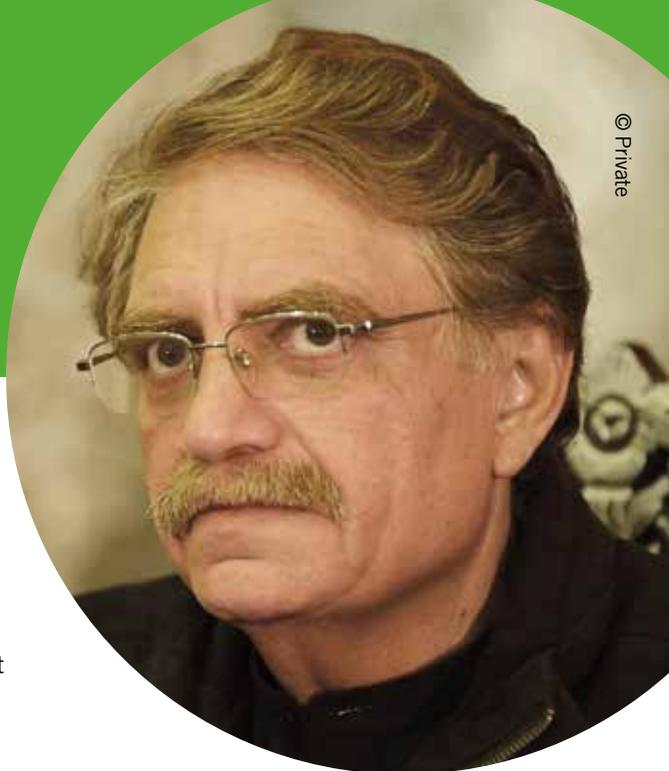
Idris Khattak

Human rights defender in prison

Human rights defender Idris Khattak was forcibly disappeared by men in plain clothes on his way home from Islamabad on 13 November 2019.

His family received no news of him. With Amnesty's help, Talia, Idris's daughter, began her fight for his return, despite being warned not to. Her bravery paid off. On 16 June 2020, the authorities finally admitted that he was in state custody. They said he would be charged under the 1923 Official Secrets Act, which provides for up to 14 years in prison or even the death penalty.

Idris, an independent researcher, is a former consultant for Amnesty International and other NGOs, and is Pakistan's expert on enforced disappearances. He documented human rights violations faced by people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas in Pakistan.



© Private

He is diabetic and requires daily medication, and is at greater risk during Covid-19 as the conditions of his detention remain unknown.

'My father is not a casefile. He is a human being... He is a person, with people who are looking for him. We deserve answers and he deserves the protection of the law.'

Talia Khattak, Idris' daughter

Send a message of support and solidarity

Talia Khattak
c/o Amnesty International South
Asia Regional Office
23/2 Horton Place
Colombo 07
Western Province
Sri Lanka
[Twitter @TaliaKhattak](https://twitter.com/TaliaKhattak) and
[Twitter @shumaisa77](https://twitter.com/shumaisa77)

Language Urdu, English or Pashto

Suggested message *Write to Idris's daughters Talia and Shumaisa.* We stand with you and hope you are reunited with you father as soon as possible.

Creative action Idris loves Russian

literature and gardening. Send your book recommendations, or photos of yourself planting trees.

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 the authorities to tell the family of Idris Khattak where he is, and to release him immediately and unconditionally.

Write to Prime Minister Imran Khan
Prime Minister's Office

Constitution Avenue G-5/2
Islamabad
Pakistan

Fax: +92 51 9215519

info@pmo.gov.pk and

spm@pmo.gov.pk

[@ImranKhanPTI](https://twitter.com/ImranKhanPTI)

[@ImranKhanOfficial](https://facebook.com/ImranKhanOfficial)

Salutation Your Excellency

In your letter ask him

- Release Idris Khattak immediately and unconditionally. If there is evidence that he committed an internationally recognised crime, he should be remanded by an independent court and receive a fair trial.
- Grant him access to a lawyer and his family.

Saudi Arabia

Nassima al-Sada

Detained for demanding women's rights

Nassima al-Sada, a prominent Saudi Arabian activist and human rights educator, has been detained in Al-Mabahith prison in Dammam for over two years.

She has spent many years campaigning for women's freedom, including campaigning for women's right to drive and ending the male guardianship system. She is at risk of being sentenced to a lengthy prison term.

She was arrested on 31 July 2018, and was held in solitary confinement from February 2019 for a year. She has also endured threats and ill-treatment. Her first trial session began on 25 June 2019. Her latest trial session in March 2020 was cancelled due to Covid-19. So far, all of her court sessions have been closed, with diplomats and journalists banned from attending.

A mother of three, she is allowed one weekly phone call with her family, but no visits, not even

This year, Saudi Arabia holds the presidency of the G20 (the world's 20 largest economies), whose summit meeting takes places on 21-22 November. We are calling on the UK government to raise this case at the G20 meetings and ask for the immediate and unconditional release of Nassima and the other women's rights defenders.

Please take action here:
[amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights)

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from her lawyer. Her detention is part of a recent wave of arrests that target Saudi women's human rights activists.

'When a woman feels that she can't carry out basic tasks as a citizen without her male guardian, this restricts her humanity.'

Nassima al-Sada

Send a message of support and solidarity

Amnesty International
For Moussa
Postbus 1968
1000 BZ Amsterdam
Netherlands
  @nasema33

Language English

Suggested message *Write to Nassima's son, Moussa.* We stand in solidarity with the true champion of reform in Saudi Arabia, arrested, ill-treated, held in solitary confinement and detained for more than two years for educating and promoting human rights.

Creative action Nassima loves

animals and her garden. Share photos of yourself in nature or with your pet on your social media channels. Include a personal message to Nassima, or suggested tweet: We stand in solidarity with the true champion of reform in #Saudi @nasema33, arrested, tortured, held in solitary, and detained for over two years for educating and promoting human rights. We call on @kingsalman to #FreeNassima.

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 Ask the King of Saudi Arabi to release Nassima al-Sada immediately and unconditionally.

Write to His Majesty King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud c/o His Excellency HRH Prince Khalid Bin Bandar Bin Sultan Al-Saud Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia 30 Charles Street, Mayfair W1J 5DZ

Salutation Your Majesty
In your letter ask him

Immediately and unconditionally release Nassima al-Sada and all women human rights defenders and activists detained for their peaceful human rights work.

South Africa

Popi Qwabe and Bongeka Phungula

Two women killed in gender based attack

Three years on from the murders of Popi Qwabe and Bongeka Phungula in Soweta, their families are still waiting for justice.

The two friends disappeared on 17 May 2017. Following a frantic search at hospitals and police stations, Bongeka's cousin Mdu and Popi's sister Thembelihle discovered Popi and Bongeka had been shot and dumped by the side of the road. They may also have been raped.

According to the families, the police failed to properly investigate the murders. A taxi containing the women's bloodstains and belongings was found. While the blood was apparently analysed, the forensic department never released the results. The families say the police did not check for fingerprints and that the phones belonging to the two girls were never traced. Key suspects were

released for lack of evidence.

The families are attempting to seek justice and reparations, but to date no one has been held to account.

'We want justice... Such young, confident, intelligent beings. Killed. As if they were nothing. Their future destroyed just like that.'
Thembelihle, Popi's sister



Send a message of support and solidarity

Amnesty International South Africa
97 Oxford Road
Rosebank
Johannesburg 2196
South Africa

Language English or isiZulu

Suggested message We stand in solidarity with your pain. We stand in solidarity in calling for justice. We support you and we will never forget them.

Creative action Take a photo holding your hand up the way that Bongeka does in the photo above (three fingers straight with the thumb and index finger

folded, held across the chest). Upload to Instagram with the message 'We are them and they are us. We stand in solidarity against GBV'. Use the hashtags #W4R20 & #popiandbongeka

Can I

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

Send an appeal letter

Urge the authorities to conduct a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation into the deaths of Popi and Bongeka, and bring

those responsible to justice.

Write to General Bheki Cele
Minister of Police
Private Bag X463
Pretoria, 0001
South Africa

✉ PhokaneN@saps.gov.za

🐦 @SAPoliceService

Salutation Dear Minister Bheki Cele, Gen.

In your letter ask him

- Conduct a thorough, fair and impartial investigation into the deaths of Popi and Bongeka in which all evidence is gathered in a constitutional manner and submitted to the National Prosecuting Authority for prosecution.

Turkey

**SPECIAL
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METU Pride Defenders



Prosecuted for celebrating LGBTI rights

Biology students Melike Balkan and Özgür Gür are among 19 people facing trial over a peaceful protest at the Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara.

Melike and Özgür defend lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI+) rights. As prominent members of the LGBTI+ Solidarity Group at METU, they have organised numerous marches, meetings and other events amid an upsurge in homophobia and increasing restrictions on freedom of expression in Turkey.

METU LGBTI+ Solidarity Group has organised an annual Pride march on campus since 2011. In 2019, the university's management told students the Pride march planned for 10 May could not go ahead. Undeterred, the Solidarity Group staged a Pride sit-in. The university called the police, who

On 10 December, Melike, Özgür and the other activists face a trial which could lead to their acquittal. To make sure the Minister of Justice is aware of pressure from the UK, please also take action online before 10 December to increase our chances of getting his attention.

Go to: [amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights)

used excessive force, including tear gas, against the peaceful protesters. They arrested at least 23 students – including Melike and Özgür – and some who were not even taking part in the protest. Eighteen students and one academic face trial.

'Pride has an extraordinary value.... It is a struggle against violence, against hate crimes, all over the world.' Özgür Gür

Send a message of support and solidarity

Uluslararası Af Örgütü
Hacımimi Mah. Kemeraltı Cad.
Adahan No:31 Kat:2 PK:34425
Karaköy-Beyoğlu/İstanbul
Turkey

Language English or Turkish
Suggested message We stand with you.

Creative action Please photograph and share solidarity messages tagging @odtulgbti on twitter.com/odtulgbti [instagram.com/odtulgbti](https://www.instagram.com/odtulgbti) [facebook.com/odtulgbti](https://www.facebook.com/odtulgbti) Take a photo with an LGBTI+ Pride or Trans Pride flag and share on your social media

channels: tag @odtulgbti and add a message of support in the caption.

Can I

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

Send an appeal letter

Ask the Minister of Justice to ensure the acquittal of 19 people unfairly prosecuted for alleged participation in the Pride Parade at METU in 2019.
Write to Mr Abdülhamit Gül
Minister of Justice

Adalet Bakanlığı
06659 Ankara
Turkey
[✉ info@adalet.gov.tr](mailto:info@adalet.gov.tr)
[@abdulhamitgul](https://twitter.com/abdulhamitgul)
Salutation Dear Minister of Justice

In your letter ask him

- Ensure the acquittal of the 18 METU students and the academic for alleged participation in the Pride Parade on 10 May 2019.
- Ensure a prompt, independent and impartial investigation into police conduct on METU campus on 10 May 2019, and bring to justice any police officers who acted unlawfully.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS FROM 2019

Last year, hundreds of thousands of people around the world took part in **Write for Rights 2019**, sending **more than 6.5 million messages** of support and appeals to authorities. Here is some news and replies we received from the people highlighted in the campaign.



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BELARUS

Emil Ostrovko

Seventeen-year-old Emil Ostrovko was arrested in 2018 accused of distributing illegal drugs. He is one of around 15,000 young Belarusians serving long prison sentences for petty drugs offences. In 2019, messages gave him, and other young prisoners, hope. In January 2020, his eight-year sentence was reduced to six years, under new legislation of Article 328 which came into force after international campaigning around imprisoned children and young people began. Prison conditions finally improved with access to medical care. We continue to campaign for the release of imprisoned minors, including Emil.

'This campaign made me believe in the importance of fighting for my rights. It showed me that my life mattered and that I was not forgotten. Many of my fellow prisoners are young people like me. They ask me to share solidarity cards with them and they keep them as symbols of hope and encouragement. Thank you so much.'
Emil Ostrovko

CANADA

Grassy Narrows Youth

For more than 50 years, the Indigenous community of Grassy Narrows First Nation, Canada, has been devastated by mercury poisoning of the river system. The young people, particularly affected by this health crisis, have led a fight for the government to keep promises made for environmental justice. There has finally been some progress. On 2 April 2020, an agreement to build a care home for survivors of mercury poisoning was signed. This is a first step towards justice. The authorities must now allocate long-term funding for the operation and services of the facility.

'I've always been taught that if you do something wrong, you have to fix it.'
Rodney Bruce, Grassy Narrows community



© Allan Lissner



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CHINA

Yiliyasijiang Reheman

In July 2017, Yiliyasijiang Reheman went missing when he was studying in Egypt with his pregnant wife Mairinsha Abuduaini. He was one of 200 Uyghur people deported from Egypt to China, presumed locked up in an internment camp for Muslims. Although his whereabouts still remain unknown, Mairinsha says the thousands of messages were a lifeline. She particularly appreciated Amnesty's idea of a solidarity football match, Yiliyasijiang's favourite sport. Amnesty continues to campaign for ethnic minority rights in China and for news of Yiliyasijiang.

'I'm very grateful for everyone who supports me. In the course of campaigning for my husband, I feel that I'm not alone. I need their support all the time.' Mairinsha Abuduaini, Yiliyasijiang Reheman's wife



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GREECE

Sarah Mardini and Seán Binder

Sarah Mardini and Seán Binder face up to 25 years in prison for their volunteer work with Emergency Response Centre International, which provides search and rescue services and assisted refugees in Lesbos. During the campaign, Sarah and Seán gave interviews and talks. Sarah took part in Amnesty's Student Conference and Seán joined the Secret Policeman's Tour in Manchester. Amnesty supporters wrote 729,072 messages and appeals, which brought attention to their case and the hostile policies towards NGOs and humanitarian workers in Europe. Amnesty continues to campaign for the case against them to be dropped.

'Having Amnesty's support during my time in prison not only catalysed my early release, but also helped me emotionally.'
Seán Binder



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IRAN

Yasaman Aryani

Yasaman Aryani was detained in April 2019, alongside her mother Monireh Arabshahi and Mojgan Keshavarz, for protesting against forced veiling. During the campaign, Amnesty supporters wrote 1.2 million messages and appeals, highlighting her case and the growing movement of women's rights defenders in Iran against these laws. A key objective was achieved when Yasaman and her mother were transferred to Evin prison. On 5 February 2020, their prison sentences were reduced on appeal from 16 years to nine years and seven months. Mojgan Keshavarz's sentence was reduced from 23 years to 12 years and six months.

'[I hope to walk side by side in the street one day] me without the hijab and you with the hijab.' Yasaman Aryani

MEXICO

José Adrián

José Adrián was just 14 when he was arrested and beaten by police on his way home from school in Mexico on 25 February. The Mayan teenager has an undiagnosed disability which impacts his capacity to hear and communicate easily. José and his Mother say the solidarity messages made them feel more empowered in their fight to clear his name. José has since attended his first advocacy meeting. Thanks to constant follow up and campaign pressure, we expect the government to sign a reparation agreement soon. He has also received a letter that officially states that he now has no criminal record.

'I thank the people who have supported me, you have changed my life, and I thank you all.'

José Adrián



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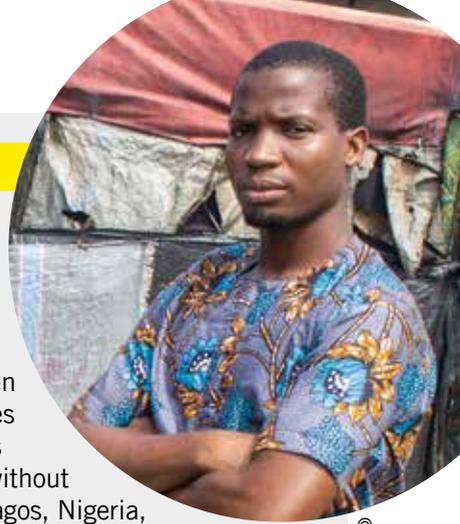
NIGERIA

Nasu Abdulaziz

Nasu Abdulaziz was shot when the authorities bulldozed his community without warning in Lagos, Nigeria, leaving 30,000 people homeless. He joined a movement to secure their right to a home. Amnesty supporters sent him more than 20,000 solidarity messages. Over 400,000 appeal letters called on the Governor of Lagos for justice. Since then, there have been talks between the authorities and Nasu's community towards a resettlement programme.

'I am very happy to receive all these messages. It means that people care about me and what happened. Thank you so much.'

Nasu Abdulaziz



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PHILIPPINES

Marinel Ubaldo

In 2013, Typhoon Yolanda destroyed Marinel Ubaldo's village, Matarinao. Now she fights against climate change and its impact on communities like her own. Marinel says the campaign boosted her activism and belief that there is power in numbers. She spent time with Amnesty in Spain, Japan and Italy, and took part in the UN's global climate summit. The authorities took notice of the thousands of appeal letters, and asked the Municipal Mayor for a report about the needs of the Matarinao community. This report will provide an opportunity for future advocacy, lobbying work and recovery efforts.

'Thank you for taking your time to write and take action. It means the world to us, you give us hope to continue the fight despite the hurdles we encounter. No words can express my gratefulness. I promise to do more.' Marinel Ubaldo



© Tracie Williams/Greenpeace

SOUTH SUDAN

Magai Matiop Ngong

Magai Matiop Ngong was 15 when he was sentenced to death in South Sudan. Supporters sent more than 765,000 people to President Salva Kiir urging him to commute the sentence and expressing their solidarity with Magai. It was a public reminder that under South Sudan and international law, a child cannot be sentenced to death. This pressure helped lead to a victory. On 14 July 2020, Magai's death sentence was commuted in the Court of Appeal and on 29 July he was removed from death row. He is now awaiting an appropriate sentence.

'Thank you so much. I have no words. You have no idea how my heart is filled with happiness.' Magai Matiop Ngong



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UK

Children priced out of citizenship

Thousands of children who have every right to British Citizenship have been charged exorbitant fees to register as British citizens. During the campaign, people supported the legal challenge to change the law, spearheaded by two children affected by the high fees and the Project for the Registration of Children as British Citizens. In a landmark decision, the High Court in London ruled the £1,012 fee was unlawful and prohibitive, although the government is appealing.

'I was born in this country and have lived here all my life. I feel as British as any of my friends and it's not right that I am excluded from citizenship by a huge fee. I want to be able to do all the things my friends can.' O aged 12, one of the two children who brought the case to court

UK

Migrant women

As part of the Step Up Migrant Women UK coalition, Amnesty campaigns to ensure that migrant women who have suffered domestic abuse have equal access to protection and support, something not given under the UK's current laws. We sent 75 hand-designed boxes filled with Christmas cards and gifts to migrant women living in refuges for survivors of domestic abuse in the UK. Supporters signed a petition which we handed to the Home Secretary in July calling for migrant women to be included in the Domestic Abuse Bill. This work continues to be one of our top priorities.

'Migrant women deserve to be heard and deserve safety.' Illary Valenzuela-Oblitas, co-ordinator, Step Up Migrant Women



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UK

Young Trans people

Our campaign backed the call of trans people's organisations to reform the UK's Gender Recognition Act. Trans people face discrimination and violence simply for being who they are. Efforts to reform the Act met with hostility from sections of the UK media and public - although many people have expressed support for trans equality. In 2020, after a three-year consultation, the UK government announced some cosmetic changes to the process of legal gender recognition, such as a lower fee. Access to the process continues to be overly medicalised and continues to exclude young people. We will continue to support the campaigns for equality and justice in all aspects of life for trans and non-binary people.





Why can't I post a letter to all the people featured in the campaign?

In some cases, it may not be safe for the person to receive mail, or the postal service in their country may be unreliable. Also, some prison authorities limit the amount of mail inmates can receive. In every case, we work with the individual to determine the safest and most effective way to share messages with them. If we suggest a method that you are unable to use – such as social media – please send a message to another individual in the campaign.

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

It is for the safety of the recipient. In some cases, association with a particular faith or Amnesty's 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 and robins, or a postcard of your local area. The message 'Season's Greetings' is not 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.

How are the 10 cases chosen, and why do four of them have a 'Special UK Focus'?

The 10 cases are carefully picked to have maximum impact: they have been developed after a long process that involved obtaining the informed consent of each individual featured, planning each action, developing a strategy and assessing the risks. On all the cases, we map out what action activists can take to achieve the changes we want to see. This year, we have identified four of our cases for a 'Special UK Focus'. For these four, we consider that a surge of UK-wide activism will pressure our UK authorities to use their influence, and can make a huge and immediate difference. See This Year's Campaign, page 2, for more information.

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

Please send a letter instead. The fax and 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, as it will help us assess the impact of the campaign.

- iar@amnesty.org.uk

Why is feedback important?

Finding out how many people took part in the campaign, and on which cases, shows us whether our tactics are working or need to be adapted. It also enables us to provide updates about an individual's changing circumstances. Please use the feedback form at [amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights)

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 that we can make sure you have the most up to date information:

iar@amnesty.org.uk

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

You can join our Urgent Action Network, which 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)

Does this campaign really work?

Yes, solidarity is effective. Thousands of letters arriving at a prison tells the prison authorities that the world is watching. And people who have received solidarity messages have told us how it boosts their spirits and strength.

Sending cards and letters individually can be pricey, can I send them all in one go?

Yes, if it is cheaper and easier to send them in one envelope, please do so.

Can I send my letters to the AIUK office?

Because of Covid-19 we are unsure when we will return to the office. Please send your letters to the addresses given.

Is it risky to sign my letters and give my address? Will that country refuse to let me visit it 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, you may wish to choose another case or to not give your full name or address (for example, sign a letter 'from Jane, Manchester').

I don't feel comfortable hosting a Write for Rights event because of Covid-19. What can I do?

Your safety is paramount, and all events must follow the government guidelines. Find the latest government guidelines at www.gov.uk/coronavirus

As an alternative, we have provided some online event ideas at [amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights)

Join Amnesty International today to defend human rights

✉ sct@amnesty.org.uk
amnesty.org.uk/join

 @amnestyUK  /amnestyUK

Amnesty International UK
The Human Rights Action Centre
17-25 New Inn Yard
London EC2A 3EA
T: 020 7033 1500

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