

# WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2021

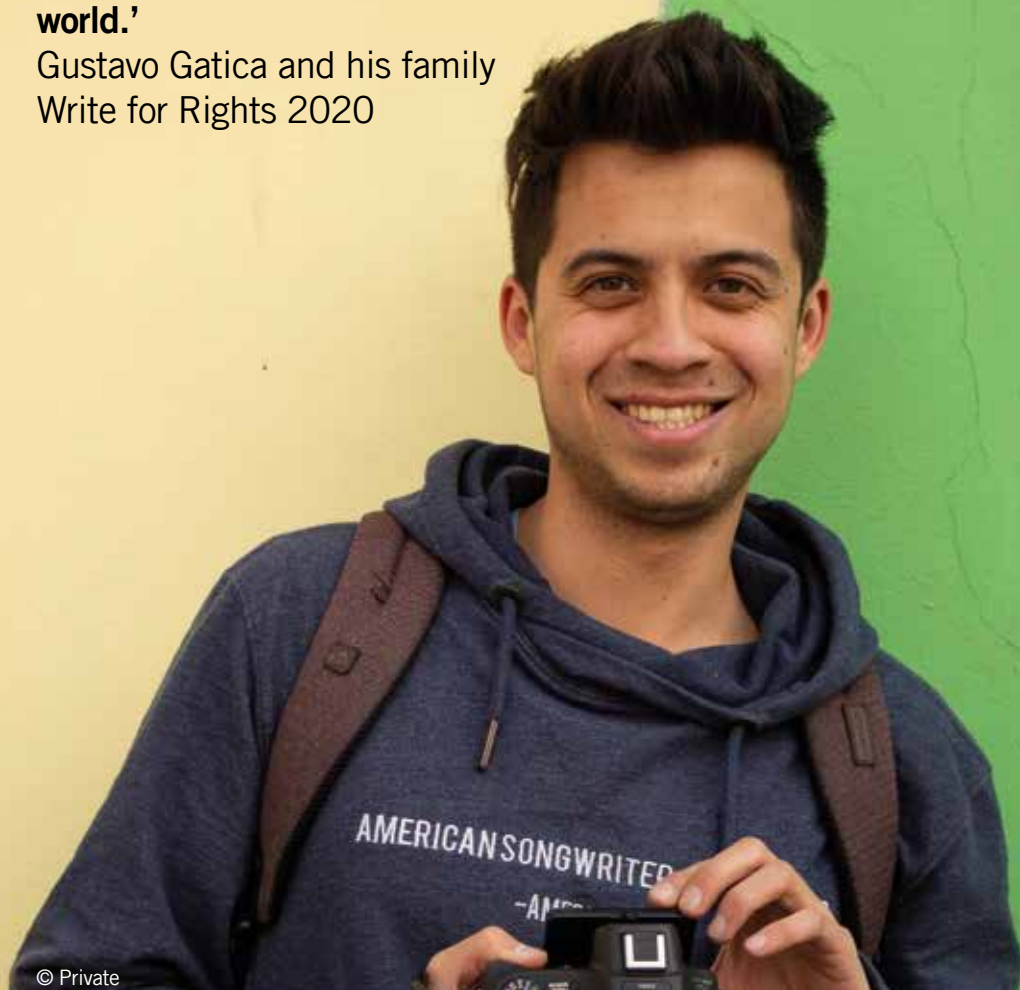
EVERY MESSAGE COUNTS

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



**‘Through this campaign we feel the fraternal embrace of thousands and thousands of people throughout the world, reminding us that we are not alone and that there are many people who dream of a better world.’**

Gustavo Gatica and his family  
Write for Rights 2020



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# YOUR WORDS ARE POWERFUL

Join hundreds of thousands of Amnesty supporters around the world this winter by taking part in our annual Write for Rights campaign and showing your solidarity for 10 people and organisations enduring human rights abuses.

It might only take a few minutes to write a letter or card, send an email or social media message, or sign a petition. But for an environmental activist facing a long prison sentence, a citizen journalist detained for reporting on the pandemic, or an LGBTI organisation suffering homophobic attacks, these simple gestures have a powerful impact.

As past campaigns have shown, your messages of solidarity – alongside those of fellow Amnesty supporters across the globe – are a great source of comfort and support for people doing the difficult and often dangerous work of standing up for human rights.

Your letters, words and actions also put pressure on the authorities to take action to free prisoners of conscience, protect the vulnerable, and bring perpetrators of human rights abuses to justice.

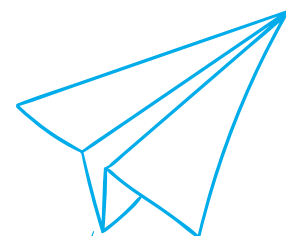
## GLOBAL SOLIDARITY WORKS

Write for Rights shows that when we act together, we can change lives. Despite the many challenges posed by the pandemic, more than 4.4 million messages of support and letters of appeal were sent during the campaign in 2020. They had a huge impact on people, communities and organisations suffering abuses and standing up against injustice.

- More than 360,000 actions were taken for Algerian journalist Khaled Drareni, who was imprisoned for his reporting on the Hirak protest

movement. He was provisionally released in February 2021.

- Over 300,000 messages were sent to and on behalf of Paing Phyto Min, a satirical poet and student leader jailed for criticising the military in Myanmar. He was freed early in April 2021.
- More than 777,000 actions were taken for Saudi women's rights campaigner Nassima al-Sada. As a result, a G20 summit hosted by Saudi Arabia was overshadowed by international calls to free Nassima and other women human rights defenders. Nassima has since been conditionally released.
- Over 341,000 actions were taken for Popi Qwabe and Bongeka Phungula, who were killed in a gender-based attack in South Africa. The police subsequently met Amnesty and Popi's family and agreed to reinvestigate the case. They later confirmed the case had been referred for prosecution.



# LETTER WRITING WORKS



## THIS YEAR'S CAMPAIGN

Join our campaign and change lives this winter. From pro-democracy activists to women's rights campaigners, this booklet tells the stories of 10 individuals, communities and organisations whose rights are being abused and who urgently need your support. Global action and solidarity will raise their profile, and that momentum can bring about many benefits, from protection to justice.

You can take action on some or, if you have the time, all 10 cases. For each, we have suggested actions you can take such as:

- Sending a message of solidarity to let people know you're thinking of them.
- Writing a letter appealing to those with the power to stop the abuse.
- Getting creative to make your voice heard – we've included lots of ideas to inspire you.
- Using social media to show your solidarity online or contact the authorities.

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

## DATES TO REMEMBER

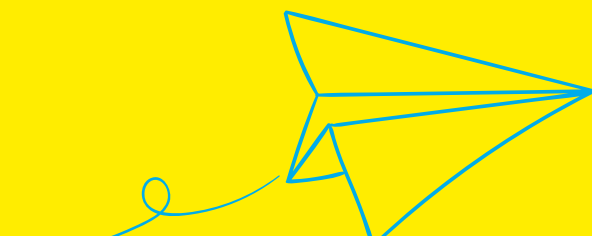
- Write for Rights 2021 runs from 1 November to 31 December.
- International Children's Day is 20 November.
- International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is 25 November.
- International Human Rights Day is 10 December.

## PERSONALISED MESSAGES

Every action you take during Write for Rights is valuable, and we only ask people to act where we believe they'll have the biggest impact. Please do as many of the actions suggested in this booklet as possible, but if you can, prioritise personal, handwritten solidarity messages – the people we support always say these are most powerful messages they receive.

## SUGGESTED ACTIONS

When planning Write for Rights, we work closely with the people featured – or, when this is not possible, their relatives, colleagues and lawyers – to ensure we choose the most appropriate and effective actions for our supporters to take. As a result, for some of the cases in this booklet, we've suggested different actions from the typical letter-writing. Don't worry if you can't do all of the actions suggested, as there are plenty of cases where letter writing is recommended. We've also added some creative ideas for each case – these work particularly well if you are taking action as part of a group.



**'I am very grateful for all the letters. From the bottom of my heart, this campaign has kept me alive, it's what has stopped them from killing me.'** Jani Silva

## STAYING SAFE: COVID-19 AND WRITE FOR RIGHTS

Although life is slowly getting back to normal, not everyone will feel safe to meet up in groups to plan and take action together. Please keep up to date with the latest government guidelines in your area and, if you're meeting in person, follow the necessary steps to make sure you're as safe as possible. Online events (see page 19) are a good option, too.

## NEW TO WRITE FOR RIGHTS?

Getting involved in our letter-writing campaign couldn't be easier, but we know the first time may seem a bit daunting. Here are a few tips to get you started:

- In this booklet, you'll find all the information you need on a case and advice on how to take action.
- You don't have to take action on all 10 cases. Anything you do to support one or two individuals will make a difference
- Try to personalise your messages of support, as this will mean a huge amount to the recipient. If you're unsure what to write, we've provided suggested messages.
- When writing to the authorities, please include your name and country. This shows the letter is genuine and personal. Keep 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 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, city or country.
- If there's anything else you're unsure of, check 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. Email us at: [iar@amnesty.org.uk](mailto:iar@amnesty.org.uk)





**1. BELARUS**  
**MIKITA ZALATAROU**



**2. CHINA**  
**ZHANG ZHAN**



**3. EGYPT**  
**MOHAMED BAKER**



**4. ERITREA**  
**CIHAM ALI AHMED**



**5. GUATEMALA**  
**BERNARDO CAAL XOL**





**10. UKRAINE  
SPHERE**



**6. ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES  
JANNA JIHAD**



**9. THAILAND  
PANUSAYA ('RUNG')  
SITHIJIRAWATTANAKUL**



**8. NIGERIA  
IMOLEAYO ADEYEUN MICHAEL**



**7. MEXICO  
WENDY ANDREA GALARZA HERRERA**

# BELARUS

## MIKITA ZALATAROU

### Teenager sent to a child prison colony

Teenager Mikita Zalatarou was waiting for the bus in the city of Homel's main square when the police moved in on a nearby, and largely peaceful, protest about the results of the recent presidential election. As the crowd started to run, someone told Mikita to do the same. He took the advice, but the next day police officers came to his home and arrested him.

The police accused Mikita of throwing a Molotov cocktail at two officers the night before. They beat him with an electric-shock truncheon, and interrogated him without a lawyer or responsible adult present. He was then locked up for six months before being put on trial.

There was no video evidence of Mikita taking part in any violence. Indeed, media reports of the demonstration did not mention mass unrest at all. Nevertheless, the judge still convicted Mikita of mass disorder and using illegal explosives, and sentenced him to five years in a child educational prison colony.



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**'For those who beat him, my son is just a step on the career ladder... and somebody will get a medal.'** Mikhail Zalatarou, Mikita's father

#### Send a message of support and solidarity

Educational Colony V.K – 2  
Batova 4  
Bobruisk  
213800 Mogilevskaya Obl.  
Belarus

**Language** Russian and English

**Creative action** Mikita would welcome solidarity cards and messages from activists. He has a BMX bike and likes rap music and computer games, particularly Minecraft, which you could incorporate 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 the Prosecutor General to release Mikita Zalatarou pending a fair retrial.

**Write to** Andrei Shved,  
Prosecutor General of the  
Republic of Belarus  
Internatsionalnaya Str.  
22, 220030 Minsk  
Belarus

✉ [info@prokuratura.gov.by](mailto:info@prokuratura.gov.by)

**Salutation** Dear Prosecutor General

#### In your letter ask him

- To release Mikita Zalatarou pending a fair retrial that complies with international juvenile justice standards.



## Jailed for reporting on Covid-19

When Wuhan went into lockdown because of Covid-19, Zhang Zhan was one of the few citizen journalists to report on the unfolding crisis. Determined to get the truth out, the former lawyer travelled to the city and revealed on social media how government officials had detained independent reporters and harassed families of Covid-19 patients. Zhang was later detained and sentenced to four years in prison in an attempt to silence her. In summer 2021, Zhang Zhan started a hunger strike that severely affected her physical health.

The authorities tried to censor information about the coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan from the very beginning. Dr Li Wenliang, the first person known to have tried to warn others about the virus, was immediately silenced and punished by the authorities for 'spreading rumours'. He died in February 2020 from Covid-19.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic in China, numerous articles relating to the virus have



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been censored, and related social media posts, sensitive hashtags and demands for freedom of expression are quickly deleted or censored.

**'We should seek the truth and seek it at all costs. Truth has always been the most expensive thing in the world. It is our life.'**

Zhang Zhan

### Send a message of support and solidarity

Zhang Zhan  
No 1601 Zhangjing Road  
Sijing Zhen  
Songjiang Qu  
Shanghai 201601  
People's Republic of China

**Language** English or Chinese

**Suggested message** Zhang Zhan, your dedication to reporting the truth will continue to inspire others. We will continue to support you and look forward to the day you regain freedom. Keep your spirits up.

### 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 the President to immediately and unconditionally release Zhang Zhan.

**Write to Xi Jinping**  
President of the People's Republic of China  
Zhongnanhai  
Xichangan'jie  
Xichengqu  
Beijing Shi 100017  
People's Republic of China  
✉ [english@mail.gov.cn](mailto:english@mail.gov.cn) or  
[content@mail.gov.cn](mailto:content@mail.gov.cn)

### Salutation Dear President Xi In your letter ask him

- To immediately and unconditionally release Zhang Zhan.

### Notes

- All mail to Zhang will be opened by the prison authorities. To increase the likelihood of your card or letter reaching her, do not mention or include anything relating to Amnesty.
- Please do not make any reference to Zhang's parents.

# EGYPT

## MOHAMED BAKER

### Lawyer jailed for his human rights work

Mohamed Baker has dedicated his career to defending the rights of the most marginalised people in Egypt. Because of his valuable work as a human rights lawyer, he has been targeted by the authorities, which falsely accused him of 'terrorism' and threw him in prison.

Mohamed is the head of the Adalah Center for Rights and Freedoms, which supports human rights and people jailed unjustly. In September 2019, after going to the prosecutor's office to defend his friend, he was himself arrested. The authorities made trumped-up, terrorism-related accusations against Mohamed, denied him a trial, and put him behind bars, simply because they disagreed with his human rights work.

In prison, Mohamed has been subjected to one cruelty after another. The authorities have held him in a cramped, fetid cell and deprived him of a bed or mattress, hot water, outdoor exercise, or photos of his family. They even refused to let him see his dying father.



©University of York/Alex Holland

Defending people's freedoms should not cost Mohamed his own.

**'Experiencing injustice is painful and I don't wish it on anyone... For the first time I am in the role of the victim instead of the role of the human rights defender who supports victims.'**  
Mohamed Baker

#### Send a message of support and solidarity

Sending solidarity letters to Egypt can lead to reprisals against the family or the lawyer. Instead, Mohamed's wife has created an email account to receive support messages:  
✉ supportbaker@protonmail.com.

You can also use the following official Twitter account and Facebook page to express support for him:

🐦 @FreeBaker2

📘 facebook.com/freebaker

**Language:** English or Arabic  
**Suggested message:** Use the hashtag #Free\_Baker in your message.

**Creative action:** Mohamed is

a cat lover and owns five cats. You can send drawings of cats or pictures of your own cats.

#### 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 to release Mohamed Baker immediately and unconditionally and close all investigations against him.

**Write to** President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi  
Office of the President  
Al Ittihadia Palace  
Cairo

Arab Republic of Egypt  
Fax: +202 2391 1441

✉ p.spokesman@op.gov.eg

🐦 @AlsisiOfficial

**Salutation:** Dear President

**In your letter ask him**

- To release Mohamed Baker immediately and unconditionally;
- To close all investigations against him into unfounded terrorism-related and other charges, stemming solely from his human rights work.

# ERITREA

## CIHAM ALI AHMED

### US-Eritrean national held for nine years

Born in Los Angeles and raised in Eritrea, a fan of Lady Gaga and Green Day, Ciham Ali Ahmed wanted to become a fashion designer when she grew up. But when she was 15, her hopes were shattered. On 8 December 2012, Ciham was arrested at the Sudanese border as she tried to flee Eritrea. Nine years on, her family do not know where she is being held. Ciham has not been charged or brought to trial. It is as if she has vanished.

Prior to her arrest, Ciham's father Ali Abdu, then minister of information under President Isaias Afwerki, went into exile just as the military attempted a coup against the government. It was rumoured Ali Abdu had supported the coup and Ciham may have been arrested in retaliation.

Eritrea is notorious for imprisoning people in underground containers. Many detainees have died from torture, starvation, infection and other appalling treatment.

Although she's a US citizen, Ciham has been ignored by the US government. It has stayed silent



© Saleh Younis

on her plight, even though it has the power to influence Eritrea.

**'You have just taken a child who has child-like dreams. You are basically saying I will punish you and detain you, and you'll spend half of your life in prison.'** Saleh, Ciham's uncle

#### Send a message of support and solidarity

C/o Eritrea Team  
Amnesty International  
1 Easton Street  
London WC1X 0DW

**Language** English or Tigrinya

**Creative action** Her family would really appreciate it if you could include the colour purple – Ciham's favourite colour – in your message of support to them.

#### 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

Call on the US Secretary of State to urgently intervene in the case by calling for Ciham Ali Ahmed's immediate and unconditional release.

**Write to** US Secretary of State  
Antony Blinken  
2201 C St. NW  
Washington, DC 20520  
USA

#### Salutation The Honorable In your letter ask him

- To urgently intervene in the case by calling for Ciham Ali Ahmed's immediate and unconditional release.

# GUATEMALA

## BERNARDO CAAL XOL

### Teacher jailed for protecting environment

Through his teaching and trade union leadership, Bernardo Caal Xol has made it his mission to empower his people, the Indigenous Maya Q'eqchi'. He has also done everything he can to peacefully protect their land and natural resources from plunder and biodiversity loss. So, when a company licensed by the government dammed the Maya Q'eqchi's Cahabón river to build two hydroelectric power plants, Bernardo and his community protested.

The Cahabón, one of Guatemala's longest rivers, is sacred to the Maya Q'eqchi'. Construction of the power plants had already stripped their forests; now the community faced losing the precious water it needed to survive. Bernardo demanded a halt to the power plants' activities, saying the authorities had failed to properly consult his people, a requirement under international law.

But his actions put him at odds with the company and economic and political elites. Bernardo was repeatedly publicly smeared with



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baseless accusations. In 2018, a judge convicted him without evidence and sentenced him to more than seven years in prison.

**'Why am I in jail? For denouncing what they are doing to the rivers, defending what little is left.'** Bernardo Caal Xol

#### Send a message of support and solidarity

Send a message of support and solidarity  
Oficina Regional de Amnistía Internacional AC  
Calle Luz Saviñón 519  
Col. Del Valle  
Alcaldía Benito Juárez, 03100  
Ciudad de México  
México

**Language** Spanish or Mayan Q'eqchi

**Suggested message** Dear Bernardo, you are not alone. Stay strong.

**Creative message** Send this message in Q'eqchi' and share on social media. At lo'oy Bernardo, moko aa jones ta. Mat kub'e kawaq aawib'.

#### 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 Attorney General to take all steps needed to ensure all charges against Bernardo Caal Xol are dropped and he is immediately released from prison, since there is no evidence against him.

**Write to** María Consuelo Porras Argueta  
Fiscal General de Guatemala  
Ministerio Público  
15 Avenida A 15-16

Ciudad de Guatemala  
Guatemala

 @MPguatemala

 @mpguatemala

Assistant's  [carrecis@mp.gob.gt](mailto:carrecis@mp.gob.gt)

**Note** If you're sending physical letters, please use a courier company. Otherwise send communications via email or social media.

**Salutation** Dear Attorney General

**In your letter ask her:** To take all steps needed to ensure all charges against Bernardo Caal Xol are dropped and he is immediately released from prison, since there is no evidence against him.

# ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

## JANNA JIHAD

### Teenage Palestinian journalist harassed for her work

**Janna Jihad wants a normal childhood for herself and all other Palestinian children. But the 15-year-old journalist lives in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where life under systematic discrimination is anything but normal.**

Janna started reporting when she was seven, after the Israeli military killed her uncle. She used her mother's phone to record and expose the racist brutality her community experiences. At 13, Janna was recognised as one of the world's youngest journalists for her work documenting the Israeli army's oppressive and often deadly treatment of Palestinians, which includes night raids, demolishing homes and schools, and crushing communities. Children are particularly affected, and many have been killed and injured.

Israel has signed up to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, yet fails to extend those protections to Palestinian children in the West Bank. By contrast, Israeli children – including those living in illegal settlements near Janna – are protected.



© Tanya Habjouqa/NOOR

Janna has been harassed and received death threats, but will not give up until institutional racism against Palestinians ends.

**'The main goal of my work is to live normally. Like any other child around the world, I want to be able to play soccer with my friends without having tear gas canisters rain on us.'**

Janna Jihad

#### Send a message of support and solidarity

Janna Jihad  
C/o Amnesty International  
6 Ibn Junair Street  
Sheikh Jarrah  
PO BOX 42626  
Jerusalem  
Israel

#### Language Arabic or English

**Creative action** Take a photo of your card or letter, share it on Facebook and tag Janna. She is @Janna.Jihad. Please do not tag her on Instagram or any other social media platform.

#### 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 the Special Committee to end the discrimination and oppression against Janna Jihad.

**Write to** Special Committee on the Rights of the Child in Israel's Parliament (Knesset) Chair, Committee on Rights of the Child  
Kiryat Ben Gurion  
Jerusalem  
Israel 9195016  
Fax: 02-6408544  
✉ [v\\_yeled@knesset.gov.il](mailto:v_yeled@knesset.gov.il)

**Salutation** Dear Special Committee on the Rights of the Child in Israel's Parliament

#### In your letter, ask the committee

- To end the discrimination and oppression against Janna Jihad.



# MEXICO

## WENDY ANDREA GALARZA HERRERA

### Childcare worker shot by police during peaceful protest

**For Wendy Andrea Galarza Herrera, helping to raise young children is the best way to create a fairer world. It is a goal she works hard for in Mexico, where women are often abused and killed simply because they are women.**

On 9 November 2020, Wendy attended a march organised by feminist collectives in Cancún to demand justice for the murder of a woman known as Alexis. But when a group of demonstrators began pulling down and burning some wooden barriers, police officers fired shots into the air and, some say, into the crowd. Wendy subsequently discovered she had bullet wounds in her leg and vulva.

Two days later, she lodged a complaint against the police. Yet it took months for the state prosecutor to accept her additional evidence, which included clothing showing bullet holes from the day of the protest. Today, the case continues, but those suspected of criminal responsibility for her shooting have still not been brought to justice.



© Maho Irigoyen/Al

**'They beat us. It was a massacre... We need justice. We already went out once demanding that they do their job. We're not asking for anything else.'**

Wendy Andrea Galarza Herrera

#### Send a message of support and solidarity

Amnesty International Mexico  
Office  
Matías Romero No. 116  
Colonia Del Valle  
Alcaldía Benito Juárez  
C.P. 03100  
Ciudad de México  
México

#### Language Spanish

**Suggested message** Tell Wendy how much you admire her for standing up for women's rights, and express your support for her fight for justice.

**Creative action** Post messages on social media with these hashtags: #ShoutForWendy, #GritoPorWendy and #W4R21. Wendy loves children, so share

her story with children and ask them send her a message and/or drawing.

#### 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 Attorney General to investigate the human rights violations suffered by Wendy Andrea Galarza Herrera and ensure those responsible are brought to justice.

**Write to** Óscar Montes de Oca  
Fiscal General de Quintana Roo  
Av. Adolfo López Mateos No.  
500, esquina Nápoles  
Colonia Italia, C.P. 77035  
Chetumal  
Quintana Roo  
México  
✉ [fiscal.general@fgeqroo.gob.mx](mailto:fiscal.general@fgeqroo.gob.mx)

**Salutation** Dear Attorney General  
**In your letter ask him**

- To conduct a prompt, impartial and exhaustive investigation into the human rights violations suffered by Wendy Andrea Galarza Herrera.
- To ensure all those suspected of criminal responsibility are brought to justice in fair trials before ordinary civilian courts.

# NIGERIA

## IMOLEAYO ADEYEUN MICHAEL

### Protester against police violence faces years in prison

When young people took to Nigeria's streets in October 2020 to protest against a notoriously violent police unit, Imoleayo Adeyeun Michael joined them. Now he faces the prospect of a long spell behind bars.

The protesters were demonstrating against violence, extortion and killings by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad, which is popularly known as SARS. Imoleayo, a young computer programmer, promoted the protests on social media, using the hashtag #EndSARS.

Two weeks later, in the early hours of 13 November, 20 armed men raided Imoleayo's home. They shattered his bedroom window and pointed a gun at him, forcing him to open his front door. Once inside, they seized his mobile phones and computer, locked his wife, elderly mother and seven-month-old son in a room, and disconnected the power supply to the street lights around his house.

Imoleayo was then taken away, locked in an



© KC Nwakalor/ AI

underground cell for 41 days, and now faces years in prison.



**I'm not a criminal. I only protested for the betterment of my fatherland. As a programmer, I should be able to move around with my laptop without fear of being killed by [the police].'**  
Imoleayo Adeyeun Michael

#### Send a message of support and solidarity

Amnesty International Nigeria  
34 Colorado Close  
Abuja Federal Capital Territory  
Maitama District  
Nigeria

**Language** English and Yoruba  
**Suggested message** We stand with you. Stay strong.


**Creative action** Imoleayo is active on social media and is happy to receive solidarity messages via his personal Twitter and Facebook accounts.

 @imoleayomichael  
 facebook.com/adeyeun

#### 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 the Attorney General and Minister of Justice to immediately withdraw all the charges against Imoleayo Adeyeun Michael.

**Write to** Abubakar Malami, SAN  
Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice  
Ministry of Justice  
New Federal Secretariat Complex  
5th Floor Shehu Shagari Way  
Maitama  
PMB 192 Garki  
Abuja  
Nigeria  
 info@justice.gov.ng

**Salutation** Honourable Attorney General of the Federation

#### In your letter ask him

- To immediately withdraw all the charges against Imoleayo Adeyeun Michael.

# THAILAND

## PANUSAYA ('RUNG') SITHIJIRAWATTANAKUL

### Young activist facing life in prison

Once a shy, quiet teenager, Panusaya Sithijirawattanakul – known as 'Rung' – has become a leading voice in Thailand's democracy movement. The student, a vocal proponent for equality and freedom of expression, opposes the use of the draconian lèse-majesté law – which penalises criticism of the monarchy – to silence government critics. In March 2021, she was jailed for 60 days under this law. After going on hunger strike for 38 days, Rung was released, but she now faces the prospect of life imprisonment.

Rung became politically active while studying sociology and anthropology at university in Bangkok. She bravely took part in demonstrations for social and political change throughout 2020, and by August had become a protest leader. Watched by thousands, Rung called for equality, freedom of expression, and reform of the monarchy, a highly sensitive topic in Thailand. This unprecedented act propelled her onto the national stage and she was branded a troublemaker by the authorities.



© Yostorn Triyos/AI

Today, Rung faces 25 charges and, if convicted, a life sentence. 'Once you step into the prison; you will no longer feel that your humanity is still intact,' she says.

**'In Thailand, for people who want a better society, we are being put in jail.'**

Panusaya ('Rung') Sithijirawattanakul

#### Send a message of support and solidarity

Amnesty International Thailand  
139/21, Soi Lat Phrao 5  
Chom Phon  
Chatuchak,  
Bangkok 10900  
Thailand

#### Language Thai or English

**Creative action** Mention or include images of rainbows (Rung means 'rainbow' in Thai) and/or cats (which Rung loves) in your solidarity messages. Solidarity actions showing compassion and kindness are also welcome. You could send virtual hugs (or non-physical gesture, if hugs seem inappropriate) to show support for Rung as she faces ongoing

harassment for her activism. This could be in the form of pictures, drawings or just writing.

#### 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 Prime Minister to ensure all the criminal proceedings against Panusaya ('Rung') Sithijirawattanakul and other peaceful activists are unconditionally dropped.

**Write to** Prayut Chan-o-cha  
Prime Minister of Thailand  
The Office of the Permanent

Secretary  
Government House  
1 Nakhon Pathom Road  
Dusit  
Bangkok 10300  
Thailand

✉ [sarabun@opm.go.th](mailto:sarabun@opm.go.th)

Fax: +66 2 282 5131

🐦 @prayutofficial

**Salutation** Dear Prime Minister  
**In your letter ask him**

- To immediately drop all the criminal proceedings against Panusaya ('Rung') Sithijirawattanakul and others charged solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and expression.

**Note** Please do not make any reference to the monarchy.

## LGBTI and women's rights NGO under attack

Sphere has championed LGBTI and women's rights since 2006, and is one of the oldest organisations of its kind in Ukraine. Founded by activists Anna Sharyhina and Vira Chernyгина, it provides a safe space for women and LGBTI people in the city of Kharkiv. But in recent years the organisation has suffered frequent homophobic attacks.

The authorities are not addressing the growing rate of hate crimes. Anti-LGBTI groups have set upon Sphere's supporters and premises, urinating on walls, daubing faeces on doorknobs, breaking windows and chanting homophobic slogans. Anna and Vira report them to the police, but no one is held accountable.

In 2019, Sphere organised Kharkiv's first Pride. Despite threats and intimidation, it was a huge success, attended by up to 3,000 people. But the police failed to protect marchers from violence, and instead joined in by hurling homophobic abuse. Anna and Vira say police inaction has left Sphere and its supporters in a permanent state of fear.



© Kate Mamaisur/AI

**'Sphere is the only organisation in Kharkiv that organises events for LGBTI people. They don't have anything else to choose from. For all these years, Sphere has not given up.'**

Vira Chernyгина

### Send a message of support and solidarity

Sphere  
PO Box 10399  
Kharkiv, 61005  
Ukraine

**Language** Ukrainian, Russian or English

**Creative action** Sphere is keen to receive things it can display in its PrideHub community centre. For example: photos of you holding placards with supportive messages for Sphere and LGBTI people in Kharkiv in a location representing your city, town or village – you could even send over the placard itself; or LGBTI flags (or other associated flags) signed by the sender. You could also

add something to the flag to represent where you live.

### 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 Minister of Interior to ensure the perpetrators of the attacks against Sphere NGO are identified and held to account.

**Write to** Minister of Interior  
Ministry of Internal Affairs  
vul. Akademika Bohomoltsa, 10  
01601 Kyiv  
Ukraine

✉ pgmia@mvs.gov.ua  
🐦 @MVS\_UA

**Salutation** Dear Minister  
**In your letter ask him**

- To take all necessary steps to ensure the perpetrators of the attacks against Sphere NGO are identified and held to account in fair trials.
- To ensure the discriminatory motive of the attacks is taken into account during the investigations.

# HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT FROM 2020

Hundreds of thousands of people around the world took part in Write for Rights 2020, sending more than **4.4 million** messages of support and appeals to authorities. Here are some updates on the people we featured in the campaign.



## **SOUTH AFRICA** **POPI QWABE AND BONGEKA PHUNGULA**

Popi Qwabe and Bongeka Phungula were killed in a gender-based attack in 2017, and the police failed to properly investigate their murders. Amnesty supporters took more than 341,000 actions for them during the campaign. In March 2020, Amnesty South Africa and Popi's sister and mother delivered our petition to the police. This led to a two-hour meeting with officials, during which they committed to re-investigating the case. Two months later, the police confirmed they had finished their reinvestigation and had referred the case for prosecution.

**'I feel optimistic, I feel like something is finally about to happen. I feel like there's a change coming.'** Popi's sister Thembelihle

© Private

## **BURUNDI** **GERMAIN RUKUKI**

Human rights defender Germain Rukuki was sentenced to 32 years in prison because of his peaceful activism. Amnesty supporters took more than 346,000 actions for him during the campaign. On 4 June 2021, a court

of appeal overturned Germain's conviction for several charges, including 'threatening internal state security', though his conviction for 'rebellion' was upheld. With his sentence reduced to a year in prison and a small fine, Germain was released on 30 June.



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**'We received some messages of support and solidarity, which gives us comfort. I'm grateful and thank you for what you are doing.'** Germain's wife Emelyne

## **CHILE** **GUSTAVO GATICA**

In 2019, psychology student Gustavo Gatica was blinded by riot police during a protest against rising prices and inequality in Chile. In August 2020, the Attorney General laid formal charges against a special police force lieutenant colonel for the crime of unlawful coercion resulting in Gustavo's serious injuries. More than 376,000 actions were taken



for Gustavo during the campaign, and we also sent him a solidarity video from several local groups.

**'In addition to the international pressure to achieve justice... we feel the fraternal embrace of thousands and thousands of people throughout the world, reminding us that we are not alone.'**

Gustavo and his family



© Private

## SAUDI ARABIA NASSIMA AL-SADA

Prominent Saudi activist Nassima al-Sada was detained because of her campaigning for women's rights. Amnesty supporters took more than 777,000 actions during the campaign. In the run-up to the G20 summit in Saudi Arabia, we ran billboards and newspaper adverts calling for the release of Nassima and other detained women's rights campaigners. We also delivered a 41,000-signature petition to the UK government, urging it to pressure the Saudi authorities. As a result, the summit was overshadowed, and in June 2021 Nassima was conditionally released, though she still has a travel ban.



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**'I am overwhelmed... A huge thanks to all of you for your solidarity.'**

Moussa, Nassima's son



© Akin Celiktaş

## TURKEY METU STUDENTS

Acquitted. Biology students Melike Balkan and Ozgür Gür defended their right to celebrate pride on their university campus at the Middle East Technical University (METU). They faced nearly three years in prison. After repeated postponements of their trial, on 8 October they were acquitted and their ordeal is finally over. More than 445,000 actions were taken for them during the campaign.

## MYANMAR PAING PHYO MIN

Poet and student leader Paing Phyto Min was jailed for six years in 2019 for taking part in theatre shows critical of the military. More than 300,000 actions were taken for him during the campaign. In April 2021, he and two fellow members of satirical poetry troupe Peacock Generation, were released early in a mass amnesty.



© Private

**'I just wanted to say as a parent thanks so much for helping my son'**

Paing Phyto Min's father

## ALGERIA

### KHALED DRARENI

Journalist Khaled Drareni was sentenced to two years in prison over his coverage of the Hirak protest movement.

Over 361,000 actions were taken for him during the campaign. In February 2021, Khaled was released, following a presidential pardon, but now faces a retrial. Amnesty continues

to call for the charges against him to be dropped.



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**'I thank all those who supported me and the tremendous work that Amnesty's sections have done.'** Khaled Drareni

## PAKISTAN

### IDRIS KHATTAK

Human rights defender Idris Khattak was 'disappeared' in 2019. He now faces charges under the Official Secrets Act, which provides for up to 14 years in prison or even the death penalty. Amnesty supporters took more than 344,000 actions for Idris during the campaign, and we continue to work on his case.

**'I'm really looking forward to reading all the letters from Amnesty supporters with Papa when he is back. It is so incredibly sweet of everybody to have written them.'**

Idris's daughter  
Talia



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## COLOMBIA

### JANI SILVA

For decades, Jani Silva has defended the environment and natural resources of the Colombian Amazon. As a result, she has been repeatedly followed, intimidated by armed men and received death threats. More

than 461,000 actions were taken on her case during the campaign. Jani has still not been granted the protection she needs, but Amnesty is keeping up the pressure on the Colombian government.



© Nubia Acosta

**'I am very grateful for all the letters. From the bottom of my heart, this campaign has kept me alive, it's what has stopped them from killing me.'** Jani Silva



© Al/Joanna Demarco

## MALTA

### EL HIBLU 3

Three teenagers – one from the Ivory Coast, two from Guinea – were falsely accused of terrorism for opposing their return to suffering in Libya. After seven months in prison they were released on bail pending trial. If convicted, they could be jailed for life. Amnesty supporters took over 269,000 actions for them, and our campaign continues.

**'The letters, the solidarity, give us courage. We are feeling hopeful and so grateful...'**  
A member of El Hiblu 3

# HOSTING A WRITE FOR RIGHTS EVENT

Every year, Amnesty groups across the UK organise a wide variety of Write for Rights events. Here are some ideas if you're looking to host one of your own this year.

- Write for Rights is a good way for people new to human rights activism to get involved. You could hold an event at work at lunchtime and ask people to sign action cards or write letters. If you're not back in the workplace yet, you could do this online (see box below).
- 10 December 2021 is Human Rights Day, which

you could use as a hook to encourage people to get involved in the campaign.

- The November-December period is the season of goodwill, so why not host a celebration with mulled wine and mince pies for your family, friends or housemates?
- Amnesty has created short films about some of the cases. You could screen them at home (or online) for your friends, family, housemates or colleagues.

## TIPS FOR VIRTUAL EVENTS

### Host a video call

You and your guests can talk about your chosen cases and write together, perhaps with music on in the background and mince pies to hand. You could even invite someone to recite poetry or play an instrument while you're writing.

### Host a virtual choir

Gather your friends on a video call and sing songs about human rights or your favourite festive tunes. If you record the video, please send it to us so we can share with our movement.

### Host an online quiz

You could organise a quiz about the individuals featured in the campaign, and end it with a letter-writing session.

### More ideas

- Create an online solidarity card and send it around to your family and friends to sign. You can then email it or print it out and send it by post.
- Contact the local media and tell them about your online actions, including how people can take part.
- Share the event on social media channels such as Facebook, as well as the Nextdoor app.
- Contact local schools to promote the campaign. Explain that pupils can write letters in the classroom or online, too.
- Use a Write for Rights background on your video calls in November and December. You could take a screen shot of this and share it on social media to boost the campaign.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **Why can't I post a letter to all the people featured in this booklet?**

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 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 all the people featured 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.

## **Why are there only 10 cases?**

The 10 cases are carefully chosen to have the maximum impact: they have been selected after a long process that involved obtaining the informed consent of each individual featured, planning each action, developing a strategy and assessing the risks.

## **What if the email address or fax number 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. It will help us assess the impact of the campaign.

• [iar@amnesty.org.uk](mailto:iar@amnesty.org.uk)

## **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](mailto: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 network member, 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://amnesty.org.uk/urgent)

### 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://amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights)

### Does this campaign really work?

Yes, solidarity is effective. Thousands of letters arriving at a prison tells the authorities 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 Amnesty UK office?

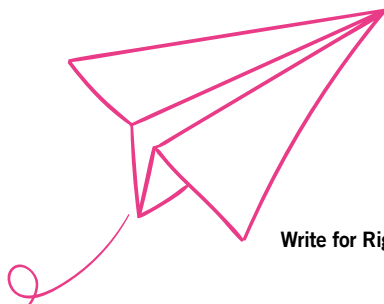
Because of Covid-19 we are unsure when we will return to the office. Please send your letters to the addresses provided.

### 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?

Our priority during Write for Rights is as much the safety of the individuals we campaign for as the safety of our supporters. If you don't feel comfortable hosting an event (see page 19) during the current crisis, you don't have to. As an alternative, we have provided some online event ideas in a box on page 19.





# Join Amnesty International today to defend human rights

✉ [sct@amnesty.org.uk](mailto:sct@amnesty.org.uk)  
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