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## Real lives

Letter-writing changes lives.

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

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

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## Luke Symons Yemen



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### STOP PRESS

Luke Symons has been released. No further need to send appeals.

### Health concerns for detained British national

Luke Symons, 29, a British national, has been arbitrarily detained in Sana'a, Yemen, for five years. He was arrested on 4 April 2017 at a security checkpoint in Ta'iz by members of the Huthi armed group, simply because he had a British passport.

According to his relatives Luke, from Cardiff, has been accused of spying. However, he has not been charged with any crime, nor has he appeared in front of a judge. On 2 December 2018, the Sana'a-based Supreme Political Council of Yemen, the executive body set up by the Huthis, ordered his release for lack of evidence against him – but this has been ignored. He is currently in solitary confinement.

Luke's family say he endured torture and ill-treatment during interrogation to try to make him 'confess' to being a spy. In January 2022 his wife was able to visit him. She is deeply concerned about his deteriorating physical and mental health.

**APPEAL** Urge the Huthi de facto authorities to immediately release Luke Symons unless he is charged with a recognisable criminal offence. Pending his release, ask that he is protected from torture and other ill-treatment, and that he receives the medical care he needs, legal representation and regular access to his family. Please email or tweet your message, as the postal service to Yemen is currently suspended.

► Ansarullah Spokesperson  
Mohamed Abdelsalam  
Email: mdabdalsalam@gmail.com  
Twitter: @abdusalamalah

**Salutation:** Dear Mohamed Abdelsalam

## People with albinism Malawi



© AI

### In urgent need of protection

Thousands of people with albinism – particularly children – remain at constant risk of being attacked and killed in Malawi, where their body parts are sold for ritual purposes.

On 23 July 2021 Ian Muhamba, a 20-year-old man with albinism, disappeared during a trip to Blantyre, Malawi's second largest city. On 14 August, his buried remains were found, with body parts missing.

On 3 February, a 12-year-old girl with albinism narrowly survived abduction when two assailants broke into her home, while in January 26-year-old Saidi Dyton was abducted and killed.

Ritual killings of people with albinism are influenced by superstitions and myths that their bones or body parts can bring riches. The safety of people with albinism is further jeopardised by the failure of the authorities to prevent this violence; attacks range from killings to tampering with graves, abductions and physical violence.

**APPEAL** Urge the authorities in Malawi to institute measures to protect people with albinism from violence, and to investigate past abductions, killings and other attacks. Those deemed responsible should be tried fairly, and if found guilty their punishment should match the gravity of the offence.

► President of the Republic of Malawi  
His Excellency Lazarus Chakwera  
Office of the President and Cabinet  
Private Bag 301  
Capital City  
Lilongwe 3  
Malawi  
Twitter: @APMutharika  
Facebook: facebook.com/APMutharika

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

► His Excellency Dr Thomas John Bisika  
High Commissioner  
High Commission of the Republic of Malawi  
36 John Street  
London WC1N 2AT

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

## Stolen Sisters Canada



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### Violence against Indigenous women and girls

In Canada, First Nations, Métis and Inuit women and girls are at least three times more likely to experience violence and at least six times more likely to be murdered than other women and girls. Indigenous women's organisations have been sounding the alarm about the violence for decades.

According to a report released by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in May 2015, 1,017 Indigenous women and girls went missing or were murdered between 1980 and 2012. Not all cases are reported, so the actual number may be far higher.

In 2019 the Canadian government published the final report of a national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, setting out 231 Calls for Justice to address this violence.

In 2021, the federal government announced work was under way to create a National Action Plan to implement next steps, including support services for survivors and family members, public awareness and training. However little progress has been made.

**APPEAL** Urge the Prime Minister of Canada to ensure the safety of Indigenous women and girls, and to bring those responsible for violence against them to justice. Ask that regular, comprehensive data is recorded on violence against Indigenous women in official crime statistics.

► Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada K1A 0A2  
Email: pm@pm.gc.ca

**Salutation:** Dear Prime Minister

► His Excellency Mr Ralph Edward Goodale  
High Commissioner  
High Commission of Canada  
Canada House  
Trafalgar Square  
London SW1Y 5BJ

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Ibrahim Ezz el-Din  
Egypt

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**STOP PRESS**

Ibrahim Ezz el-Din has been released. No further need to send appeals.

**Housing rights activist back in detention**

On 11 June 2019, housing rights activist Ibrahim Ezz el-Din was arrested by plainclothes police in the street near his home. For 167 days, the authorities denied they were holding him. He reappeared on 26 November 2019, when he was brought before a prosecutor to be charged with unfounded 'terrorism' offences. In the meantime, he had been held in secret detention centres, questioned about his work and repeatedly subjected to torture including electric shocks, beatings and threats to his life.

Ibrahim worked on housing rights at the Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms. He investigated forced evictions and researched Egypt's urban planning policies.

On 27 December 2020 the Cairo Criminal Court ordered Ibrahim's release but just six days later, he was charged with new offences of 'belonging to a terrorist group'. He remains in prison in Cairo.

Ibrahim has been targeted because of his work on the right to adequate housing.

**APPEAL** Urge the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Ibrahim Ezz el-Din. Pending his release, call for him to be given access to his lawyers, family and adequate health care. Urge them to investigate his enforced disappearance and torture and prosecute those responsible.

► Public Prosecutor Hamada al-Sawi  
Office of the Public Prosecutor  
Madinat al-Rehab  
Cairo  
Arab Republic of Egypt  
Email: m.office@ppo.gov.eg

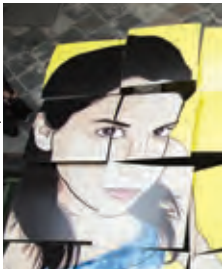
**Salutation:** Dear Counsellor

► His Excellency Mr Sherif Ahmed Mahmoud Kamel  
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt  
26 South Street  
London W1K 1DW

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Karla Pontigo  
Mexico

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**Justice for victim of femicide**

On 28 October 2012, Karla Pontigo was found in her workplace severely injured. She died in hospital the next day. The Attorney General of San Luis Potosí concluded that the death of the 22-year-old was an accident. Yet her injuries were inconsistent with the alleged accident and the autopsy recorded evidence of sexual assault.

On 13 November 2019, the National Supreme Court of Justice ordered the Public Prosecutor's Office to open a new investigation, taking into account that Karla may have been murdered because of her gender. The new investigation was opened in August 2020.

In 2020, the killings of 3,723 women were registered in Mexico, of which 940 were investigated as femicides – women murdered because of their gender. Investigations are often flawed because evidence is lost and a gender perspective is not applied correctly, so this case must be investigated carefully.

In May 2021, a statue in memory of Karla Pontigo was installed in San Luis Potosí as part of the reparation for her killing. But the killing itself remains unpunished.

**APPEAL** Ask the San Luis Potosí Attorney General's Office to ensure a thorough investigation into Karla's death, and bring to justice the authorities for the negligent first investigation. Urge the State of San Luis Potosí to start the process of integral reparation to Karla's family.

► Attorney General San Luis Potosí  
Federico Arturo Garza Herrera  
Eje Vial Ponciano Arriago No. 100  
Zona Centro, 78000 San Luis, SLP  
Mexico  
Email: fiscaliageneralslp@outlook.com  
Twitter: @FiscaliaSLP  
Facebook: www.facebook.com/FiscaliaSLP

**Salutation:** Ministro

► Her Excellency Ms Josefa Gonzalez Blanco Ortiz Mena  
Embassy of Mexico  
16 St George Street  
London W1S 1FD

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Hwang Won  
North Korea

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**Missing for more than 50 years**

It is 53 years since Hwang Won, a former TV producer from South Korea, 'disappeared' after arriving involuntarily in North Korea. He is among hundreds of people who have vanished in connection with illegal operations of North Korean agents after the Korean War.

On 11 December 1969, an aeroplane travelling from the South Korean city of Gangneung to the capital, Seoul, was hijacked to North Korea. Thirty-nine passengers returned to South Korea in February 1970, but 11 were held in North Korea, including Hwang Won.

Despite repeated requests from his family, the North Korean authorities have refused to confirm where Hwang Won has been for all these years, or whether he is alive or dead. After piecing together limited information from a broker who took people out of North Korea, his son Hwang In-cheol has strong reason to believe that his father is still alive.

**APPEAL** Urge the President of South Korea to ask the North Korean authorities to immediately investigate the cases of Hwang Won and others who may be held in North Korea against their will; to provide accurate information about their fate; and respect their right to return to South Korea.

► President of South Korea  
Yoon Suk-yeol  
1 Cheongwadae-ro, Jongno-gu  
Seoul 03048  
Republic of Korea  
Email: president@president.go.kr  
Twitter: @bluehousekorea  
Facebook: /TheBlueHouseKR

**Salutation:** Dear President Yoon

► His Excellency Mr Gunn Kim  
Embassy of the Republic of Korea  
60 Buckingham Gate  
London SW1E 6AJ

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

## Eren Keskin Turkey

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### Human rights lawyer persecuted

Amnesty is renewing calls to protect prominent human rights lawyer Eren Keskin.

Eren has been repeatedly subjected to death threats, physical attacks and sustained judicial harassment because of her outspoken stand against human rights violations in Turkey. She has been brought before the Turkish courts more than 100 times, and also had fines and suspended sentences.

In February 2021, she was sentenced to six years and three months in prison for supposed 'membership of an armed terrorist organisation'. She was convicted under Article 301 of the Penal Code, which makes 'denigrating' the Turkish nation a criminal offence.

This case is part of the *Özgür Gündem* trial, which concerns a daily newspaper that was closed in 2016. Eren Keskin currently remains at liberty pending her appeal.

**APPEAL** Urge the Minister of Justice to overturn Eren Keskin's conviction and that all outstanding cases against her as editor-in-chief of *Özgür Gündem* are dropped. State that she must be allowed to exercise her right to freedom of expression and to carry out her human rights work free from reprisals and judicial harassment.

► Minister of Justice  
Mr Bekir Bozdağ  
Adalet Bakanlığı  
06659 Ankara  
Turkey  
info@adalet.gov.tr  
Twitter: @bybekirbozdag

**Salutation:** Dear Minister

► His Excellency Mr Ümit Yalçın  
Embassy of the Republic of Turkey  
43 Belgrave Square  
London SW1X 8PA

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

## Mordechai Vanunu Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories

© Adeline O'Keefe



### Years of post-release persecution

Israeli nuclear whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu lives under highly punitive restrictions imposed on him since he was released from jail in 2004.

The former technician at the top-secret Negev Nuclear Research Centre served 18 years in prison, including 11 years in solitary confinement, for treason, after revealing information about Israel's nuclear capacity to the *Sunday Times* in 1986. In the same year he was abducted in Rome by Israeli secret service agents and secretly taken to Israel to stand trial.

Since his release, he has been forbidden from travelling to certain areas in Israel and abroad, talking to foreigners and participating in internet chats, among other conditions which violate his rights to freedom of movement, expression and assembly. He has been imprisoned several times for breaching these restrictions, most recently in 2016 when he was sentenced to six months in prison.

The Supreme Court has refused all his appeals to lift the restrictions, which are renewed every year. Israeli officials contend that restricting his freedom is necessary to prevent him from divulging any further secrets.

In February 2022, Mordechai tweeted:  
'No freedom yet, soon or later this case must be closed, too long waiting to be free to leave.'

**APPEAL** Call on the Israeli authorities to immediately lift the restrictions imposed on Mordechai Vanunu. Urge them to allow him to leave the country if he wishes, and to exercise his rights to freedom of movement, association and expression in Israel.

► Prime Minister Naftali Bennett  
Office of the Prime Minister  
3 Kaplan St.  
Hakirya  
Jerusalem 91950  
Israel

**Salutation:** Dear Prime Minister

► Her Excellency Mrs Tzipora Hotovely  
Embassy of Israel  
2 Palace Green  
Kensington  
London W8 4QB

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

## Peace Community of San José de Apartadó Colombia

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### In danger for wanting peace

The people of the San José de Apartadó founded their community in order to assert their right not to be drawn into Colombia's armed conflict. But because they refuse to take sides, all the warring parties treat them as enemies.

Since the Peace Community was formed in 1997, more than 170 members have been killed or subjected to enforced disappearances, with many more being threatened and sexually assaulted.

The community of 600 people are in constant danger but the authorities have failed to take effective action to protect them. Despite numerous investigations launched into the abuses, little progress has been made in bringing those responsible to account.

**APPEAL** Urge the government implement protection measures agreed by the community to guarantee their safety. Ask for all the human rights abuses against the community to be investigated with those responsible being brought to justice.

► The Director  
The National Protection Unit  
Carrera 63 # 14 – 97/Primer Piso  
Puente Aranda, Bogotá D.C.  
Colombia  
Email: correspondencia@unp.gov.co

**Salutation:** Dear Director

► His Excellency Mr Alvaro Gomez Jaramillo  
Embassy of Colombia  
3 Hans Crescent  
London SW1X 0LN

**Salutation:** Your Excellency