

40 YEARS OF URGENT ACTIONS



9 MARCH 1973

Urgent Action is born – the first is for Professor Luiz Basilio Rossi, Brazilian trade unionist.



1992

Urgent Action for Aung San Suu Kyi, still under house arrest.



2000s

Rise of the internet means a growing need to protect those who express opinions online.

1980s

Urgent Action expands to include victims of both political and non-political human rights abuses.

1980

Urgent Action for South Korea opposition leader Kim Dae Jung – later president and Nobel Peace Prize winner.



1993

Vera Chirwa from Malawi, Africa's longest serving prisoner of conscience, is finally released. *'If it had not been for Amnesty International, I would not be standing before you today.'*



2011

The UK Urgent Action Network has 10,000 members.

2011

The first Urgent Action SMS (text message) is sent from the UK.

2012

92 Urgent Actions for cases in Syria.

8 FEBRUARY 2013

Chinese human rights activist Mao Hengfeng is allowed to spend the rest of her sentence at home. She thanks Amnesty supporters, and is convinced she owes her release to international and domestic pressure.



1989:

The Velvet Revolution sweeps across Czechoslovakia. Urgent Action for playwright and poet Václav Havel, later Czech president.



1993

More than 25,000 faxes are sent from Amnesty's Urgent Action stall at the UN World Conference on Human Rights.

1993

'We cannot use fax machines due to your continuous engagement of it' – message from the Egyptian Embassy in London. *'We will stop blocking faxes when governments stop blocking human rights'* – response from AIUK's Urgent Action team.

2000s

'War on terror' prompts many Urgent Actions for victims of torture, imprisonment without trial, and Guantánamo Bay detainees.

19 MARCH 2013

Urgent Action's 40th birthday.

We don't know who the next Urgent Action will be for or what human rights issue it will highlight, but we hope you will stand with us and speak up for this individual whoever or wherever they are. To join the UK Urgent Action Network, visit www.amnesty.org.uk/ua

