

WRITE A LETTER

CHANGE A LIFE

**WRITE
FOR
RIGHTS**

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



WRITE FOR RIGHTS

MORE THAN 20 YEARS OF WRITING

LETTERS THAT CHANGE LIVES

When just a handful of people unite behind someone, the results can be amazing.

Some 20 years ago, a small group of activists in Poland ran a 24-hour letter-writing marathon. Over the following years, the idea spread. Today, Write for Rights is the world's biggest human rights event.

From 2,326 letters in 2001 to more than 5.3 million letters, tweets, petition signatures and other actions in 2022, people the world over have used the power of their words to unite behind the idea that geography is no barrier to solidarity. Together, these individuals have helped transform the lives of more than 100 people over the years, freeing them from torture, harassment or unjust imprisonment.

Once again, this year's campaign features people from around the world, all connected because their human rights have been violated. Some by their governments, others by the police, or even big corporations. All because of who they are or because they simply exercised their rights. Together, we can fight for their rights. Through Write for Rights, they will receive personalized messages of solidarity from thousands of people across the globe. The awareness that their situations are gaining public attention offers reassurance to them and their families that they are not forgotten. And by writing directly to the authorities to demand they take immediate action to remedy injustice we can create a more just and equal world.

Alongside the letter-writing actions, Amnesty International speaks to those who have the power to change these people's situations, such as politicians in their countries. Write for Rights also gives visibility to these injustices through public events, and garners international attention on social media.

Individuals and groups featured in the campaign in previous years report the difference that these actions make, and often describe the strength they derive from knowing that so many people care about them.

Often, there is a noticeable change in the treatment of these individuals, and of other people and groups in a similar situation, by the country's authorities. Charges may be dropped and people released from detention. People are treated more humanely, and new laws or regulations addressing the injustice are introduced.

“From the bottom of my heart, this campaign has kept me alive, it's what has stopped them from killing me because they know that you are there”

Jani Silva,
environmental defender, 2021

BEFORE YOU START

This **human rights education activity** can take place in a variety of online or offline settings, such as a school classroom, a community group, a family or an activist group. As a facilitator, you can adapt the activity to best suit the context and group you are working with. For example, you may want to consider what knowledge the group already has about the issues discussed, the size of your group and how to best organize the activity to allow for active participation, the physical setting of your activity, delivering it in-person or online, and any limitations. When participants want to take action on a case, discuss whether it is safe for them to do so.

The activities are all based on **participatory learning methods** in which learners are not merely presented with information; they explore, discuss, analyse and question issues relating to the cases. This methodology allows participants to:

DEVELOP key competencies and skills

FORM their own opinions, raise questions and gain a deeper understanding of the issues presented

TAKE CONTROL of their learning, and shape discussions according to their interests, abilities and concerns

HAVE THE SPACE required for them to engage emotionally and develop their own attitudes.



Letter writing event in Antwerp, Belgium, for Write for Rights 2022.

Read about the people we're fighting for:
[amnesty.org/writeforrights](https://www.amnesty.org/writeforrights)

Contact the Amnesty team in your country:
[amnesty.org/countries](https://www.amnesty.org/countries)

Tweet your support to
[@Amnesty](https://twitter.com/Amnesty) using the hashtag #W4R23

If you are not familiar with participatory learning methods, look at Amnesty International's **Facilitation Manual** before you start: [amnesty.org/en/documents/ACT35/020/2011/en/](https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ACT35/020/2011/en/)

Amnesty International offers online human rights education courses, including a short course about human rights defenders which introduces the **Write for Rights campaign**: academy.amnesty.org/learn



YOUR WORDS ARE POWERFUL

ACTIVISTS ACQUITTED

After leading an anti-government protest in May 2020, Cecillia Chimhiri, Joanah Mamombe and Netsai Marova were arrested, taken to a police station, forced into an unmarked car, and driven out of the city of Harare, Zimbabwe. They were subsequently beaten, tortured and left on the side of the road. While hospitalized, the women were charged with criminal offences relating to the protest. Later, they were also charged with communicating falsehoods and obstructing the course of justice, for speaking about their ordeal. Netsai fled Zimbabwe following the attack. After featuring in Write for Rights 2022, where more than half a million actions were taken on their behalf, Cecillia and Joanah were acquitted by the High Court on 4 July 2023.



© Amnesty International/Vongai Chikwanda/Kuramiah Moodley



FREED FROM DEATH ROW

Magai Matiop Ngong from South Sudan was just a schoolboy when he was sentenced to death on 14 November 2017 for murder. Magai recounted how he told the judge the death was an accident and that he was only 15 years old at the time. Yet Magai was tried for capital murder without any access to a lawyer. More than 700,000 actions were taken for Magai during Write for Rights 2019. In March 2022 the High Court agreed that, because he had been a child at the time, he should be released. Magai is now safely out of the country and determined more than ever to help people like him.

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER FREED

Bernardo Caal'Xol, a teacher and father, worked tirelessly to defend communities affected by hydroelectric projects on the Cahabón river, in northern Guatemala. In November 2018 he was sentenced to more than seven years in prison on bogus charges aimed at preventing his human rights work. During Write for Rights 2021, more than half a million actions were taken for Bernardo and, in March 2022, he was released from prison.



© Simone Dalmaso



ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections that belong to every single one of us. They are based on principles of dignity, equality and mutual respect – regardless of age, nationality, gender, race, beliefs and personal orientations.

Your rights are about being treated fairly and treating others fairly, and having the ability to make choices about your own life. These basic human rights are universal – they belong to all of us; everybody in the world. They are inalienable – they cannot be taken away from us. And they are indivisible and interdependent – they are all of equal importance and are interrelated.

Since the atrocities committed during World War II, international human rights instruments, beginning with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, have provided a solid framework for national, regional and international legislation designed to improve lives around the world. Human rights can be seen as laws for governments. They create obligations for governments and state officials to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of those within their jurisdiction and also abroad.

Human rights are not luxuries to be met only when practicalities allow.



© Amnesty International Togo

Launch of Write for Rights 2022 in Lomé, Togo.

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF Human Rights

UNITED NATIONS

(The booklet contains the full text of the 30 articles of the UDHR in English, French, and Spanish.)

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (UDHR)

The UDHR was drawn up by the newly formed United Nations in the years immediately following World War II. Since its adoption on 10 December 1948, it has formed the backbone of the international human rights system. Every country in the world has agreed to be bound by the general principles expressed within the 30 articles of this document.

The UDHR itself is, as its name suggests, a declaration. It is a declaration of intent by every government around the world that they will abide by certain standards in the treatment of individual human beings. Human rights have become part of international law: since the adoption of the UDHR, numerous other binding laws and agreements have been drawn up on the basis of its principles. It is these laws and agreements which provide the basis for organizations like Amnesty International to call on governments to refrain from the type of behaviour or treatment that the people highlighted in our Write for Rights cases have experienced.

© UN Photo

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

 <p>CIVIL RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES Right to life, freedom from torture and slavery, right to non-discrimination.</p>	<p>Article 1 Freedom and equality in dignity and rights</p> <p>Article 2 Non-discrimination</p> <p>Article 3 Right to life, liberty and security of person</p> <p>Article 4 Freedom from slavery</p> <p>Article 5 Freedom from torture</p>
 <p>LEGAL RIGHTS Right to be presumed innocent, right to a fair trial, right to be free from arbitrary arrest or detention.</p>	<p>Article 6 All are protected by the law</p> <p>Article 7 All are equal before the law</p> <p>Article 8 A remedy when rights have been violated</p> <p>Article 9 No unjust detention, imprisonment or exile</p> <p>Article 10 Right to a fair trial</p> <p>Article 11 Innocent until proven guilty</p> <p>Article 14 Right to go to another country and ask for protection</p>
 <p>SOCIAL RIGHTS Right to education, to found and maintain a family, to recreation, to health care.</p>	<p>Article 12 Privacy and the right to home and family life</p> <p>Article 13 Freedom to live and travel freely within state borders</p> <p>Article 16 Right to marry and start a family</p> <p>Article 24 Right to rest and leisure</p> <p>Article 26 Right to education, including free primary education</p>
 <p>ECONOMIC RIGHTS Right to property, to work, to housing, to a pension, to an adequate standard of living.</p>	<p>Article 15 Right to a nationality</p> <p>Article 17 Right to own property and possessions</p> <p>Article 22 Right to social security</p> <p>Article 23 Right to work for a fair wage and to join a trade union</p> <p>Article 25 Right to a standard of living adequate for your health and well-being</p>
 <p>POLITICAL RIGHTS Right to participate in the government of the country, right to vote, right to peaceful assembly, freedoms of expression, belief and religion</p>	<p>Article 18 Freedom of belief (including religious belief)</p> <p>Article 19 Freedom of expression and the right to spread information</p> <p>Article 20 Freedom to join associations and meet with others in a peaceful way</p> <p>Article 21 Right to take part in the government of your country</p>
 <p>CULTURAL RIGHTS, SOLIDARITY RIGHTS Right to participate in the cultural life of the community.</p>	<p>Article 27 Right to share in your community's cultural life</p> <p>Article 28 Right to an international order where all these rights can be fully realized</p> <p>Article 29 Responsibility to respect the rights of others</p> <p>Article 30 No taking away any of these rights!</p>

ACTIVITY

HUMAN RIGHTS: EMPATHY IN ACTION

KEY CONCEPTS

- Human rights
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Individuals at risk

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Participants are introduced to the individuals in the 2023 Write for Rights campaign and match the human rights that are at risk to those provided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). As part of the activity, participants are encouraged to write letters and take other actions.

AGE: 12 TO 15+

Please read the stories first to check they are appropriate for the participants

TIME NEEDED

90 minutes – you may want additional time for the **Take Action** section.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Participants will:

- understand** the concept of human rights and its importance.
- identify** how human rights connect to their own lives.
- gain knowledge** of human rights situations in different countries through real-life stories.
- learn** about Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign.
- write** letters in support of and showing solidarity with individuals at risk.

MATERIALS

- Handout: UDHR Article Cards** (page 10)
- Handout: Daily Action Cards** (page 11)
- Handout: Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) simplified version** (page 5)
- Handout: Story Cards** (pages 13-22)
- Handout: Take Action Cards** (pages 13-22)
- Paper, pens and envelopes** (if sending letters)
- Optional: World Map (page 12)
- Optional: Template letters from [amnesty.org/writeforrights/](https://www.amnesty.org/writeforrights/)

PREPARATION

- Read the Story Cards and select which cases to work on.
- Print the handouts for each participant/group.

MORE INFORMATION

- More specific 60-minute activities for the individual stories from Australia, Brazil, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, South Africa, United Arab Emirates and the USA can be found here: www.amnesty.org/writeforrights
- Take the Write for Rights short course at academy.amnesty.org/learn/course/external/view/elearning/145/write-for-rights-a-short-guide

PRECAUTIONS

Some of the cases featured in this activity include concepts that might be triggering or upsetting for participants, such as police violence, racial discrimination and abortion. Familiarize yourself thoroughly with the content and anticipate potential areas of sensitivity. This will enable you to navigate the discussions with empathy and understanding. Prior to the activity, inform participants about the topics to be discussed and provide them with the option to change groups to work on a different case, or to step out if they feel uncomfortable at any point. Regularly check in with your participants during the activity to gauge their comfort levels. This can be done through non-verbal cues, private dialogue or brief pauses for reflection. During and after the activity, allow participants to express their feelings and thoughts about the activity. This can help them process any strong emotions they might have experienced.

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY

The entire activity is designed to take approximately 90 minutes to complete. It is strongly recommended to follow all the steps, as each activity builds upon the previous one, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the topic. If you're conducting this activity in a classroom setting, you might need to allocate two sessions to cover all the activities. Alternatively, if participants already have an understanding of human rights, you might choose to skip Activity 2 and adjust the instructions accordingly.

1. INTRODUCING HUMAN RIGHTS

Start the lesson by asking the participants:

- What are human rights?
- Why are they important?

Encourage them to share their thoughts and ideas. After hearing from several participants, summarize their thoughts, and provide a brief definition and explanation of the importance of human rights. Use information from page 4 to guide the conversation.

Then, ask them: **Which human rights do you know?** Use this as an opportunity to introduce the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) if it hasn't been mentioned yet.



2. MATCH RIGHTS WITH DAILY LIFE

 **25 MINUTES**

Divide participants into small groups and distribute copies of the 10 **UDHR Article Cards** and 10 **Daily Action Cards** to each group (pages 10 and 11). Ask the groups to match the rights with the examples (that is, which Daily Action Card can be applied to which UDHR Article Card).

Regroup and ask participants to discuss their answers. They should look like this:

Article 19: A	Article 26: E	Article 24: I
Article 25: B	Article 20: F	Article 27: J
Article 12: C	Article 3: G	
Article 13: D	Article 2: H	

There is more than one possible solution for some of the rights. This is a good opportunity to outline that rights are interconnected, meaning they often depend on each other. For instance, the right to health affects your right to education, as being healthy enables you to attend school and learn effectively. Thus, a limitation in one right can often indirectly limit another, underlining their interdependence.

3. REAL-LIFE STORIES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

 **40 MINUTES**

Explain the following to the participants:

“Having explored how human rights are woven into our everyday lives, let’s broaden our perspective. It is crucial to understand that the rights we take for granted are not universally respected or upheld everywhere, sometimes not even in our own country. By studying different cases from around the world, we can appreciate the challenges others face, recognize the importance of advocating for these rights, and gain insights into how we can contribute to a more just and equal world. It is not just about knowing our rights, but also understanding our role in protecting and promoting these rights globally.”

Divide the participants into small groups or pairs and give each group one of the **Story Cards** that you have selected to use (pages 13, 15, 17, 19 and 21) and a copy of the **UDHR** (page 5). Explain that this activity will introduce some real people living in different countries.

Ask each group to read about the person (or people) on their card. They can discuss their ideas together. They should:

- Draw up a list of what they think is wrong or unfair about what happened to this person or the way the person is being treated, and identify which human rights are connected to this case.
- Prepare to present their person to the rest of the participants, by focusing on:
 - Who is this person? What is their life story?
 - Where are they from?
 - What happened to them?
 - Which human rights are violated?
 - Who do you think is responsible for these human rights violations?

After about 20 minutes, invite everyone back together and ask each group to briefly introduce their case to the others and list the injustices they have found. Debrief by asking:

- **Upon hearing about these stories, is there anything that surprises or shocks you?**
- **Are there similarities between some of the stories?**

OPTIONAL: Use the **world map** (page 12) to locate the country and case that each group is working on. Ask the participants what stands out when looking at the world map and why it is important that we care about these cases and act upon them. Highlight that human rights

violations can happen in any country and in any region in the world, no matter whether the country is rich or poor, at war or in crisis or seemingly peaceful and safe. Human rights are not just about 'other' people; they are about everyone, everywhere. This is why it is important to learn about our rights and to defend them and the rights of others.

4. TAKE ACTION

Tell participants about Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign and explain that Amnesty International is calling on people to write letters to the individuals affected, and also to the authorities responsible for protecting, respecting and fulfilling their human rights. Explain that the people on the cards have all been included in this year's campaign. You can give examples from last year's campaign (page 3) demonstrating how successful writing letters and taking other actions can be, or watch this one-minute video from Moses Akatugba who was freed from death row thanks to the actions of people during Write for Rights 2014: youtu.be/8cU6EPY5r_c (available in English only).

If there isn't enough time for participants to take action within the time allowed, encourage them to organize how to do so afterwards or divide the actions among the groups. Encourage them to be creative.



Show participants the videos of the people featured in this year's campaign which can be found here: amnesty.org/w4r-videos (available in English).

*Amnesty International Netherlands
letter-writing event at Loevestein Castle,
Netherlands, in 2021.*





WRITE A LETTER

Ask participants to choose one of the people whose cases they have learned about, and give them a copy of the **Take Action Card** for that person. Tell the participants that their letters will be sent to the authorities responsible for protecting that person's human rights.

Give everyone letter writing materials and allow time for them to write their letters. Explain that a personal message to the officials can have the most impact. Ask them to:

- Write something about themselves.
- Tell the official what shocks them about the case.
- Say why they think it is important that governments respect human rights.

If people wish to share their letters afterwards, provide an opportunity for them to do so.

Conclude by asking participants to use a few words to express their feelings at the end of the activity. Try to take contributions from everyone.

SHOW SOLIDARITY

If you have time, you can also do some of the solidarity actions on the Take Action Cards. The solidarity letters are often a great source of support and strength for the people featured in these cases.

Learn more about other activities in the Write for Rights campaign at [amnesty.org/writeforrights/](https://www.amnesty.org/writeforrights/)

Amnesty International Mongolia letter-writing event in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 2022.



HANDOUT

UDHR ARTICLE CARDS

ARTICLE 19:
RIGHT TO FREEDOM
OF EXPRESSION

ARTICLE 25:
RIGHT TO HEALTH

ARTICLE 12:
RIGHT TO PRIVACY

ARTICLE 13:
RIGHT TO FREEDOM
OF MOVEMENT

ARTICLE 26:
RIGHT TO EDUCATION

ARTICLE 20:
RIGHT TO FREEDOM
OF ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE 3:
RIGHT TO LIFE AND TO LIVE
IN FREEDOM AND SAFETY

ARTICLE 2:
RIGHT TO FREEDOM
FROM DISCRIMINATION

ARTICLE 24:
RIGHT TO REST AND
LEISURE

ARTICLE 27:
RIGHT TO ENJOY
CULTURAL LIFE

HANDOUT

DAILY ACTION CARDS

A *During a class discussion, I can argue for themes that matter to me, like the importance of combating climate change, even if some of my classmates or my teachers have different opinions.*

C *When I received vaccinations at a government-run clinic, my parents were reassured that my medical records would be kept confidential. They wouldn't be accessed by anyone other than authorized healthcare professionals involved in my care.*

E *Even if we don't live in the richest part of town, I can still go to school and study, and I receive the same lessons and opportunities for learning and growth as other children my age.*

G *Every day, when I ride my bike or walk to school, I know there are traffic laws, pedestrian crossings and other safety measures in place to help protect me and ensure I get there safely.*

I *After doing my daily homework and chores, I have time to play sports with my friends, explore my hobbies, or just relax and listen to some music.*

B *Whether it's a physical illness or stress from school, I know I can seek help from professionals like doctors or counsellors, regardless of my family's income.*

D *I can take a bus to the city library, bike to a nearby town or travel with my family to other parts of the country during vacations.*

F *Whether it's for a study group, a peaceful protest about an issue I care about, or an online community of artists, I can join and spend time with others who share my similar interests.*

H *I am treated with the same respect and kindness by my teacher and classmates as any other student. I am not excluded from activities or made fun of because of who I am or where I am from.*

J *I can visit museums, join a local theater group, or take part in a cultural dance workshop. I can also organize events to share my own cultural traditions with my classmates.*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

WORLD MAP

The individuals in this year's Write for Rights campaign come from 10 different countries around the world. By taking part in the campaign, you can show that geography is no barrier to solidarity.



ROCKY MYERS
USA



CHAIMA ISSA
TUNISIA



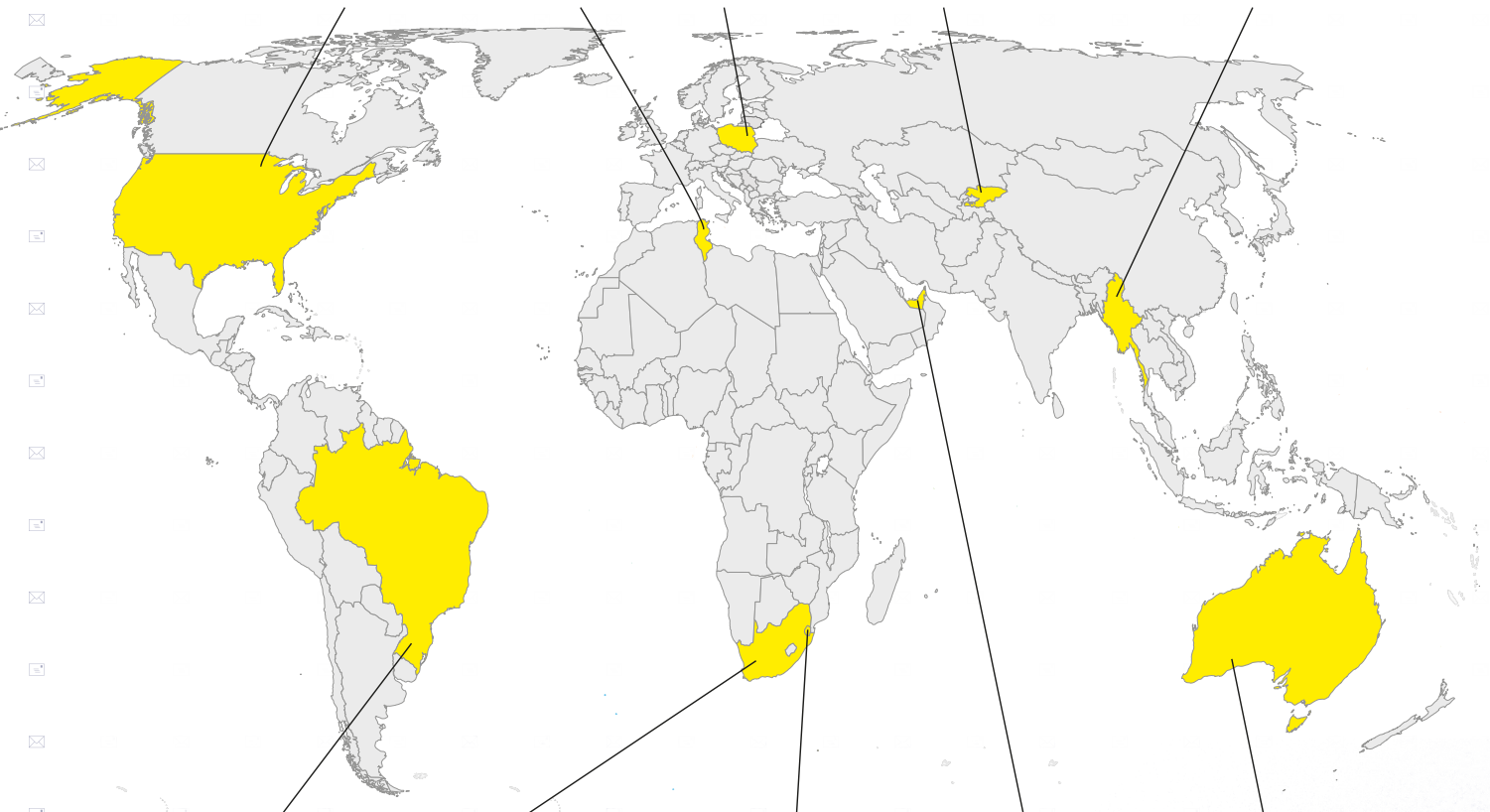
JUSTYNA WYDRZYŃSKA
POLAND



RITA KARASARTOVA
KYRGYZSTAN



MAUNG SAWYEDDOLLAH
MYANMAR



ANA MARIA SANTOS CRUZ
BRAZIL



THAPELO MOHAPI
SOUTH AFRICA



THULANI MASEKO
ESWATINI



AHMED MANSOOR
UAE



UNCLE PABAI & UNCLE PAUL
AUSTRALIA



UNCLE PABAI AND UNCLE PAUL Australia

FIGHTING TO SAVE THEIR ANCESTRAL LANDS

Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul are community leaders from the Guda Maluyligal Nation in the northernmost part of Australia in the Torres Strait. Their Indigenous ancestors have lived on the islands for thousands of years.

Now, because of climate change, their way of life, traditional knowledge systems, cultural practices and spiritual connections that have been passed down from generation to generation could be broken forever. Rising sea levels are causing more destruction each year by eroding beaches, destroying sacred cultural sites and cemeteries where their ancestors are buried, wrecking food gardens and putting the islands' infrastructure at risk.

Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul – who are referred to as “uncle” by their communities as a sign of respect – have

turned to the courts. They argue that the Australian government is taking insufficient action to prevent harm from climate change, resulting in the destruction of their lands and culture.

Unless urgent action is taken, many Torres Strait Islanders will be forced to leave their homelands in the coming years as large parts become uninhabitable. This would be devastating to the communities. As Uncle Pabai says:
“We are born to these islands, they are our mothers, our identities, who we are. For thousands of years, our warrior families fought off anyone who tried to take our homelands from us. But now, we could lose the fight to climate change.”



WRITE FOR RIGHTS

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

STORY CARD

ANA MARIA SANTOS CRUZ Brazil

A MOTHER'S FIGHT FOR JUSTICE

Ana Maria Santos Cruz is a loving mother. She enjoys attending concerts and cultural events with her daughter in Salvador, Brazil. However, since the death of her son, Pedro Henrique, Ana Maria feels like a part of her has been taken away.

In his short life, Pedro Henrique achieved a lot. An activist and advocate of racial justice and human rights, Pedro Henrique organized ‘Walks of Peace’ in his hometown of Tucano, in Bahia, Brazil. These annual marches brought people together to speak out about police abuses primarily against Black communities.

These moments of solidarity were met with hostility and intimidation from the police. Officers began to monitor Pedro Henrique. They threatened and violently attacked him for his activism. On 27

December 2018, at the age of 31, Pedro Henrique was killed. His house was raided by three hooded men as he slept next to his girlfriend. He was shot eight times in the head and neck. His girlfriend recognized the three men as police officers.

The officers suspected of killing Pedro Henrique were indicted in 2019. But, almost five years later, they are still active in the police force. The investigation into the killing has not been concluded and the trial has yet to begin.

Despite ongoing threats and the grief of losing her child, Ana Maria has bravely sought the truth about his death, calling on the authorities to conduct a thorough investigation and to put those responsible on trial.



WRITE FOR RIGHTS

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

STORY CARD

TELL AUSTRALIA TO TAKE URGENT CLIMATE ACTION

WRITE TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA

Demand the rights of First Nations communities in the Torres Strait are protected, by rapidly reducing carbon emissions in line with the world commitment of limiting global warming to 1.5°C in line with the best available scientific research.

Prime Minister of Australia
PO box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Email: pm.gov.au/contact
Facebook: facebook.com/AlboMP
Twitter / X: [@AlboMP](https://twitter.com/AlboMP)
Instagram: [@albomp](https://www.instagram.com/albomp)

Hashtags: #PabaiVCmth #W4R23

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

SHOW UNCLE PABAI, UNCLE PAUL AND THEIR COMMUNITIES THAT YOU SUPPORT THEM

Send your messages of support to show the Peoples of the Torres Strait that you support them in their fight to protect their island homes.

Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul
c/o Amnesty International Australia
Locked bag 23
Broadway, NSW, 2007
Australia

Email: pm.gov.au/contact
Facebook: facebook.com/AlboMP
Twitter / X: [@AlboMP](https://twitter.com/AlboMP)
Instagram: [@albomp](https://www.instagram.com/albomp)

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Broadway, NSW, 2007
Australia

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TAKE ACTION CARD



© Tatei Elu

SUPPORT ANA MARIA IN HER FIGHT FOR JUSTICE

WRITE TO THE GENERAL PROSECUTOR

Demand they take all necessary measures to ensure an independent, impartial and thorough investigation into Pedro Henrique's murder and bring those responsible to justice in fair trials.

General Prosecutor of Bahia
Ministério Público do Estado da Bahia
Quinta Avenida, nº 750, 1º andar
sala 129, do CAB (Centro
Administrativo da Bahia)
CEP 41.745-004
Salvador, BA
Brazil

Salutation: Dear General Prosecutor

Twitter / X: [@MPdaBahia](https://twitter.com/MPdaBahia)

Hashtags:
#JusticeForPedroHenrique
#W4R23

SHOW ANA MARIA SHE'S NOT ALONE

Send your messages of solidarity to help keep Ana Maria's spirits strong.

Ana Maria Santos Cruz
c/o Amnesty International Brazil
Rua da Gloria, 344
Rooms 302 and 304
Gloria
CEP 20241-180
Rio de Janeiro
Brazil

Instagram:
[@justicaparapedrohenrique](https://www.instagram.com/justicaparapedrohenrique)

Hashtags:
#JusticeForPedroHenrique
#W4R23

WRITE
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INTERNATIONAL

TAKE ACTION CARD



© Amnesty International / Gabriel Vjalade

THULANI MASEKO

📍 Eswatini

KILLED IN HIS HOME FOR SPEAKING OUT

Thulani Maseko was a loving father and husband. He was a committed member of the Methodist church, a devoted human rights defender, and an ally to LGBTI people. People who knew Thulani described him as humble and friendly, with an incredible sense of humour.

After qualifying as a lawyer, Thulani fought tirelessly for the people of Eswatini, a country ruled by a wealthy absolute monarchy, and where approximately 60% of the population live under the poverty line. Thulani was openly critical of the country's repressive laws and excessive state violence used to silence peaceful protest.

Thulani knew the risk of speaking out was high. In 2014 he was arrested and charged with criminal contempt of court after writing two

news articles denouncing the lack of judicial independence and integrity in Eswatini. He spent over a year in prison. Undeterred, Thulani continued his human rights work, stating in 2016: "We shall never surrender, for we know there is a price to pay for the truth."

On 21 January 2023, Thulani paid the ultimate price. He was shot dead at close range, through the window of their home, in front of his wife, Tanele. Just hours earlier the king gave a speech stating that those calling for democratic reform would be "dealt with" and "people should not shed tears and complain about mercenaries killing them." To date no one has been held accountable for Thulani's killing.

WRITE FOR RIGHTS

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

STORY CARD



© Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria

RITA KARASARTOVA

📍 Kyrgyzstan

FACING 15 YEARS IN PRISON FOR PEACEFULLY PROTESTING

Rita Karasartova loves spending time with her children, practising yoga and sewing *chapans*, the traditional quilted jackets worn by people in Kyrgyzstan. But in October 2022, Rita's life was turned upside down. She was arrested and spent months detained in a cramped cell, denied access to healthcare and unable to see or speak to her family. Now she is under house arrest and a strict curfew.

Rita is a human rights defender and an expert in civic governance. For over a decade she dedicated her life to providing independent legal advice, helping people whose rights had been violated by a corrupt and unreliable legal system. She leads the non-governmental Institute for Public Analysis and is a member of the United

Democratic Movement of Kyrgyzstan, fighting against poverty and injustice.

Alongside 26 other people, Rita was arrested for opposing a new border agreement that gave control of a freshwater reservoir to neighbouring Uzbekistan. The group called for people to peacefully demonstrate against the agreement, demanding transparency from the government. Like others, Rita feared Uzbekistan would restrict or prohibit access to water, a scarce resource in the region where loss of access could have devastating consequences.

Rita and the others were initially detained for organizing "mass disorder", and she was charged with attempting to "violently overthrow the government", which carries a maximum sentence of 15 years' imprisonment.

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DEMAND JUSTICE FOR THULANI MASEKO

WRITE TO THE KING OF ESWATINI

Demand the unlawful killing of Thulani Maseko is effectively investigated, the people suspected of responsibility are brought to justice in a fair trial and that Thulani's family is provided access to effective remedies.

His Majesty King Mswati III
Office of the King
Lozitha Palace
PO box 1
Kwaluseni
Eswatini

Salutation: Your Majesty
Email: clerktoparl@swazi.net
Facebook: [facebook.com/EswatiniGov/](https://www.facebook.com/EswatiniGov/)
Twitter / X: [@EswatiniGovern1](https://twitter.com/EswatiniGovern1)

Hashtags: #JusticeForThulaniMaseko
#W4R23

SHOW THULANI'S FAMILY THAT THEY ARE NOT ALONE

Send Thulani's wife, Tanele, messages of hope and support.

Tanele Maseko
c/o Amnesty International Southern Africa
97 Oxford Road
Saxonwold
Johannesburg 2196
South Africa

Instagram: [@Tanele70](https://www.instagram.com/Tanele70)
Hashtags:
#JusticeForThulaniMaseko
#W4R23

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DEMAND RITA KARASARTOVA'S FREEDOM

WRITE TO THE GENERAL PROSECUTOR

Demand Rita is immediately released from house arrest, all charges against her are dropped and that she can carry out human rights activities without fear of retaliation.

General Prosecutor
A. Toktonaliev Street, 139
Bishkek
720040
Kyrgyz Republic

Salutation: Dear General Prosecutor
Email: statement@prokuror.kg
Facebook: [facebook.com/prokuraturakg](https://www.facebook.com/prokuraturakg)
Hashtag: #W4R23

KEEP RITA'S HOPE ALIVE

Let Rita know she is not alone by sending your messages and drawings of friendship and hope.

Rita Karasartova
c/o Civic Initiatives
Abdrakhmanova 204
Office 14
Bishkek
710040
Kyrgyz Republic

Email: freedomrita@protonmail.com
Facebook: [facebook.com/rita.karasartova](https://www.facebook.com/rita.karasartova)
Hashtag: #W4R23

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MAUNG SAWYEDDOLLAH

Myanmar

TAKING ON FACEBOOK FOR ITS ROLE IN MYANMAR ATROCITIES

Six years ago, life wasn't easy for Maung Sawyeddollah, but he enjoyed playing football and dreamed of becoming a doctor. However, in 2017, when he was 15, his life was upended.

The Myanmar military unleashed ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya – an ethnic minority who have faced decades of severe state-sponsored discrimination in Myanmar. Thousands of Rohingya were killed, raped, tortured and their villages burned.

Fearing for their lives, Sawyeddollah and his family walked for 15 days to Bangladesh. They reached Cox's Bazar refugee camp, where they still live.

Sawyeddollah now wants to be a lawyer, seeking justice for the suffering

around him. In addition to studying, he campaigns for Facebook's owner, Meta, to take responsibility for its contribution to the atrocities. Years before the attacks, Meta's algorithms amplified anti-Rohingya incitement on the Facebook platform, fuelling the Myanmar military's violence.

Sawyeddollah and his family have lost everything, but he still has hope. He and his community are calling on Meta to pay reparations for its role in the atrocities, including funding for educational programmes in Cox's Bazar. He believes that education will help rebuild the shattered lives of people in his community.

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JUSTYNA WYDRZYŃSKA

Poland

PROSECUTED FOR DEFENDING SAFE ABORTION

Justyna Wydrzyńska's own abortion experience, with no support or access to reliable information, gave her the strength and motivation to help others make informed decisions about their reproductive lives. Justyna co-founded Abortion Dream Team, an activist collective campaigning against abortion stigma and offering advice on accessing safe abortion in Poland, where abortion laws are among the most restrictive in Europe.

In February 2020, Justyna was put in contact with Ania (not her real name). Ania was in an abusive relationship, pregnant and desperate, saying she would rather die than continue with her pregnancy. Justyna, a survivor of a violent relationship herself, knew she had to help. She sent Ania her own abortion pills through the post, but Ania's partner intercepted the

package and contacted the police, who confiscated the pills.

In November 2021, the public prosecutor brought charges against Justyna for "helping with an abortion". In March 2023, she was found guilty and sentenced to eight months' community service. Her lawyers have appealed.

Justyna's conviction sets a dangerous precedent. Without the support and trustworthy information that she and other activists provide, people like Ania would be alone and without access to safe abortion.

Demonstrating her courage in spite of the hostility she faces, Justyna says: *"I was driven by the will to help when no one else wanted to or could help. For me, helping Ania was an obvious, decent and honest thing to do."*

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DEMAND META PROVIDES AN EFFECTIVE REMEDY

WRITE TO META'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE MARK ZUCKERBERG

Demand that Meta provides an effective remedy to Sawyeddollah and affected Rohingya communities, as it enabled hatred and discrimination against Rohingya people to thrive on the Facebook platform.

Mr Zuckerberg
Meta CEO
1 Hacker Way
Menlo Park, CA 94025
USA

Email: humanrightsteam@meta.com
Instagram: [@zuck](https://www.instagram.com/zuck)
Facebook: www.facebook.com/zuck

Hashtags: #PayUpMeta
#RohingyaRemediation
#RohingyaReparations #W4R23

Salutation: Dear Mr Zuckerberg

HELP KEEP SAWYEDDOLLAH'S SPIRIT STRONG

Send your messages of hope and solidarity, so Sawyeddollah knows he has your support in his fight for reparations.

Maung Sawyeddollah
c/o Amnesty International South Asia
Regional Office
23/2 Horton Place
Colombo 7
Sri Lanka

Twitter / X: [@M_Sawyed](https://twitter.com/M_Sawyed)
Hashtag: #W4R23

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© Mumin Uz Zaman/AFP via Getty Images

DEMAND THAT JUSTYNA'S UNJUST CONVICTION IS OVERTURNED

WRITE TO THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL

Tell them to take all necessary measures to ensure that Justyna's unjust conviction is overturned and to refrain from bringing any other charges against her for carrying out her legitimate defence of human rights.

Prosecutor General
National Prosecutor's Office
ul. Postępu 3
02-676 Warsaw
Poland

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

Email: biuro.podawcze.pk@prokuratura.gov.pl
Twitter / X: [@PK_GOV_PL](https://twitter.com/PK_GOV_PL)

Hashtags: #IAmJustyna #W4R23

HELP KEEP JUSTYNA'S SPIRIT STRONG

Send her your message of solidarity and hope.

Justyna Wydrzyńska
c/o Amnesty International Polska
Sapieżyńska 10A
00-215 Warsaw
Poland

Email: dla.justyny@amnesty.org.pl

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THAPELO MOHAPI AND ABAHLALI BASEMJONDOLO

South Africa

THREATENED FOR DEFENDING HIS COMMUNITY

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Thapelo Mohapi loves listening to jazz and supporting his favourite football teams, the Mamelodi Sundowns and Manchester City. But right now he can't enjoy these things like he used to. Since 2021, he has been forced to live in hiding because of threats to his life.

As general secretary of Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM), a vibrant and courageous grassroots movement, Thapelo has dedicated his life to fighting for the rights of people across South Africa, particularly in areas suffering economic hardship.

One such place is eKhenana, in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Most residents are economic migrants from rural South Africa who have moved to seek a better life. They cannot afford the high costs of living in the area and often end up making homes from tin, with little to no access to water or sanitation.

They also face police brutality, forced evictions and poor public services, among many other challenges.

Determined to improve lives in the community, AbM members in eKhenana have spoken out against cases of local government corruption and worked hard to improve life in their community by starting a school, farm, communal kitchen and shop. In return, they have been met not just with resistance but threats, harassment and intimidation from state officials who have incited violence against them. They have been victims of attempted and actual murders, violence, harassment and damage to their homes. In 2022 alone, three AbM members were killed in eKhenana.



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CHAIMA ISSA

Tunisia

FACING YEARS IN PRISON FOR SPEAKING OUT

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Speaking out for what she believes is right runs in activist Chaima Issa's blood. The daughter of a former political prisoner, Chaima speaks truth to power. Even if the cost is her freedom.

When Tunisian president Kais Saied suspended parliament, dismissed the prime minister and took executive control of the country in July 2021 citing emergency powers, Chaima was one of the first to publicly oppose him. Since his power grab, human rights in Tunisia are more fragile than ever. Freedom of expression is under attack. Military courts target critics of the government, and the legal system lacks independence.

After meeting foreign diplomats along with other Tunisian opposition figures to discuss the political situation in Tunisia,

Chaima was arrested on 22 February 2023 as part of an investigation for alleged "conspiracy". She was released on 13 July after more than four months of arbitrary detention, but the legal case is ongoing and the authorities have banned her from travelling abroad and "appearing in public spaces". A military court, which lacks independence, is also investigating Chaima for criticizing the authorities on a radio show. She faces decades in prison. But Chaima will not give up.



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DEMAND POLICE INVESTIGATE THE HARASSMENT AND KILLINGS

WRITE TO THE MINISTER OF POLICE

Demand a thorough, impartial, independent, transparent and effective investigation into the harassment and killings of AbM members, bringing suspected perpetrators to justice in fair trials and an end to the attacks against AbM members.

Minister of Police
Private bag X463
Pretoria
0001
South Africa

Salutation: Dear Minister

Twitter / X: [@SAPoliceService](#)
Facebook: [facebook.com/SAPoliceService](#)
Instagram: [@sapoliceservice_za](#)

Hashtags: #ProtectThapelo
#ProtectAbM #W4R23

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SHOW THAPELO AND ABM YOU'RE WITH THEM

Send your messages of friendship and hope, so they can keep up their fight for their communities.

Thapelo Mohapi and the AbM
movement
c/o Amnesty International South Africa
97 Oxford Road
Rosebank
Johannesburg
2196
South Africa

Twitter / X: [@abahlalibm](#)
Facebook: [facebook.com/abahlalibasemjondolo](#)
Instagram: [@abahlalibasemjondolo](#)

Hashtags: #ProtectThapelo
#ProtectAbM #W4R23



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DEMAND CHAIMA'S FULL FREEDOM

CONTACT THE PRESIDENT OF TUNISIA

Call on the Tunisian authorities to immediately drop the baseless investigation and other restrictions against Chaima Issa as they are related solely to the exercise of her human rights.

President's email: contact@carthage.tn

Salutation: Your Excellency

Facebook: [facebook.com/Presidence.tn/](#)

Twitter / X: [@TnPresidency](#)

Hashtag: #W4R23

SHOW CHAIMA THAT SHE IS NOT ALONE

Send Chaima messages of hope and solidarity. Let her know you support her in her fight for human rights in Tunisia.

Chaima Issa
c/o Amnesty International
Tunis Regional Office
24 Avenue de la livre
Les Berges du Lac 2
Tunis
Tunisia

Twitter: [@IssaaChaima](#)

Hashtags: #FreeChaima #W4R23

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AHMED MANSOOR

UAE

LOCKED UP FOR SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

Ahmed Mansoor is a loving father and husband. He's a poet, blogger and human rights defender. Right now, he is locked away in a cell in al-Sadr prison, Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). He spends his days in an isolation cell, with no access to books, pens or paper. He does not even have a bed.

His crime? Speaking the truth. Before his arrest, Ahmed was one of the few voices within the UAE providing the rest of the world with credible independent information about human rights violations in the country. He regularly raised concerns about the detention, torture and unfair trials of dissenting voices. He spoke about problems with the justice system and of domestic laws that breach international ones.

For this Ahmed is paying a high price. In March 2017, UAE security forces raided his home and arrested him. For over a year, no one, not even his family, knew where he was detained. In May 2018, Ahmed was sentenced to a decade in prison on charges including "insulting the UAE and its symbols".

Protesting about his prison conditions, Ahmed has twice resorted to hunger strikes, losing dangerous amounts of weight and putting his life at risk. Despite this he is only allowed outside three times a week, when guards remove all other prisoners from the yard and Ahmed spends the little time he has in the sunlight, alone.



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ROCKY MYERS

USA

THREE DECADES ON DEATH ROW

Rocky Myers is described by those who know him as gentle and kind. He loves his siblings, children and grandchildren, and they adore him. He played drums in his church choir. At the age of 11, Rocky was diagnosed with an intellectual disability. He finds reading hard and can't keep dates or times straight in his head. One night in 1991, in the town of Decatur, Alabama, his life changed forever.

An elderly white woman was murdered in a predominantly Black neighbourhood. Rocky, who is Black, lived across the street. Despite no evidence linking him to the scene of the murder, except for a video cassette recorder belonging to the victim which Rocky maintains he found abandoned in the street, Rocky was convicted of the crime.

Testimonies were tainted by inconsistencies and allegations of police pressure – one key witness later stated that he had lied. An overwhelmingly white jury found him guilty but recommended a sentence of life imprisonment. The judge instead sentenced Rocky to death. Overruling a jury in this way is now illegal in Alabama.

The US Supreme Court has ruled that defendants with intellectual disabilities "face a special risk of wrongful execution". This is certainly true for Rocky. Burdened with ineffective legal representation and abandoned by his post-conviction lawyer, Rocky missed his deadline to appeal. His execution could be scheduled at any time, and his only hope is for the Governor of Alabama to grant him clemency.



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DEMAND AHMED MANSOOR'S FREEDOM

CONTACT THE PRESIDENT

Tell him that Ahmed Mansoor must be immediately and unconditionally released, as he has been imprisoned solely for his peaceful human rights activism.

President of the United Arab Emirates
Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan

Send your letter via the UAE embassy in
your country, or a country near you.

Salutation: Your Highness

For the best chance of the president
seeing your letters, please take photos
of them and post on Twitter and
Instagram, tagging the president's
handles.

Twitter / X: [@MohamedBinZayed](#)
Instagram: [@mohamedbinzayed](#)

Hashtags: #FreeAhmed #W4R23

HELP KEEP AHMED'S SPIRIT ALIVE

Send him your message of solidarity and hope.

Ahmed Mansoor
c/o Ms S.F
Gulf Centre for Human Rights
PO box 245
Saida
Lebanon

Please post photos of your cards and
letters for Ahmed on social media, so
his family can see them.

Twitter / X: [@Ahmed_Mansoor](#)

Hashtags: #FreeAhmed #W4R23

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DEMAND CLEMENCY FOR ROCKY MYERS

WRITE TO THE GOVERNOR OF ALABAMA

Demand they use their authority to grant clemency to Rocky Myers and commute
his death sentence.

Governor of Alabama
Office of the Governor of Alabama
600 Dexter Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36130
USA

Email: info@governor.alabama.gov

Salutation: Dear Governor

TAKE ROCKY ON A WORLD TOUR

Send Rocky postcards or pictures of where you live, where you go on holiday,
or places you love. Remember, Rocky has a hard time reading, so keep your
messages simple. If writing in another language, provide Rocky with an English
translation, if possible.

Rocky Myers, AIS 0000Z563
Holman Correctional Facility, M-44
Holman 3700
866 Ross Road
Atmore, AL 36503
USA

Please add your full address to ensure
the prison authorities allow Rocky to
receive his mail.

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SOLIDARITY IN ACTION

ALEKSANDRA'S STORY

Russia

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You might think that writing to someone you don't know can't make a difference, or that they won't want to hear from you. But when you're locked up or in fear for your life for calling out injustice, having someone tell you that they believe in you matters a lot.

Whoever you choose to write to, remember that they will love to hear from you. They may feel anxious and alone, and your words will bring comfort and hope to them.

In 2022, singer-songwriter Aleksandra Skochilenko felt the embrace of a global community of allies when she received thousands of letters while imprisoned in Russia for opposing the war in Ukraine. Aleksandra, or Sasha as she is known, was charged with spreading false information and put in jail after she replaced price tags in a Saint Petersburg supermarket with little paper labels containing information about the invasion of Ukraine.

Following the campaign, Aleksandra's lawyer sent this message to Amnesty International members on her behalf:

"I wholeheartedly thank you for your support for Sasha. Your attention warms us up at this difficult time and lets us feel that we are not left alone... In gratitude, Sasha asked me to share with you this drawing that she'd made in prison especially for you... She sends you a big hello and thanks for the postcards! A lot of postcards came from Amnesty International: thank you for the emotions that you give her! Now Sasha devotes all her time to communicating with you and preparing for the courts."



© Andrey Bok



© Aleksandra Skochilenko

Top: Aleksandra Skochilenko during a court session.

Bottom: A postcard drawn by Aleksandra Skochilenko to thank everyone who wrote to her during Write for Rights 2022.

ABOUT

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International is a movement of 10 million people which mobilizes the humanity in everyone and campaigns for change so we can all enjoy our human rights. Our vision is of a world where those in power keep their promises, respect international law and are held to account. We investigate and expose the facts, whenever and wherever abuses happen. We lobby governments as well as other powerful groups such as companies, making sure they keep their promises and respect international law. By telling the powerful stories of the people we work with, we mobilize millions of supporters around the world to campaign for change and to stand in the defence of activists on the frontline. We support people to claim their rights through education and training.

Our work protects and empowers people – from abolishing the death penalty to advancing sexual and reproductive rights, and from combating discrimination to defending refugees' and migrants' rights. We help to bring torturers to justice, change oppressive laws, and free people who have been jailed just for voicing their opinion. We speak out for anyone and everyone whose freedom or dignity are under threat.

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Reagan Siima

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