

# Write for Rights 2020/1

## Southbank's Amnesty Club

# Types of Service

## Get Thinking:

Have a look at the grid to the right.

- What kind of service activities have you engaged with in the past?
- What kinds of service opportunities might be easier to partake in during the latest lockdown?
- Have a look at advocacy--how might you be an advocate? What cause might you support?



# Amnesty International

- An international NGO (Non-governmental organisation) that focuses on defending human rights
- Over 7 million worldwide supporters
- Won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977 for their defence of human dignity against torture
- Their mission statement is: ‘to campaign for a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.’

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# The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

A list created by the UN General Assembly in December 1948 of the 30 human rights and freedoms that belong to all human beings.

*The 30 rights and freedoms set out in the UDHR include the **right to asylum**, the **right to freedom from torture**, the right to **free speech** and the right to **education**. It includes civil and political rights, like the right to **life, liberty, free speech and privacy**. It also includes economic, social and cultural rights, like the right to social security, health and education.*

Read the full list [here](#).



# The Write for Rights Campaign

For the past 19 years, Amnesty has hosted the world's biggest human rights event during the months before and after December 10th, international human rights day.

Write for Rights is a **global letter-writing campaign** in which supporters send letters to those whose basic human rights are being attacked.

Through two types of letters - one addressed to persons in authority positions and one to the person (or people) we are fighting for - pressure is put on governments to combat human rights abuses.

It is also possible to take online action through signing petitions, sending emails and advocating on social media.



# This Year's Letter Writing Campaign...

Review the following 10 cases and choose one or two that you would like to advocate for. Choose a person/issue that speaks to you in particular.

El Hibleu  
3--Malta

Melika Balkan and  
Ozgur Gur--Turkey

Nassima  
Al-Sada--Saudi  
Arabia

Khaled  
Drareni--Algeria

Germain  
Rukuki--Burundi

Jani  
Silva--Colombia

Gustavo  
Gatica--Chile

Paing Phy  
Min--Myanmar

Idris  
Khattak--Pakistan

Popi Qwabe and  
Bongeka  
Phungula--South  
Africa







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**KHALED DRARENI, ALGERIA**

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# **JAILED FOR HIS JOURNALISM**

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Khaled Drareni is a journalist that has been covering protests by Hirak, a movement that encourages freedom, respect for rights and ending corruption in Algeria.

Although Drareni is just doing his job as a journalist, he has been detained many times and in August 2020 he was sentenced to two years in prison for inciting an unarmed gathering.

# Khaled Drareni, Algeria: Jailed for His Journalism

Khaled Drareni is a journalist who shares a common dream of freedom and equality with many Algerians. When people took to the streets in February 2019 to demand these principles, Khaled joined in.

He made sure the world knew what was happening inside Algeria. Through his journalism, he made a point of covering protests by Hirak, a movement that embraces freedom, respect for rights and an end to corruption. Like many young Algerians, Khaled sees a chance to build a fairer, better Algeria through Hirak.

When Hirak first emerged, Khaled was one of the first independent journalists to cover the weekly protests and document police violence when it occurred. This placed him at odds with the authorities who targeted him, detaining him many times.

On March 27th 2020, Khaled was arrested while covering a demonstration. He was charged with inciting an unarmed gathering – even though he was simply doing his job as a journalist. He was sentenced in August to two years in prison.

## WRITE TO THE PRESIDENT OF ALGERIA

**Abdelmadjid Tebboune**  
Présidence de la République  
El-Mouradia – B.P 16000  
Algiers, Algérie  
**Email:** [President@el-mouradia.dz](mailto:President@el-mouradia.dz)  
**Twitter:** @TebbouneAmadjid  
**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Please send a copy to:  
**Larbi El Hadj Ali**  
Ambassador, Embassy of Algeria  
500 Wilbrod Street  
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N2  
**Email:** [info@embassyalgeria.ca](mailto:info@embassyalgeria.ca)

## ENCOURAGE KHALED TO KEEP REPORTING THE TRUTH

Post a photo of yourself with the message  
**#FreeKhaledDrareni** on social media.  
Remember to tag **@khaleddrareni** on  
Twitter and **@Khaled.Drareni** on Instagram.

Or mail him encouragement at:

**Mohamed Khaled Drareni, Cellule 222 44**  
Etablissement Pénitentiaire de Koléa  
42003 Koléa, wilaya de Tipaza  
Algérie

[Online action](#)



# Sample Letter

## **KHALED DRARENI, ALGERIA**

*Your Excellency*

*I call on you to immediately and unconditionally release Khaled Drareni, an independent journalist, sentenced to prison simply for doing his job. He was reporting on a Hirak demonstration on 27 March when he was arrested. He has been detained ever since.*

*Khaled just wants a fairer, better Algeria that cares for and benefits everyone. He is held on the sham charge of inciting an unarmed gathering and "harming the integrity of the national territory".*

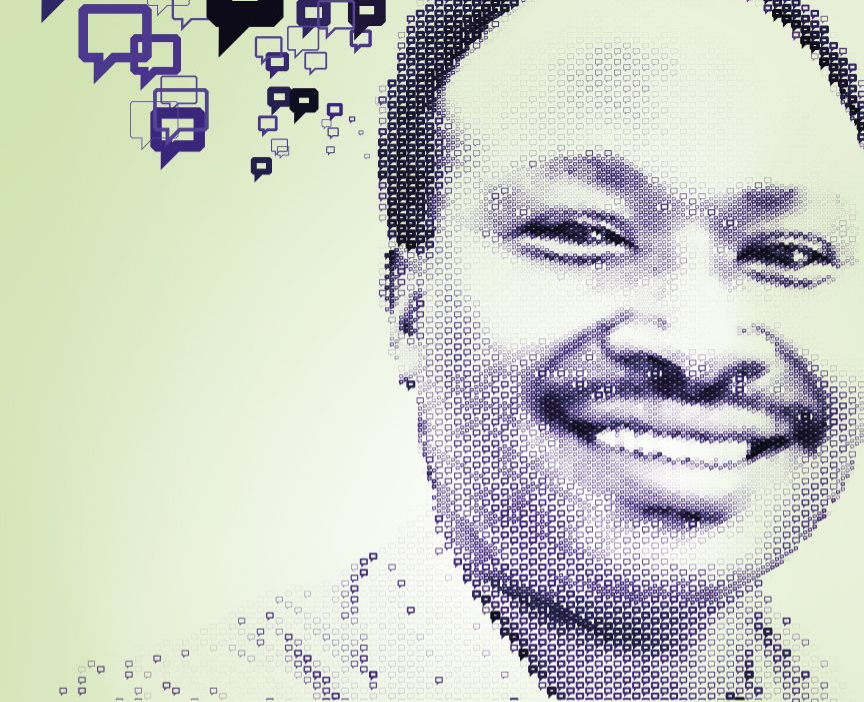
*Khaled should be back on the streets, reporting the news, not locked up for his principled journalism.*

*Please, release him without delay.*

*Yours sincerely*



**Abdelmadjid Tebboune**  
**President of the Republic**  
**El-Mouradia – B.P 16000**  
**Algiers**  
**Algeria**



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GERMAIN RUKUKI, BURUNDI

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# JAILED FOR 32 YEARS FOR DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS

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Germain Rukuki has been sentenced to 32 years in prison for campaigning against torture.

Rukuki was found guilty for “rebellion”, “threatening state security”, “participation in an insurrectional movement” and “attack on the authority of the state” because of his past work for ACAT-Burundi, Action by Christians for Abolition of Torture.

## Germain Rukuki, Burundi: Jailed for 32 Years for Defending Human Rights

Germain Rukuki has risked everything to campaign against torture in Burundi. Because of his human rights work, he is serving a 32-year prison sentence.

Emelyne recalls the moment when her husband was taken away. They were woken up in the early hours of the morning on 13 July 2017 by heavy footsteps and banging on their door. Dozens of security officers stormed into their home, while the rest blocked the streets outside.

Germain was arrested in connection to his previous work at a local organization called Action by Christians for Abolition of Torture (ACAT-Burundi), which had been shut down by the government. On 26 April 2018, he was found guilty of “rebellion”, “threatening State security”, “participation in an insurrectional movement” and “attack on the authority of the State” and sentenced to 32 years in prison.

He is currently in the massively overcrowded Ngozi Prison, which puts him at a high risk of catching Covid-19. He is forced to share a cell with 120 inmates, with only two showers and two toilets. Since 2015, many other human rights defenders, opposition leaders and journalists have fled Burundi and those that have remained have faced threats and reprisals. Germain has appealed the decision of the court; we must call for his release.

### WRITE TO THE PRESIDENT OF BURUNDI

Ask him to release Germain immediately and unconditionally.

**President Évariste Ndayishimiye**  
c/o Embassy of Burundi  
350 Albert St, Suite 410  
Ottawa, Ontario K1R 1A4

**Email:** [presidence@burundi.gov.bi](mailto:presidence@burundi.gov.bi) /  
[ambabottawa@yahoo.ca](mailto:ambabottawa@yahoo.ca)

**Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram:**  
[@GeneralNeva](https://twitter.com/GeneralNeva)

**Salutation:** Dear Mr President

### HELP KEEP GERMAIN'S SPIRIT STRONG

Send your message of support to Germain or his wife Emelyne. You may include the Kirundi words: *Komera Turikumwe!* (“Stay strong, we are together!”).

**Amnesty International**  
c/o Burundi Team  
Regional Office for East Africa, the Horn and Great Lakes  
Riverside Studios, Riverside Lane,  
Off Riverside Drive  
P.O Box 1527-00606  
Nairobi, Kenya  
**Email:** [burunditeam@amnesty.org](mailto:burunditeam@amnesty.org)

[Online action](#)

# Sample Letter

## **GERMAIN RUKUKI, BURUNDI**

*Dear Mr President*

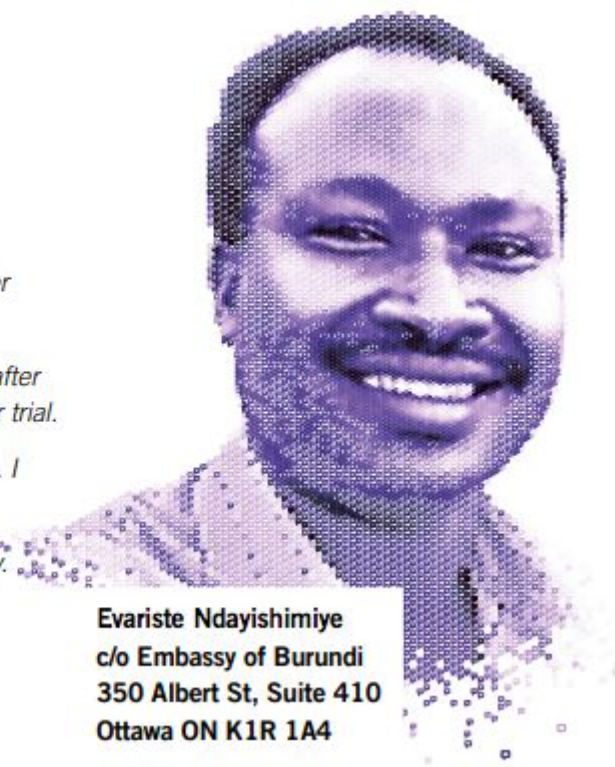
*I call on you to immediately and unconditionally release Germain Rukuki. Germain has dedicated his life and work to truth and justice. He is also a dedicated father, yet because of his commitment to what's fair, he has never seen his own three-year-old son.*

*Germain is serving a 32-year prison sentence for defending human rights, after a court found him guilty on three charges, including "rebellion", in an unfair trial.*

*In your inaugural speech you made a commitment to respect human rights. I urge you to honour that pledge.*

*Germain's little boy wants his father back home. Please, free Germain today.*

*Yours sincerely*



**Evariste Ndayishimiye**  
**c/o Embassy of Burundi**  
**350 Albert St, Suite 410**  
**Ottawa ON K1R 1A4**





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GUSTAVO GATICA, CHILE

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# **BLINDED BY POLICE FOR DEMANDING DIGNITY AND EQUALITY**

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In 2019, protests broke out in Chile over rising prices and inequality. Gustavo Gatica took part in these protests but police retaliated with brutal and, in some cases, sexual violence.

The police shot at the crowd with rubber and metal bullets, leaving Gustavo permanently blind on both eyes. Yet, those that allowed this attack remain unpunished.



## Gustavo Gatica, Chile: Blinded by Police for Demanding Dignity and Equality

When protests broke out across Chile in 2019 over rising prices and inequality, Gustavo Gatica was studying psychology in the capital, Santiago. Like millions of others, Gustavo, too, took to the streets. The demonstrations continued for weeks, growing in strength. This was people power in action, inspiring hope for change.

The authorities response was chilling. Police attacked protestors with brutal force, causing deaths and serious injuries. Women also reported sexual attacks.

On November 8, police once again loaded their shotguns with rubber and metal ammunition and fired into the crowds of demonstrators. Gustavo was hit in both eyes and permanently blinded. The attack made global headlines.

An internal investigation absolved the police of responsibility and even suggested that demonstrators injured Gustavo. The National Prosecutor's Office is now investigating. Still, those who allowed the attack on Gustavo remain unpunished.

"I gave my eyes so people would wake up," says Gustavo. As demonstrations continued, protestors wore eye patches and chanted Gustavo's name at police.

### WRITE TO CHILE'S NATIONAL PROSECUTOR

Tell him to investigate the commanders responsible for the shooting that blinded Gustavo. They had a duty to avoid the misuse of dangerous shotguns and ammunition, but failed to fulfil it.

#### **Jorge Abbott Charme**

National Prosecutor  
Fiscalía Nacional  
Catedral 1421-1453  
Santiago de Chile  
Chile

**Email:** [jabbott@minpublico.cl](mailto:jabbott@minpublico.cl)

**Twitter:** [@FiscaliaDeChile](https://twitter.com/FiscaliaDeChile)

**Salutation:** Dear Mr National  
Prosecutor, Jorge Abbott Charme

### DEMONSTRATE YOUR SOLIDARITY TO GUSTAVO

Record a solidarity message in Spanish or English, including your name and country.

**Email:** [justiciaparagustavo@amnistia.cl](mailto:justiciaparagustavo@amnistia.cl)

Or mail something Gustavo can feel (braille letters, a maple leaf from fuzzy material, origami) to:

**Diego Martínez**  
**Amnistía Internacional Chile**  
Av. Rojas Magallanes 1869,  
departamento 104  
La Florida, Santiago, Chile

[Online action](#)

# Sample Letter

## **GUSTAVO GATICA, CHILE**

*Dear Mr National Prosecutor, Jorge Abbott Charme*

*Psychology student Gustavo Gatica was at a protest in the capital, Santiago, when police shot ammunition into the crowd in ways they shouldn't have. Gustavo was struck in both eyes and was blinded. Commanders in charge didn't stop these officers. They let this violence continue unchecked for weeks.*

*I call on you to investigate all those responsible for Gustavo's shooting, especially commanders. They had a duty to avoid the misuse of force, but failed to fulfil it. Gustavo must live with the consequences of their failure forever. He deserves justice, truth and reparation.*

*Yours sincerely*



**Jorge Abbott Charme**  
**National Prosecutor**  
**Fiscalía Nacional**  
**Catedral 1421-1453**  
**Santiago de Chile**  
**Chile**



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Jani co-founded the Association for the Integral and Sustainable Development of the Amazonian Pearl (ADISPA) in 2008.

Through it, she protects the environment and rights of those living in the Amazonian Pearl, a campesino reserve in Putumayo.

JANI SILVA, COLOMBIA

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**PROTECTING THE AMAZON  
COULD GET HER KILLED**

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## Jani Silva, Columbia: Protects the environment and rights of those living in the Amazonian Pearl

Born in the heart of the Amazon, Jani Silva has dedicated her life to defending the trees and land that are everyone's lifeblood. From the age of 16, she has supported the campesino farmers of Putumayo, a region brimming with unique biodiversity.

Jani co-founded the Association for the Integral and Sustainable Development of the Amazonian Pearl (ADISPA) in 2008. Through it, she protects the environment and rights of those living in the Amazonian Pearl, a campesino reserve in Putumayo.

Jani's work placed her at odds with the Ecopetrol oil company, which got a license to operate in areas overlapping with the reserve. In 2009 the license was transferred to the Amerisur oil company. Since then, at least two oil spills have poisoned the water sources that local communities depend on.

Defending a healthy environment is dangerous work in Colombia and increasingly so for women and their communities in isolated areas. Armed men followed Jani and threatened her with death. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, state protection has been reduced, while assassinations skyrocketed.

Still, Jani remains undaunted. "Because I defend my territory, people have put a gun to my head to kill me," she says. "But we cannot run away or let ourselves be won over by fear." Demand protection for Jani.

### WRITE TO THE PRESIDENT OF COLOMBIA

Tell him to protect Jani and all ADISPA members from harm so they can safely defend the land and water their communities depend on.

**President of the Republic of Colombia**  
**Mr Iván Duque**  
c/o Amnesty International  
312 Laurier Ave. E.  
Ottawa ON K1N 1H9  
**Twitter:** @IvanDuque  
**Salutation:** Dear Mr President

### LET JANI KNOW YOU SUPPORT HER

Share with her and fellow ADISPA members how much you admire their brave efforts. You can include one of these lines and add a picture that represents your sentiment.

Nature is \_\_\_\_\_ to me.  
Thanks for taking care of it.

Water means \_\_\_\_\_ to me.  
Thanks for fighting for it.

Protecting the Amazon is important to me because \_\_\_\_\_.  
Thanks for guarding it.

Jani Silva/ADISPA  
Oficina Comisión  
Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz  
Carrera 37\* #25B – 42  
Bogotá, Colombia.

[Online action](#)





# Sample Letter

## JANI SILVA, COLOMBIA

*Dear Mr President*

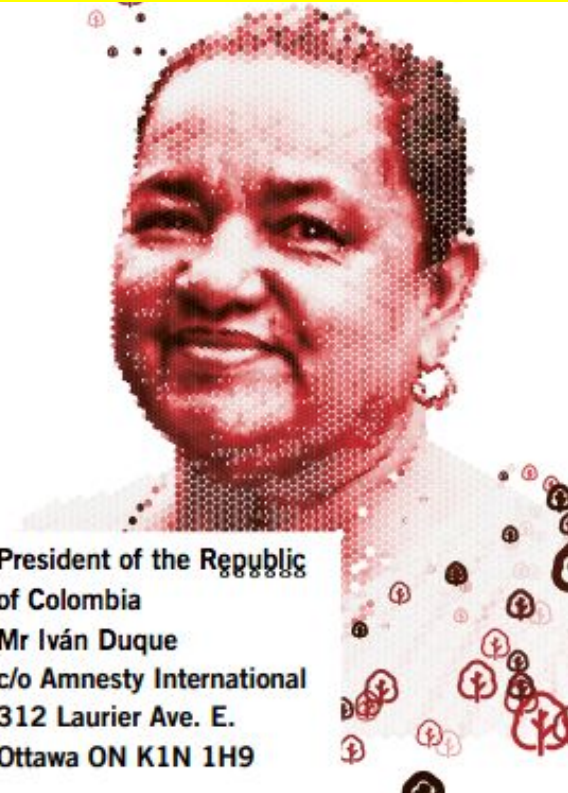
*Jani Silva has been standing alongside the campesino farmers in the Putumayo region for decades. She has dedicated her life to defending the environment and natural resources.*

*However, Jani's work has put her in danger. She has been followed, intimidated by unknown people with guns and threatened with death.*

*As protectors of resources that the world depends on for its survival, Jani and the campesino farmers she stands with should be defended.*

*I call on you to protect Jani and all members of ADISPA, an organization she founded along with her colleagues to preserve the peasant Amazon Pearl Reserve Zone. In doing so, you will be safeguarding not just them, but a whole ecosystem powering the planet.*

*Yours sincerely*



**President of the Republic  
of Colombia**

**Mr Iván Duque**

**c/o Amnesty International  
312 Laurier Ave. E.  
Ottawa ON K1N 1H9**





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A group of three teenagers (not identified by name) had the common goal to leave their homes in Guinea and The Ivory Coast through Libya. Desperate to escape the violence and torture they experienced in Libya, they boarded a boat to Europe with 111 others. When they reached Maltese waters, the Maltese authorities accused the El Hiblu 3 as having taken another ship by force and now they may face a lifetime in jail despite little evidence.

EL HIBLU 3, MALTA

**THEY OPPOSED TORTURE,  
NOW THEY FACE PRISON**

# El Hiblu 3, Malta: They Opposed Torture, Now They Face Prison

Before they were known as the El Hiblu 3, they were three teenagers aged 15, 16 and 19 with a passion for soccer and basketball. Because they were minors at the time, their names have not been revealed. They wanted what we all do: a safer, better life.

That common goal forced them to leave their homes in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire to seek better futures. They met each other in Libya, but they were desperate to escape the violence and torture cells reserved for refugees and migrants there. In March of 2019, they boarded a dinghy boat with 111 others bound for Europe.

The rubber boat soon ran into trouble and was rescued by the El Hiblu, an oil tanker. The El Hiblu's crew then tried to return the dinghy's passengers to Libya – which was unlawful – despite promising that they wouldn't.

When the rescued passengers realized they were headed back to Libya, a protest broke out. The three youths were asked to use their language skills to calm the situation. Acting as interpreters, they defended the right of those rescued not to face torture again in Libya. The crew turned the ship towards Europe. However, as it entered Malta's waters, the Maltese authorities stormed the ship, claiming the three had taken it by force. They charged them with offences so serious that they could be jailed for life despite little evidence.

The three youths had simply tried to defend their safety and to protect those rescued with them. Now they're on trial.

## WRITE TO MALTA'S ATTORNEY GENERAL

Insist that he drop all charges against the El Hiblu 3 and close the case.

### Attorney General

The Palace  
VLT 1115 – Valletta  
Malta

**Email:** ag@gov.mt

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

**Please send a copy to:**

### His Excellency Keith Azzopardi

High Commissioner for Malta  
2017 Connecticut Avenue N.W.  
Washington, DC 20008, USA

**Email:** maltaembassy.washington@gov.mt

## SUPPORT THE EL HIBLU 3

Send them your messages of solidarity and hope. Be sure to take a photograph of your message and post it on your social media channels, tagging it #ElHiblu3.

El Hiblu 3  
P.O. Box 39,  
Hamrun,  
Malta

[Online action](#)

# Sample Letter

## EL HIBLU 3, MALTA

*Your Excellency*


*I urge you to drop all charges against the El Hiblu 3 and close the case.*

*These youths, two of whom were just 15 and 16 years old at the time of the alleged incident, could be jailed for life for opposing their return to suffering and torture in Libya. Yet there is little to no evidence to support the serious charges against them.*

*The youths had acted as interpreters on the El Hiblu, an oil transporter, to help preserve their lives and those of their fellow passengers after they were rescued at sea.*

*They have been through grave hardship and trauma. Deliver justice: drop the charges, close the case.*

*Yours sincerely*



**Attorney General  
The Palace  
VLT 1115 – Valletta  
Malta**





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PAING PHYTO MIN, MYANMAR

# LOCKED UP FOR SLAMMING THE MILITARY WITH POETRY

Paing Phyto Min (aka De Yay) is part of the Peacock Generation, a poetry troupe dedicated to Thangyat - a traditional version of slam poetry. De Yay along with other members of his troupe were arrested and are facing six years in prison after performing Thangyat dressed as soldiers and criticising the military for bankrupting the country while its generals accumulate wealth.

## Paing Phyo Min, Myanmar: Locked up for Slamming the Military with Poetry

Paing Phyo Min (aka De Yay) loves singing, playing the guitar and the music of Taylor Swift. The 22-year-old is a member of the Peacock Generation, a poetry troupe dedicated to Thangyat – a traditional version of slam poetry. Fusing verse with comedy and music, Thangyat is usually performed in April during the New Year Water Festival.

In April and May 2019, Paing Phyo Min and six other Peacock Generation members were arrested after performing Thangyat dressed as soldiers. During the performance, they made fun of the military, saying it couldn't take criticism, was desperate to hang on to power, and was bankrupting the country while its generals accumulated wealth.

Paing Phyo Min was convicted and sentenced to six years in prison. Other members received lesser sentences. The charges against Paing Phyo Min include 'incitement' (encouraging military officers to abandon their duties) and 'online defamation' for sharing photographs and videos of their performances online. A shared image of a dog in military uniform seemed particularly upsetting to authorities.

“We have been performing Thangyat every year since 2013,” says Paing Phyo Min. “We have been directly communicating with the public, expressing... what is wrong in our society... including criticisms of the government. But in 2019, the military targeted us. They are undermining Myanmar’s democratic transition. We may be imprisoned, but we will not be deterred from speaking our minds.”

### WRITE TO MYANMAR'S STATE COUNSELLOR

Tell her to immediately release Paing Phyo Min and other members of the Peacock Generation.

**H.E. Aung San Suu Kyi**  
State Counsellor  
Ministry of the State Counsellor Office  
Office No. 20, Nay Pyi Taw  
Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
**Twitter:** @MyanmarSC  
**Email:** [compt.msco@gmail.com](mailto:compt.msco@gmail.com)  
**Salutation:** Your Excellency

### HELP LIFT PAING PHYO MIN'S SPIRITS

Send him your messages of friendship and hope to help lift his spirits in prison.

**President of the Student Union**  
Dagon University Students' Union  
Office  
Theater (1), Cherry Street, Dagon  
University  
North Dagon Township, Yangon  
Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
11422  
**Email:** [dagonuniversitysu@gmail.com](mailto:dagonuniversitysu@gmail.com)

[Online action](#)





# Sample Letter

## PAING PHYO MIN, MYANMAR

*Your Excellency*

*I urge you to immediately and unconditionally release Paing Phyo Min, a 22-year-old poet and student leader serving six years in prison solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression.*

*In April and May 2019, Paing Phyo Min and other members of the Peacock Generation, a satirical poetry troupe, performed Thangyat critical of the military. The military took offence at their performances and brought charges against them.*

*Paing Phyo Min should not be in prison simply for criticizing the military. Everyone must be free to express their views in Myanmar, even if these are critical of the authorities. I urge you to release Paing Phyo Min immediately and unconditionally, and your government to repeal or amend all repressive laws that violate the right to freedom of expression.*

*Yours sincerely*



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



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IDRIS KHATTAK, PAKISTAN

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# ABDUCTED FOR EXPOSING DISAPPEARANCES

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Idris Khattak is Pakistan's expert on enforced disappearances, having worked for many years to document crime under international law. In November 2019, Idris' car was stopped and after many months the authorities have revealed that they have him in their custody. His family fear that he could be sentenced to 14 years in prison or even death for espionage.

## Idris Khattak, Pakistan: Abducted for Exposing Disappearances

Described by his daughters as an “enthusiastic but terrible” cook, Idris Khattak is a man of many interests. He speaks Russian, reads voraciously, and raises chickens that he loves chatting to.

Idris is also Pakistan’s expert on enforced disappearances. He spent years documenting this crime under international law for Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. But in a cruel twist, Idris, too, disappeared.

It was November 13th 2019. Idris was on his way home from the capital, Islamabad, when his rented car was stopped. In Pakistan, the authorities use enforced disappearance to silence human rights defenders like Idris, and other critics as well.

With Amnesty’s help, Idris’ 20-year-old daughter, Talia, began fighting for her father’s return, despite being warned not to. Her bravery paid off. In June, the authorities admitted they had Idris in their custody and that they would be charging him under the Official Secrets Act. But they still haven’t revealed where he is.

His family fears he could be charged with espionage. If convicted, he could be jailed for 14 years or even sentenced to death.

“I look at pictures of Papa, and only dream of him walking into the room to be with us again,” says Talia. “We deserve answers and he deserves the protection of the law.”

### WRITE TO PAKISTAN’S PRIME MINISTER

Tell him to release Idris or, if there is credible and admissible evidence of an internationally recognized offence, bring him promptly to justice in a fair trial before a civilian court.

**Prime Minister Imran Khan**  
Prime Minister’s Office  
Constitution Avenue G-5/2  
Islamabad, Pakistan  
**E-mail:** info@pmo.gov.pk /  
spm@pmo.gov.pk  
**Twitter:** @ImranKhanPTI  
**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Please send a copy to:

**His Excellency Raza Bashir Tarar**  
High Commissioner for Pakistan  
10 Range Road  
Ottawa, ON K1N 8J3  
**Email:** parepottawa@rogers.com

### SHOW IDRIS’ FAMILY YOU’RE WITH THEM

Send a message of hope to his daughters **Talia and Shumaisa**. Include photos of things Idris loves - chickens, books, trees, gardening, cooking. **Tweet** it to @TaliaKhattak and @shumaisa77, email it to SupportIdrisKhattak@amnesty.org or send hard copies to:

**Amnesty International South Asia  
Regional Office**  
23/2 Horton Place  
Colombo 07, Sri Lanka

[Online action](#)



# Sample Letter

## **IDRIS KHATTAK, PAKISTAN**

*Your Excellency*

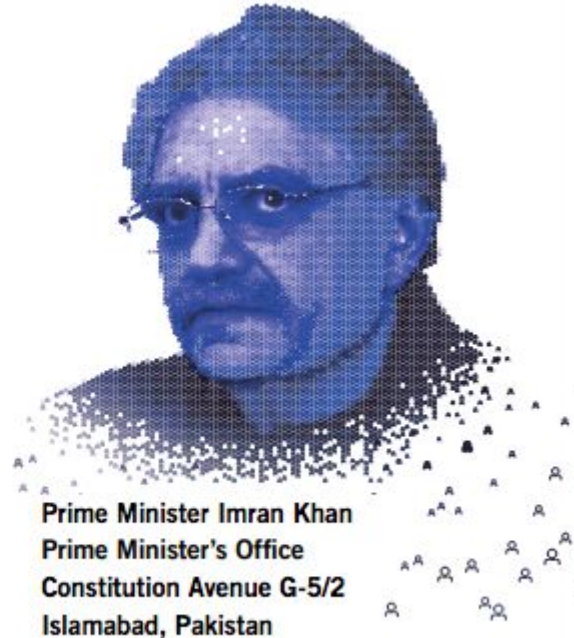
*I urge you to release Idris Khattak, Pakistan's expert on enforced disappearances, who has himself been subjected to enforced disappearance.*

*If there is credible and admissible evidence that he has committed an internationally recognized crime, then please try him promptly and fairly in a civilian ordinary court, without recourse to the death penalty. If not, release him immediately and unconditionally.*

*His daughters have not seen Idris since he was abducted in November 2019. They don't know where he is or whether he can take his medication. They just want their father back home safe with them.*

*You once made a promise to make enforced disappearance a crime under national law. Now is your chance to honour that pledge.*

*Yours sincerely*





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NASSIMA AL-SADA, SAUDI ARABIA

**LOCKED UP  
FOR DEMANDING  
WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

Nassima Al-Sada has campaigned for women's rights in Saudi Arabia for most of her life. She has fought for women's rights to drive and carry out their daily lives without the permission of a male "guardian." Nassima was arrested for her peaceful human rights work in 2018 and has been jailed in solitary confinement for over a year with no visits and only one phone call per week.



## Nassima Al-Sada, Saudi Arabia: Locked up for Demanding Women's Rights

Nassima al-Sada loves animals and cherishes her garden back home. Even in her prison cell, she has a carefully tended plant. It is her only link to the outside world.

For much of her life, Nassima has campaigned for women's rights in Saudi Arabia. She was one of several prominent activists campaigning for women to have the right to drive and to carry out their daily lives without the permission of a male "guardian."

Saudi Arabia's guardianship laws required women to seek a man's permission to go out, and to fulfill other basic needs such as travel, marrying, working, or accessing healthcare. While these laws have been eased recently, Nassima and other activists who campaigned to end the guardianship system remain behind bars. "Why should an under-age boy be the guardian of a woman who is an adult?" Nassima wrote in 2016. "Why isn't there an age at which a woman becomes an adult, responsible for her decisions and her life? Why should there be a man responsible for her life?"

Nassima was arrested for her peaceful human rights work in July 2018. While in jail, she was ill-treated. She was placed in a cell alone, in complete isolation from other detainees from February 2019 to February 2020. She is allowed one weekly phone call with her family, but no visits, not even from her lawyer.

### WRITE TO THE KING OF SAUDI ARABIA

Urge him to free Nassima and other women's rights activists immediately and unconditionally.

**His Majesty King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud**

c/o Embassy for Saudi Arabia  
201 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1K6  
**Twitter:** @KingSalman

### HELP KEEP NASSIMA'S SPIRIT STRONG

On social media, post a photo of you gardening or simply enjoying the sun and include a personal message to Nassima. Remember to tag her @nasema33, as well as @KingSalman and @AmnestyNow. Use the hashtag #FreeNassima.

You can also mail a card to Nassima's son, Moussa :

**Moussa, c/o Amnesty International**  
312 Laurier Avenue  
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H9

[Online action](#)

# Sample Letter

## **NASSIMA AL-SADA, SAUDI ARABIA**

*Your Majesty*

*Nassima al-Sada is a woman whom Saudi Arabia should take great pride in. Her lifelong journey has been one dedicated to the improvement of women's freedoms and her vision of them being active members of an open, vibrant society.*

*But instead of embracing Ms. al-Sada, the authorities arrested her in July 2018 and placed her in solitary confinement for one year. Today, she is still behind bars. I respectfully call on you to release Ms. al-Sada and all other detained women human rights defenders, immediately and without conditions.*

*Yours sincerely*



**His Majesty King Salman bin Abdul  
Aziz Al Saud  
c/o Embassy for Saudi Arabia  
201 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1K6**



**WRITE  
FOR  
RIGHTS**  
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INTERNATIONAL**



**POPI QWABE & BONGEKA PHUNGULA, SOUTH AFRICA**

**THEIR KILLERS MUST BE  
BROUGHT TO JUSTICE**

In May 2017, Popi Qwabe and Bongeka Phungula headed for a night out but were later found shot dead and left at the side of the road. A taxi containing the women's belongings and bloodstains was found but the police failed to investigate the case properly and released two drivers that had been taken into custody citing lack of evidence. No investigation has taken place in the three years since the murder.



See speaker notes for UK  
ambassador contact information →

## Popi Qwabe & Bongeka Phungula, South Africa: Their Killers Must be Brought to Justice

It was a Friday night in May 2017 and like many 20-somethings, Popi Qwabe and Bongeka Phungula were heading for a night out. The friends had met while studying drama in Durban, KwaZulu Natal. Both were talented young women, chasing a dream to make it big as actors.

At some point that evening, the pair hailed a minibus taxi. They were not heard from again. Following a frantic search at hospitals and police stations, Bongeka's cousin Mdu and Popi's sister Thembelihle discovered the terrible truth. Popi and Bongeka had been shot dead and dumped by the side of a road. They may also have been raped.

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

Two taxi operators were arrested. They had some of the women's belongings, including a cellphone and lipstick, which they claimed they found in the taxi. But the police released the men citing lack of evidence and the case was withdrawn pending further investigation.

In the three years since the murder, no thorough investigation has taken place.

### WRITE TO THE CANADIAN AMBASSADOR

Demand a thorough, fair and impartial investigation into the deaths of Popi and Bongeka.

**Her Excellency Sibongiseni Yvonne Dlamini-Mntambo**  
High Commissioner for South Africa  
15 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario K1M 1M8  
Email: [rsafrica@southafrica-canada.ca](mailto:rsafrica@southafrica-canada.ca)

### SHOW POPI AND BONGEKA'S FAMILIES YOU ARE WITH THEM

Send them a message of hope and solidarity to strengthen them in their battle for justice.

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

[Online action](#)



# Sample Letter

## **POPI QWABE & BONGEKA PHUNGULA, SOUTH AFRICA**

*Your Excellency*

*It has been three years since Popi Qwabe and Bongeka Phungula were shot dead. Both aged in their twenties, the two young women were talented drama students with brilliant futures ahead of them.*

*But their dreams were cut short one night in May 2017 when they were killed, and dumped by the side of a road. The police investigation that followed was riddled with mistakes: a bloodstained taxi was recovered but the forensics and autopsies were never published. As a result, key suspects were released due to lack of evidence.*

*Popi and Bongeka's families want answers and demand justice. You can help them by asking the Minister of Police to ensure a prompt, thorough, fair and impartial investigation into the murders.*

*Impunity for acts of gender-based violence cannot continue.*

*Yours sincerely*



**Her Excellency Sibongiseni Yvonne Dlamini-  
Mntambo**  
**High Commissioner for South Africa**  
**15 Sussex Drive**  
**Ottawa, Ontario K1M 1M8**



WRITE  
FOR  
RIGHTS

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL

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INTERNATIONAL



METU PRIDE DEFENDERS, TURKEY

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**PROSECUTED**

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**FOR CELEBRATING**

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**LGBTI RIGHTS**

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Melike Balkan and Özgür Gur have dedicated themselves to defending the rights of the LGBTI+ community at their university in Turkey. Since 2011, they have organised an annual pride march, however, in 2019 the university told the students that the pride could not go ahead. After a pride sit-in in protest to this, 23 students were arrested and may face 3 years in prison.



# Metu Pride Defenders: Prosecuted for Celebrating LGBTI Rights

From their first day at university, biology students Melike Balkan and Özgür Gür dedicated themselves to defending the rights of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI+) people.

As prominent members of the LGBTI+ Solidarity Group at Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara, they have organized numerous marches, meetings and other events. They've engaged with an ever-growing number of students, against a backdrop of increasing homophobia and restrictions on freedom of expression in Turkey.

The METU LGBTI+ Solidarity Group have organized an annual Pride march on campus since 2011. But in 2019, the university's management told the students the march planned for May 10th could not go ahead.

Undeterred, the Solidarity Group staged a Pride sit-in instead. In response, the university called the police who used excessive force, including tear gas, against the peaceful protestors. Police arrested at least 23 students – including Melike and Özgür – and an academic. Some of those detained hadn't even taken part in the protest. Despite simply exercising their right to peaceful protest, 18 students and the academic are on trial.

If found guilty, they face up to three years in prison.

## WRITE TO TURKEY'S MINISTER OF JUSTICE

**Mr Abdülhamit Gül**  
Minister of Justice  
Adalet Bakanlığı  
06659 Ankara,  
Turkey  
**Twitter:** @abdulhamitgul  
**Email:** info@adalet.gov.tr  
**Salutation:** Dear Minister of Justice

Please send a copy to:

**His Excellency Kerim Uras**  
Ambassador for Turkey  
197 Wurtemberg Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8L9  
**Email:** embassy.ottawa@mfa.gov.tr

## SHARE YOUR PRIDE IN MELIKE & ÖZGÜR

Visit METU LGBTI+ Solidarity Group's Twitter & Instagram feed @odtulgbti. Take a photo with a Pride flag and share on your social media channels, tagging @odtulgbti and @AmnestyNow, and adding a message of support in the caption.

You can also mail cards to:

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

[Online action](#)



# Sample Letter

## MELIKE BALKAN & ÖZGÜR GÜR, TURKEY

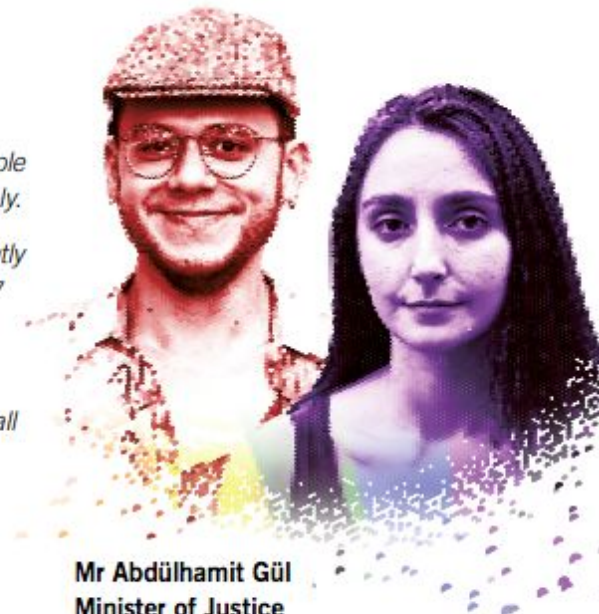
*Dear Minister of Justice*

*Biology students Melike Balkan and Özgür Gür are among a group of 19 people facing up to three years in prison for exercising their right to peaceful assembly.*

*On 10 May 2019, a Pride sit-in at Middle East Technical University was violently broken up by police. Melike, Özgür and 21 others were detained; they and 17 among the detained are now on trial.*

*As Minister of Justice, you know that participating in a peaceful gathering is not a crime. I call on you to monitor the case to ensure they are acquitted of all charges.*

*Yours sincerely*



**Mr Abdülhamit Gül**  
**Minister of Justice**  
**Adalet Bakanlığı**  
**06659 Ankara**  
**Turkey**



# Steps to Writing for Rights

1. Choose one (or more) causes that you'd like to advocate for--choose one that resonates with you in particular.
2. Choose to write to a government OR directly to that person.
3. Use the sample letters that follows each case for inspiration but DO add to the letter with your own personal thoughts
4. Save the letter using your name in the file
5. Upload your letter to the appropriate folder [here](#)
6. On each slide you can also find links to petitions and online actions you can take for each case.

# Writing for Rights

The Amnesty International ECA coordinators (Karen and Calum in Grade 12) will print the letters out and post them to the relevant addresses by the end of the campaign on the 31st of January.

Please upload your completed letter(s) to the folder by **Wednesday 27th January**.

THANK YOU!