




WRITE FOR RIGHTS

TAKE ACTION AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL




**WRITE FOR RIGHTS
5-13 DECEMBER 2009**

Amnesty international's Write for Rights action takes place every year on and around International Human Rights Day on 10 December. Each year, people around the world come together to demand that the rights of individuals are respected, protected and fulfilled and to show solidarity with people who suffer human right abuses.

Participants write letters, send faxes and emails and sign petitions. They call for human rights defenders to be protected, and for prisoners of conscience to be released. They challenge injustice and demand accountability.

This year, Amnesty International is calling for action on behalf of people facing human rights abuses in Colombia, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Greece, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam. You can find information on some of them overleaf. To get details on others who are imprisoned, tortured or ill-treated for peacefully expressing their views or for protecting the rights of others, go to: www.amnesty.org/en/individuals-at-risk

Your letters, together with those of thousands of others, will help to put pressure on governments and international organizations that are failing to stop human rights abuses and can help people get their voices heard.

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SOLIDARITY WORKS

'I spent 900 days on a "torture island"; 700 of those days I spent in solitary confinement. I endured only because of the support of people who were concerned about my fate. Only this gave me strength.'

Mutabar Tadzhibaeva, chairwoman of the independent non-registered human rights organization Utiuraklar (Fiery Hearts) Club in Uzbekistan. She was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment in March 2006 and was released early in June 2008. Mutabar Tadzhibaeva received letters of solidarity during the 2006 action.

LETTER-WRITING WORKS

'So many ASJ staff have said how encouraged they feel every time they walk past the 100-lb sacks of Amnesty letters here in the office.'

Members of human rights organization Asociación para una Sociedad Más Justa (ASJ) in Honduras. Two staff members, who faced threats and intimidation, were sent messages of support at the 2007 action.

KONSTANTINA KUNEVA, GREECE

Konstantina Kuneva, a Bulgarian migrant worker and trade union leader, had sulphuric acid thrown in her face in Athens on 22 December 2008. She lost her sight in one eye, has limited vision in the other, and her larynx, oesophagus and stomach were seriously damaged. The police initially failed to take her trade union activities fully into account during their investigation.

In June 2009 the investigative judge assigned to the case decided to end the investigation, even though the perpetrators had not been identified. Konstantina Kuneva's lawyers believe that the investigation was flawed. She is still in hospital and awaits several further operations.

WRITE TO:

Director of the Prosecutor's Office of the First Instance
Courts of Athens
(κύριον Προϊστάμενο Εισαγγελίας
Πρωτοδικών)
Building No. 16
Proin Sholi Evelpidon
Athens 10167
Greece

- Demand that the investigation into the attack on Konstantina Kuneva is continued, and that it is impartial, independent and effective, leading to the perpetrators being brought to justice.
- Demand the protection of other human rights defenders and trade union members from similar attacks.



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Konstantina Kuneva, pictured before the attack.



NGUYEN VAN DAI AND LE THI CONG NHAN, VIET NAM

Human rights lawyers Nguyen Van Dai, aged 40, and Le Thi Cong Nhan, aged 30, were jailed in May 2007 for "conducting propaganda against the State." Nguyen Van Dai was sentenced to five years' and Le Thi Cong Nhan to four years' imprisonment.

Their sentences were reduced by one year each on appeal on 27 November 2007. Amnesty International considers them prisoners of conscience and is calling for their immediate release.

WRITE TO:

Nguyen Tan Dung
Office of the Prime Minister
Hoang Hoa Tham
Ha Noi
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
Fax: + 8443 823 1872 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

- Call for the immediate and unconditional release of Le Thi Cong Nhan and Nguyen Van Dai as prisoners of conscience.
- Call on the Prime Minister to ensure that while detained, they are allowed regular family visits, and receive appropriate medical care.



© freeDai-Nhan.org

Nguyen Van Dai



© freeDai-Nhan.org

Le Thi Cong Nhan



THE PEACE COMMUNITY OF SAN JOSÉ DE APARTADÓ, COLOMBIA

Members of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó in the municipality of Apartadó, Antioquia department, have been subject to repeated threats and attacks because they refuse to bear arms or participate in the 40-year armed conflict in the country.

More than 170 have been killed since the Community's formation in 1997. The Colombian authorities have made little progress in investigating the vast majority of abuses committed against the community.

WRITE TO:

Señor Presidente Álvaro Uribe Vélez
Presidente de la República
Palacio de Nariño
Carrera 8 No.7-26
Bogotá
Colombia
Fax: +57 1 337 5890
Salutation: Dear President Uribe/
Excmo. Sr. Presidente Uribe

- Call for the right of civilians not to be drawn into the conflict to be respected by all parties in the conflict.
- Ask for all human rights abuses against the members of the San José de Apartadó Peace Community to be investigated and those responsible brought to justice.
- Call for the authorities to take all the measures necessary, in accordance with those at risk, to guarantee their safety.



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Children of the Peace Community
San José de Apartadó, Colombia.



BIRTUKAN MIDEKSA, ETHIOPIA

Birtukan Mideksa, an opposition party leader, is serving a life sentence in Kaliti Prison in Addis Ababa. Amnesty International considers her a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression and association.

She was charged with treason, among other charges, and subsequently convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment in relation to demonstrations disputing election results in June and November 2005. She was pardoned and released in June 2007 after serving more than 18 months in prison. In December 2008, she was re-arrested because she made a statement about her pardon while abroad. The Ministry of Justice revoked her pardon and re-imposed her life sentence upon her return to Ethiopia.

WRITE TO:

Karel de Gucht
European Commissioner for Humanitarian
and Development Aid
Berlaymont 10 /165
1049 Brussels
Belgium

- Express concern about the life sentence re-imposed on Birtukan Mideksa following her re-arrest in December 2008.
- Urge him to use all diplomatic means to strongly encourage the government of Ethiopia to immediately and unconditionally release Birtukan Mideksa.



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Birtukan Mideksa



SOLIDARITY WORKS

'I know it's essential not to feel alone. This need for encouragement, strength and company [...] is met by the thousands and thousands of letters of solidarity which we're receiving from the wonderful people who make up the membership of Amnesty International.'

Jorge Velásquez, Guatemalan national, has been campaigning for the killers of his daughter, 19-year-old Claudima Velásquez, to be identified and brought to justice. He received letters from participants in the 2006 action.

ACTIVISM WORKS

'I am lost for words to express my deep gratitude for your support in these difficult times. Be assured that the cards you have sent have fortified thousands of women in Nord Kivu who had lost hope.'

Justine Masika Bihamba, coordinator of the women's human rights NGO, Synergie des femmes contre les violences sexuelles, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. She received letters of support from participants in the 2008 action.

HUMSA AND HADIDIYA HAMLETS, THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Palestinian families living in Humsa and Hadidiya, hamlets in the Jordan Valley region of the West Bank, part of the Occupied Palestinian Territories, face a daily threat of forcible eviction from their homes by the Israeli army. Their movement is restricted and they are denied access to the water and land they need for survival.

The evictions are part of an ongoing pattern of discrimination in which Palestinians' homes are destroyed while scores of Israeli settlements, illegal under international law, are built and developed on occupied Palestinian land and benefit from its natural resources.

WRITE TO:

Benjamin Netanyahu
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
3 Kaplan Street
Hakiry,
Jerusalem 91950
Israel
Fax: +972 2 566 4838, +972 2 649 6659
Email: bnetanyahu@knesset.gov.il
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

- Express concern that the residents of Hadidiya and Humsa are facing the demolition of their homes and expulsion from the area.
- Call for the demolition and expulsion orders to be rescinded, for discrimination and harassment to end, and for confiscated property to be returned.



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**Israeli army demolish
the houses and animal pens
of four Palestinian families in
Hadidiya hamlet in the Jordan
Valley area of the West Bank,
6 February 2008.**



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Cover images (top left to right): Write for Rights actions in Canada, South Korea, Poland, South Korea, Mongolia and Tunisia.

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TAKE ACTION NOW

Join the Amnesty International Write for Rights action between 5 and 13 December 2009

- Do it on your own or take part in one of the many letter-writing events around the world. You can find an Amnesty International office near you on www.amnesty.org
- Host a Human Rights Day party and invite people to come together and take action. Tell others about the people featured in the 2009 action in your blog, or in social networking sites.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



Amnesty International is a global movement of 2.2 million people in more than 150 countries and territories who campaign to end grave abuses of human rights.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion – funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

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