

A group of young people, mostly Black, are gathered in a circle on a dirt ground. They are all looking down at their hands, which are joined together in a supportive grip. Several of them are wearing black t-shirts with a yellow 'WRITE FOR RIGHTS' logo and 'AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL' text. On the ground around them are various 'Write for Rights' materials, including colorful brochures with portraits of individuals, a large white sheet with the text 'FREEDOM TO ALL' and a red handprint, and a smartphone displaying the 'WRITE FOR RIGHTS' logo. The overall atmosphere is one of solidarity and collective action.

WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2024

GLOBAL REPORT

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WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2024 – SOME HIGHLIGHTS

The Write for Rights (W4R) campaign was back again for its 24th edition in 2024, working hard to bring positive change in the lives of nine individuals and groups at risk, and their families and communities.

At least **4,662,638** actions were taken worldwide in more than **200** countries and territories.

64 national entities delivered inspiring campaigns. As ever, activists' **CREATIVITY** and dedication to Write for Rights shone through.

We saw **LETTER WRITING EVENTS** held in all sorts of locations, including

a former prison in the Netherlands, **STUNTS**, human rights education activities in schools, discussion panels, concerts, running events, meetings with embassies, media interviews and even student law competitions!

What's more, almost **1 MILLION PEOPLE** **WORLDWIDE** were mobilized through human rights education alone.

It's early days to assess the human rights impact of the campaign, but we have already seen positive changes in some of the individuals and groups' situations.

One individual featured in Write for Rights 2024, Neth Nahara, was **RELEASED** on 25 December 2024. We have also seen positive steps towards justice in legal cases, slight improvements in prison conditions, and one individual's family finally heard from her after months of silence.

Beyond human rights impact, Write for Rights is a **SOLIDARITY** campaign, showing the individuals at risk featured that people in all corners of the world are supporting them. Of the total numbers of actions, at least **376,518** were cards and letters of solidarity.

The following three pages show some of the incredible Write for Rights events that took place across the world in 2024, from concerts, running events and letter-writing in schools, to demonstrations, speaker tours, and even a letter-writing event in a former prison!

highlights



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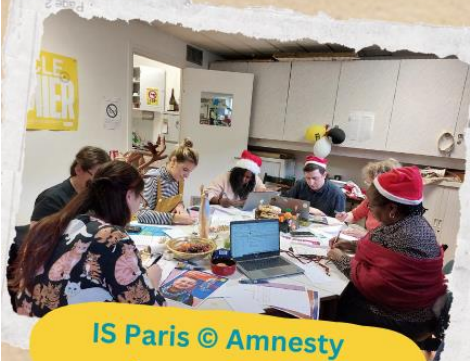
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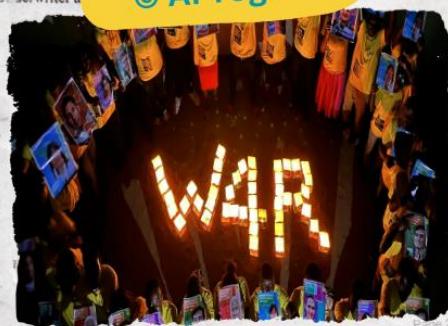
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INDIVIDUAL CAMPAIGN WRITE-UPS

On the following pages you will find write-ups of the campaigns for each of the nine individuals and groups featured in the campaign. The write-ups give a brief overview of the individual or group's story and how they came to be part of the campaign, any changes to the situation of the individual or group, some information on the wider context of human rights issues happening in the relevant countries and regions that may have had an impact, and lastly, how Amnesty International intends to keep up work with and for the individuals featured after the close of the campaign.

As part of this write-up, the impact of the campaign on the individuals' situations is assessed. Impact assessments are carried out in several ways, including interviews with the individuals and groups themselves or their representatives, with family members and local partner organisations working with them. In addition to this, country experts look at signs of impact from the authorities, such as big obvious changes to laws or official procedures, to more incremental changes such as differences in the treatment of the individual or group. Since this assessment has been carried out shortly after the close of the campaign, we are still unable to see the full impact. We will continue to assess impact and keep national entities updated through the casefile for each individual on the Individuals at Risk Platform, and on the Write for Rights Podio space.

NETH NAHARA – ANGOLA



Introduction

On 13 August 2023, Tiktoker Ana da Silva Miguel (AKA Neth Nahara) was arrested at her home by the Criminal Investigation Services, in Luanda, capital of Angola. On 14 August 2023, she was summarily tried and sentenced to six months in prison for “outrage against the state, its symbols and bodies” for having made a live stream on her TikTok account on 12 August 2023, criticizing the government and the President of the Republic.

On 1 September 2023, Neth Nahara’s lawyers were informed about the public prosecutor’s appeal to extend her six-month sentence. However, before her legal team could submit a response, the prosecution’s appeal was fast-tracked to Tribunal da Relação de Luanda (TRL), the second-stage court, violating the 20-day deadline set for such responses. The court did not consider the constitutional complaint submitted by Neth’s lawyers and, on 27 September 2023, upheld the appeal, increasing her sentence to two years in prison.

In 2020, Neth publicly disclosed that she is HIV positive. Despite her health condition, she was denied access to her medication for eight months while in detention, severely impacting her health and putting her life at risk. In December 2023, her condition worsened, requiring emergency hospitalization, but the prison hospital failed to provide adequate care. Neth’s request for a private medical consultation was formally denied by authorities in January 2024, and she was only given access to her medication in April 2024.

Amnesty International became aware of Neth’s case in October 2023, when her sentence was extended from six months to two years. An activist in Angola initially reached out to Amnesty International, requesting we monitor Neth’s case. One month later, during a mission to Angola, the Southern Africa team met with one of Neth’s lawyers.

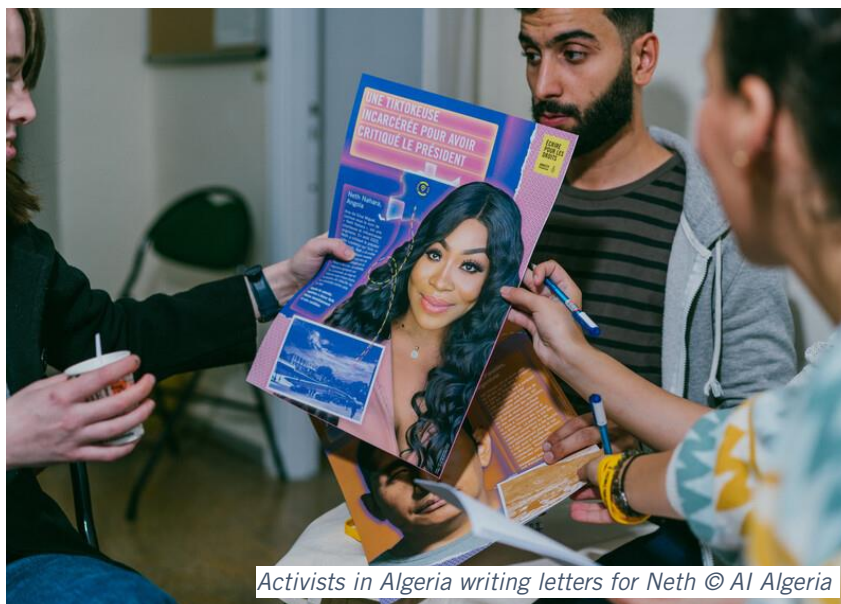
Our primary contacts throughout the process were Neth’s lawyer and other activists who, frequently visited Neth’s mother to provide support and obtain necessary consent. On 12 July 2024, we met Neth’s mother for the first time at her home, marking our first direct interaction with her. She did not have a smartphone, which made communication difficult.



Activists in Algeria taking action for Neth © AI Algeria

However, the activists were instrumental in facilitating contact and keeping our team informed of any developments.

The W4R campaign has been crucial in highlighting systemic violations of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly in Angola, particularly in cases like Neth's, where the authorities have undermined both the right to freedom of expression and the right to health for those detained solely for peacefully exercising their human rights. By shedding light on such violations, especially in a Portuguese-speaking African country, W4R has inspired others to use their voices online and offline and raise international attention to human rights violations in Angola.



Context of human rights concerns in Angola

In addition to Neth Nahara, four other activists, Adolfo Campos, Gildo das Ruas, Pensador, and Tanaice Neutro (collectively known as the AGPT), were arrested on 16 September 2023, ahead of a solidarity protest in Luanda. The mobilization efforts within Angola, particularly led by the wives of the detained activists, as well as within the Angolan diaspora, gained significant momentum in support of the four activists and Neth Nahara. We believe that the campaign advocating for these four activists also played a crucial role in drawing further attention to Neth's case. Simultaneously, Neth's case shed light on the situation of the four activists, who, alongside her, were pardoned by the President on 25 December 2024.



Highlights of Neth's campaign

Social media mobilization played a key role in raising awareness of Neth's case. Numerous outlets covered her story, and every time we checked social media or the internet, Neth's face was prominently featured. This widespread attention gave us confidence that, sooner or later, decision-makers

in Angola would recognize the need to take the right course of action and release Neth.

The team also appreciated the numerous requests we received to have Neth's mother travel to speak about her daughter's case and garner support. Although Neth's mother was unable to travel due to her responsibilities in caring for Neth's children and visiting Neth in prison daily, the fact that such opportunities were being offered was deeply meaningful.

Hilária Abreu, an activist in Angola, highlighted the importance of Neth's campaign: *'The fact that this campaign did not overlook Neth because she was someone who openly spoke about HIV made us understand that everyone has the right to be defended when their rights are violated. The campaign for Neth was an incredible decision. In this way, other people feel more secure knowing that if something happens to them while exercising their rights, the world will not let it go unnoticed.'*

Total number of actions taken in support of Neth: 550,514

Outcomes of Neth's campaign

On 25 December 2024, the President's office announced that 50 individuals, including Neth Nahara, would be granted pardons. Neth was subsequently released from prison on 1 January 2025, following the increased global attention surrounding her case. This decision came amid mounting pressure both domestically and internationally, especially as Angola sought to attract more foreign investment. Had the President intended to pardon Neth earlier, it is likely that



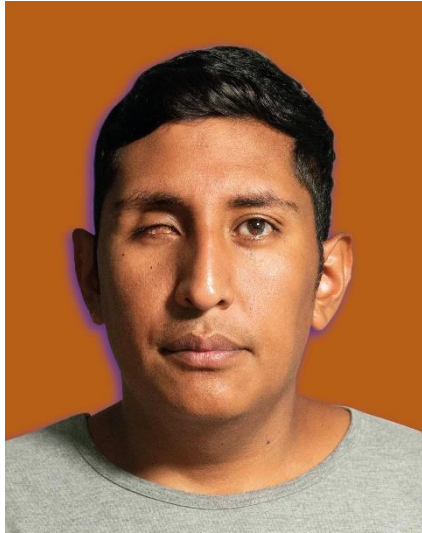
A student in Togo reading Neth's story © AI Togo

this would have occurred in 2023, however, at that time her case had not garnered the same level of public attention that it did in 2024, particularly through the W4R campaign. From the outset of the campaign, it was anticipated that Neth's release would occur in 2024 as a direct result of international scrutiny. We suspect authorities had been hesitant to release her sooner, fearing that such an action might imply an acknowledgment that her detention had been arbitrary and unjust. The most straightforward resolution was a pardon, which ultimately took place. The campaign highlighted Angola's human rights challenges and placed the country under intense global scrutiny.

Neth told us:

'I am free right now, in my house. I was released on 1 January, so I want to say thank you to Amnesty International for everything you did for me...and for everyone who demanded my freedom. Right now, I am in my house, with my kids and speak to my husband and everybody. I want to say thank you.'

JOEL PAREDES –ARGENTINA



Introduction

In June and July 2023, the province of Jujuy in north-western Argentina witnessed mass protests about a provincial constitutional reform pushed forward by the Jujuy provincial government.

Communities in Jujuy denounced the lack of public participation in the constitutional reform process and the failure to conduct free, prior, and informed consultations with Indigenous communities, as required by international standards. In response to the widespread demonstrations that took place across the province, the provincial government deployed heavy-handed police repression, characterized by excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests, and the inappropriate use of less-lethal weapons against peaceful protesters.

Joel Paredes, a 29-year-old musician and ceramist from Jujuy, attended one such protest on 30 June 2023 to oppose the constitutional changes. While playing the bass drum with his band in the main square of Humahuaca, police entered the square and fired rubber bullets at the crowd. Joel was struck, resulting in permanent blindness in his right eye and debilitating nerve pain. To date, no one has been held accountable for this violent act. In August 2023, Joel filed a formal complaint with the Public Prosecutor's Office, which is responsible for leading investigations of this nature. However, no charges have been brought, and the investigation appears to be stalled.

Despite Joel's efforts to seek justice, the judicial investigation has made no progress, the perpetrators remain unidentified, and he has received no form of reparation. The injury has drastically altered Joel's life, affecting his work as a potter and his ability to provide for his family.

Joel's case was included in Amnesty International's *Write for Rights 2024* campaign because it provides a stark example of state repression in Argentina and is emblematic of impunity in cases of police violence against peaceful protesters. It was believed that international pressure could play a critical role in progressing the investigation and ensuring justice and reparation for Joel.

In addition, raising awareness about Joel's case is crucial to exposing the growing repression of protests in Argentina and its devastating impact on those affected. Amid a social and economic crisis, defending the right to peaceful protest is more important than ever. In fact, an anti-picketing protocol restricting the right to protest has been in force since 15 December 2023. Amnesty International [has warned](#) about the serious consequences of implementing this protocol on the ability to protest freely.

For these reasons, Write for Rights was not only an opportunity to seek justice for Joel but also a powerful way to send a clear message to the Argentine authorities that repression and impunity cannot be the response to legitimate social demands.

Context of human rights concerns in Argentina

The repression and criminalization of protests in Argentina have intensified significantly in recent months. Throughout 2024, we have identified numerous cases similar to Joel's, observing the abusive use of force in the context of protests and the systematic criminalization of protesters.

Joel's case exemplifies this troubling reality. His experience is not an isolated incident but part of a broader pattern of state repression aimed at discouraging social protest. His story mirrors that of countless others who have faced repression for exercising their fundamental rights in a country where civic space is increasingly under threat.

This escalation coincides with the economic and political reforms promoted by the Milei government, which have triggered widespread social unrest and mass demonstrations. On 15 December 2023, the Ministry of Security began enforcing the "Protocol for the Maintenance of Public Order in the Event of Roadblocks," which has legitimized the use of force and the criminalization of social protest. This protocol has further consolidated state control over dissent across the country.

The implementation of this protocol has led to a sharp increase in human rights abuses by police forces during protests. Amnesty International has documented a consistent pattern of repression and criminalization of those expressing dissent in public spaces. To shed light on this, the organization launched the website ["El Disenso en Riesgo"](#), which includes a timeline of protests, case studies, audiovisual materials, and a detailed [report](#) documenting the repression of social protests throughout 2024.

The state's response to demonstrations has mirrored the repression witnessed in Jujuy, characterized by the disproportionate use of force by security forces. Tragically, cases like Joel's have been repeated across the country. Amnesty International has interviewed numerous individuals who were repressed or criminalized during the 2024 protests. Among them is Matías Aufieri, a human rights defender who, on 1 February 2024, was struck by a rubber bullet in his left eye while participating in a demonstration in Congress Square.

It is imperative to demand respect for fundamental rights and to call on authorities to conduct thorough, timely, and effective investigations into cases of human rights violations against those exercising their right to protest. Without accountability, the cycle of repression and impunity will continue to undermine civic space and the rights





An activist in Togo in solidarity with Joel © AI Togo

of individuals in Argentina.

Highlights of Joel's campaign

One of the most impactful moments of the *Write for Rights* campaign was the overwhelming show of solidarity for Joel through the incredible volume of letters sent to Amnesty International Argentina. To ensure these messages of support reached him, we placed a letterbox at the entrance of our offices. On several occasions, the letterbox overflowed with

heartfelt letters, a testament to the global commitment to Joel's cause. Even now, we continue to receive many letters of support for Joel on a daily basis.

In a world increasingly dominated by digital communication, the act of sending handwritten letters carries profound significance. Thousands of people from around the globe took the time to write messages of solidarity and demand justice for Joel. These actions demonstrated that the fight for human rights continues to inspire and mobilize communities worldwide in deeply meaningful ways.

Total number of actions taken in support of Joel: 402,466

Outcomes of Joel's campaign

Recently, Joel's lawyer informed us that there has been some movement in his case. The investigation has recently been reactivated, with a new case number assigned. On 6 February 2025, an ocular inspection was conducted by the prosecution, as part of the inspection process, at the location where the events occurred—specifically, where



Piles of letters arriving for Joel in Argentina

Joel was struck by a rubber bullet. This marks a notable step forward in the investigation, which had previously been stalled. So far, no one has been charged yet in the case.

While this progress is encouraging, much remains to be done to ensure justice is served. Continued support for Joel's case will be crucial to sustaining momentum in the investigation and holding the perpetrators accountable.

The global solidarity generated by the *Write for Rights* campaign has been instrumental in keeping Joel's case in the spotlight. The overwhelming number of letters and expressions of

support have sent a clear message to the authorities that Joel's fight for justice is being closely watched by the international community. This attention likely contributed to the reactivation of the investigation and continues to serve as a powerful reminder that Joel is not alone in his struggle.

Next steps

Amnesty International will continue to support Joel through ongoing communication with him and his legal team, closely monitoring the progress of the investigation and providing advocacy for his demand for justice.

An IAR casefile has been developed and will be available soon, as continued international mobilization is critical in ensuring that the investigation proceeds and that the perpetrators are held accountable. Please continue to take action!

WET'SUWET'EN NATION LAND DEFENDERS – CANADA



Introduction

In 2018, Coastal GasLink Pipeline Ltd (CGL) sought and was granted an injunction order to prevent anyone from interfering with construction of the CGL pipeline.

In 2019, CGL began constructing the pipeline through the Wet'suwet'en Nation's ancestral territory, without the consent of the Hereditary Chiefs and their clans. They never agreed to the pipeline and the Nation has the right to decide what development takes place on its territory. Committed to protecting their ancestral lands and everyone's right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, Sleydo' and other land defenders began taking action to stop the pipeline construction. As a result of the injunction, their peaceful actions have been met with intimidation,

harassment and criminalization from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The police have conducted four violent raids on Wet'suwet'en territory, using weapons, helicopters and dogs. More than 75 land defenders were arrested.

Amnesty International Canada worked closely with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in March 2023. The Wet'suwet'en Nation also submitted a direct statement to the Special Rapporteur and contributed to a joint submission submitted by Amnesty International Canada. The Special Rapporteur expressed concern with the “ongoing militarization of Indigenous lands and the criminalization of Indigenous human rights defenders resisting the Trans Mountain and Coastal GasLink pipelines in British Columbia.” Amnesty International is not aware that Canada has taken measures to comply with this decision.



Wet'Suwet'en Land Defenders with the 'solidarity canoe' delivering letters from around the world © Alli McCracken



Letters and drawings for the Wet'suwet'en land defenders written by people in the Philippines © AI Philippines

the “ongoing militarization of Indigenous lands and the criminalization of Indigenous human rights defenders resisting the Trans Mountain and Coastal GasLink pipelines in British Columbia.” Amnesty International is not aware that Canada has taken measures to comply with this decision.

In November 2021, Sleydo' was arrested during one of these raids, with nearly 30 other defenders. Along with two other defenders, she was later found guilty of “criminal contempt” for allegedly disobeying the injunction order to stay away from pipeline construction sites, despite being on her ancestral territory. The land defenders have made an application to the BCSC stating that their

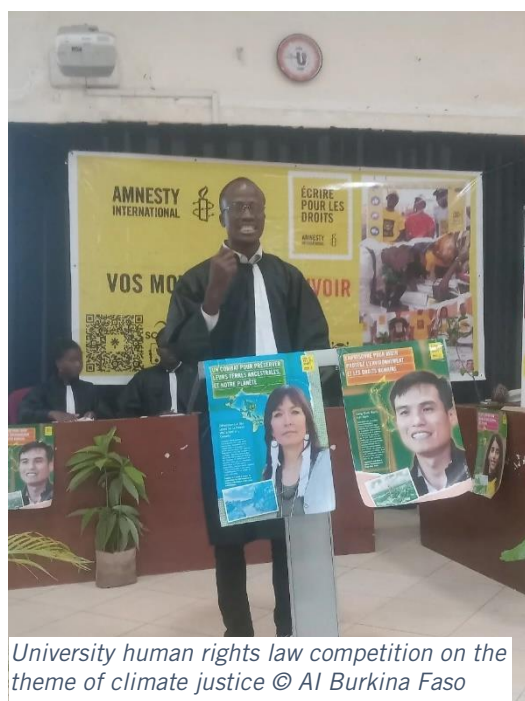
human rights were violated by police during the raids. Their future depends on the outcome of the application. If unsuccessful, they face prison.

This case was put forward as a Write for Rights case because we were hopeful that the government of Canada would be influenced by the overwhelming global support for the Nation. Canada purports and is widely thought to be a human-rights abiding



An activist in Taiwan writing a letter to the Canadian authorities © AI Taiwan

country, but the truth is starkly different. We want the government to live up to its global reputation. The Write for Rights campaign was also the next step in a series of escalation tactics targeting government officials to try to convince them to do the right thing. Sleydo', pictured, represented the Wet'suwet'en Nation in the campaign.



University human rights law competition on the theme of climate justice © AI Burkina Faso

Context of human rights concerns in Canada

The political situation in Canada has been tumultuous in recent months, with the Prime Minister tendering his resignation and the entire political spectrum shifting toward the right. In addition, rising economic tensions with the United States has presumably consumed much of the time and energy of Canadian government officials at all levels.

With specific regards to this campaign, our target was the provincial level government, which is regarded as relatively "liberal", despite its ongoing and persistent violations of the rights of Indigenous peoples.

However, it is unclear at this stage when Canadian federal elections will take place and how that will impact officials at the British Columbia level.

Highlights of the Wet'suwet'en Nation Land Defenders' campaign

Our partners from the Nation participated in several online conversations with national entities, including Amnesty International France, Netherlands and Portugal. A representative from the Nation travelled to Belgium for a speaking tour organized by the national entity, and two representatives from the Nation travelled to France for a speaking tour. Several entities hosted screenings of the film *Yintah* about the Wet'suwet'en struggle.

An incredibly powerful moment came during the Amnesty International Canada Write for Rights

event on 10 December. Hosted by Vancouver Island University, an Indigenous high school student Tulutgak wrote a powerful poem speaking out on the criminalization of Wet'suwet'en land defenders for defending their ancestral lands and urging young people to support the Wet'suwet'en land defenders by signing the petition.

Total number of actions taken in support of the Wet'suwet'en Nation Land Defenders: 540,188

Outcomes of Wet'suwet'en Nation Land Defenders' campaign

On 18 February 2025, there was an important court date for criminalized defenders, but a judge made the decision to uphold the guilty conviction of criminalized defenders. The judge reduced their sentences, but we were trying to convince authorities to drop the charges, which they did not.

While we have not been able to confirm any positive developments in the campaign objectives, it is notable that no other defenders have been criminalized from the Nation in the duration of the case. Albeit there have been no significant demonstrations during this time.



Sleydo' with the 'solidarity canoe' © Alli McCracken

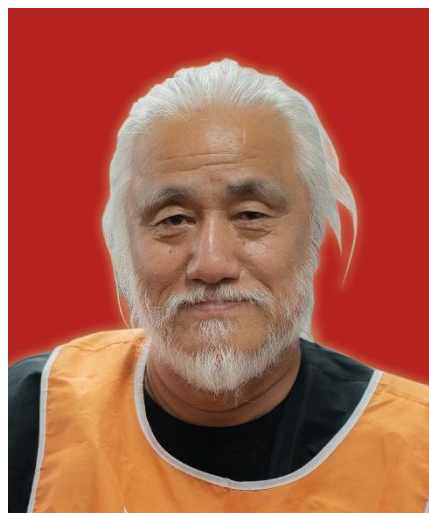
Next steps

The [IAR casefile](#) remains active in the IAR Platform, and we urge national entities to maintain pressure on the authorities. Our work to end to criminalization of all Indigenous land and water defenders in Canada continues, and we will continue to campaign for the end of pipelines being built without free, prior and informed consent.



Youth leaders met officials at the Canadian embassy in Iceland to discuss the Wet'suwet'en land defenders' case © AI Iceland

KYUNG SEOK PARK – SOUTH KOREA



Introduction

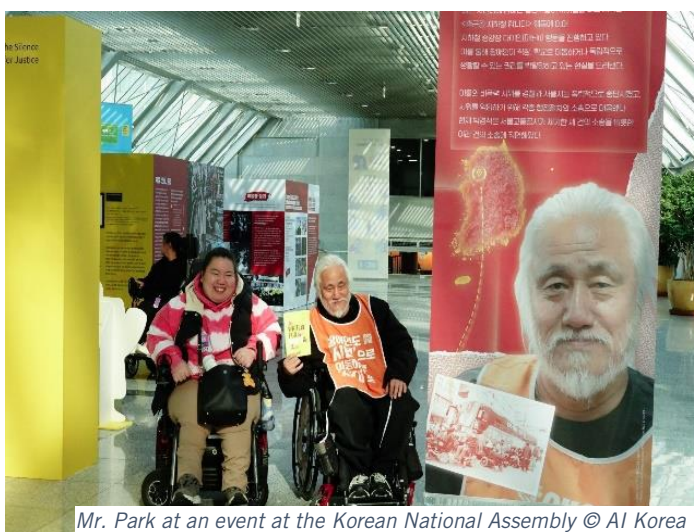
Disability rights activist Kyung Seok Park and Solidarity Against Disability Discrimination (SADD) have been advocating for the rights of people with disabilities since the 1990s. Their key demands focus on the right to mobility through accessible public transportation, the right to education, and the right to employment for people with disabilities. Their activism has led to significant progress, including the installation of at least one elevator in most subway stations in Seoul, and wheelchair accessibility on 60% of Seoul's buses. In 2022, they launched the 'Ride the Subway' protest, during which activists in wheelchairs repeatedly embarked and disembarked Seoul's subway during peak commuting hours to oppose budget cuts

affecting disabilities rights. The protest immediately gained widespread attention, with politicians, the media and the Seoul city government condemning it as a public nuisance. In response, the City of Seoul and Seoul Metro, the company operating the subway system under the city's management, launched a media smear campaign against Mr. Park and SADD. Mr. Park has been the face of SADD's activism since he has endured the most intense smear campaigns and legal battles due to decade-long commitment to peaceful protests.

Context of human rights concerns in South Korea

On 3 December 2024, President Yoon Suk Yeol declared martial law in a televised address, introducing measures that severely restricted basic human rights, including significant limitations on freedom of speech and freedom of peaceful assembly. This heightened public awareness of the right to assembly and drew greater attention to Mr. Park and SADD's subway protests. Until that point, SADD's silent protests in subway stations typically involved 5-10 protestors, all of whom were SADD activists. However, from 3 December, participation surged, with more than

20 people joining the protests daily. As before, Seoul Metro employees and the police responded by forcibly evicting protestors from subway stations. This led to a surge in online posts, making the issue a trending topic on social media. In response, numerous citizens took action, including filing complaints with Seoul Metro, and as a result, from 15 January to 5 February 2025 Seoul Metro and the police refrained from forcibly evicting protestors from the subway stations.



Mr. Park at an event at the Korean National Assembly © AI Korea

Highlights of Kyung Seok Park's campaign



Mr. Park talking at an event in Taiwan © AI Taiwan

In November 2024, to increase pressure on the campaign targeting the Mayor of Seoul, AI Korea decided that the involvement of National Assembly members and politicians would be effective and therefore organized a Write for Rights exhibition inside the National Assembly and gathered letters of assembly members in support of the campaign. To date, more than 40 letters have been collected through this initiative.

Since the launch of the Write for Rights 2024 campaign, Mr. Park

has actively engaged with Amnesty International's communities worldwide. He attended Amnesty International Japan's 'Letter Marathon', Amnesty International Korea's 'Letter Night' and an event at Amnesty International Taiwan. Additionally, he has connected with Amnesty International Mexico, Amnesty International Australia, and Amnesty International Malaysia through online meetings with their members and activists.

When Mr. Park and Amnesty International Korea's campaigner were invited to Amnesty International Taiwan's Write for Rights event, local disability rights activists visited the event site specifically to meet with Mr. Park. They engaged in a meaningful conversation about the challenges both countries face regarding disability rights, how they can fight through it, and practical knowledge for advocacy. Amnesty International Taiwan and Amnesty International Korea campaigners facilitated the discussion through interpretation. It was a truly inspirational moment, as it demonstrated Amnesty's role in connecting grassroots movements in South Korea and Taiwan, fostering solidarity, and strengthening their shared fight for disability rights.

Following the visit to Taiwan, an American School in Taichung reached out to Amnesty International Korea, informing us that their students had written letters to Mr. Park as part of their class activities. They expressed a strong interest in meeting Mr. Park through online calls. Mr. Park was more than happy to speak with the students about the rights of people with disabilities. As a tribute to their engagement, the art collage they created, titled 'We have the right to ride', now hangs in SADD's office.



Students at the American School in Taichung supporting Mr. Park © Taichung American School

Mr. Park expressed gratitude for the solidarity he felt through the campaign:

'I am grateful we're garnering worldwide support. It means a lot to be part of Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign. The disability rights movement has been a lonely battle, so it makes us feel huge solidarity and warmth to be part of a big movement.'

He also made a plea to people supporting him:

'To those who write letters, I want you to understand this – this is not just a problem for those with disabilities. It is an issue we must tackle together.'

Total number of actions taken in support of Kyung Seok Park: 463,645

Outcomes of Kyung Seok Park's campaign

Until January 2025, SADD's silent protests, where protestors remained still and silent while holding paper signs above their heads on subway station platforms, were met with excessive violence from Seoul Metro employees and the police. Protestors were forcibly dragged out of subway stations, with officers gripping their arms and legs. Electric wheelchairs were also pulled out with such force that many were damaged or malfunctioned as a result. However, on 15 January 2025, for the first time, Seoul Metro employees and the police did not react to the peaceful protest with such violence. Instead, they simply assisted commuters in moving around the demonstration. Amnesty International Korea inquired about this shift in response, and Seoul Metro stated: 'Many citizens have raised concerns about the physical suppression of SADD's protest, so we have slightly altered our way of response.' This moment was deeply moving, as it demonstrated the tangible impact of public attention and engagement. However, the use of excessive force resumed on 6 February 2025.

One particularly distressing incident occurred when Mr. Park and Amnesty International's Korea campaigner attempted to attend Amnesty International Japan's 'Letter Writing Marathon' event. Upon arrival at Narita Airport, Mr. Park was denied entry. Japanese immigration officials cited his 2012 conviction under South Korea's Assembly and Demonstration Act, invoking "Article 5, Paragraph 1, Subparagraph 4 of Japan's Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act", which states:



People in Nepal signing petitions supporting Mr Park © AI Nepal

"Any foreign national who has been sentenced to imprisonment for one year or more under the

laws of Japan or any other country shall be denied landing in Japan. However, this does not apply to those convicted of political crimes.”

Despite having successfully conducted peaceful international solidarity activities in Japan just a few months prior without any entry restrictions, Mr. Park was forced to return to Korea on the same day, only four hours after arrival.

Notably, Japanese immigration officials had a printed copy of an online article citing Mr. Park’s criminal record prepared in advance. Given this, Amnesty International Korea suspected that the denial of entry may have been a targeted act against a human rights activist. In response, Amnesty International Korea sent an official letter to the Japanese Ministry of Justice in December 2024, but no reply was received.

Next steps

While it is a significant achievement that excessive violence against SADD’s protests was briefly halted, Mr. Park was recently found guilty in a high court trial for placing stickers in subway stations to raise awareness about disability discrimination. Additionally, Mr. Park and SADD are facing a civil lawsuit amounting to 900 million won (around GBP 480,000).

Mr. Park and SADD’s story will be prominently featured in the upcoming report on freedom of assembly in Korea, set for release in June 2025. Since Amnesty International Korea’s ultimate goal is to push the City of Seoul and Seoul Metro to drop the charges against Mr. Park and SADD activists, we will continue applying pressure on these targets through a campaign following the report’s publication. AI Korea is also in discussions with Mr. Park and SADD about the possibility of developing a casefile.



ĐẶNG ĐÌNH BÁCH – VIET NAM



Introduction

Đặng Đình Bách a prominent environmental justice lawyer in Viet Nam, has garnered recognition for his tireless advocacy and activism in addressing environmental issues. Bách was awarded the 2023 [Paul K. Feyerabend Award](#) and 2024 Human Rights First's [Roger N. Baldwin Medal of Liberty](#) for his courage and dedicated activism.

Growing up in Viet Nam, Bách witnessed firsthand the environmental degradation caused by pollution and climate change, spurring him to take action. In 2007, in his late twenties, Bach co-founded and became the Director of the Research Center on Law and Policy of Sustainable Development (LPSD). This is the first public interest legal organization in Viet Nam. Through LPSD, Bách trained young lawyers to better protect the environment and public health.

Since 2022, he has been serving a five-year sentence on a charge of tax evasion, through an unfair trial. Bách's case, sadly, is not isolated. Four other environmental NGO leaders also faced similar charges between 2021 and 2023, and Amnesty International suspected a targeted suppression of environmental justice activism.

According to his family, Bách's health has continuously deteriorated due to poor prison conditions and harassment from prison officers. Despite this, Bách's commitment to justice remains unwavering. He continues to go on hunger strikes, at least four times already, to protest his sentence and demand improvement in prison conditions for himself and other prisoners.

Context of human rights concerns in Viet Nam

Since the middle of the 2010s, the environmental movement in Viet Nam has gained huge momentum, with several protests on a scale never seen before. A large part of this new phenomenon is due to the tremendous people power: climate justice is one of the rare areas in Vietnam's civil society landscape where individuals, activists' groups, as well as NGOs from diverse sectors and walks of life unite in their effort to hold the Vietnamese government and corporate actors to account.

According to the World Bank and an analysis by The Lancet Regional Health - Western Pacific, Viet Nam is one of the world's top five countries most vulnerable to climate change. Typhoons, floods, drought, and



landslides frequently threaten a high proportion of the country's 98 million people and economic assets concentrated along its long, densely populated coast. The low-lying coastal and river delta regions have very high vulnerability to rising sea levels, which means about 6 - 12 million people will potentially be affected by coastal flooding. Alarming, the population most impacted by climate change is often the most socio-economically disadvantaged and deprived of opportunities and means to have their voice heard on issues that affect them.

Viet Nam announced at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow (COP26) its target to achieve net zero greenhouse gas (GhG) emissions by 2050. However, the Climate Action Tracker rates the country's climate targets, and action remains "Critically insufficient". Ironically, at the same time, Vietnamese authorities have increased their suppression of climate justice advocates. Since 2021, at least five environmental and climate NGO leaders have been arrested and charged with "tax evasion", under Article 200 of the Penal Code. Bách's detention is designed to send a chilling message to climate justice advocates and civil society organizations. The "tax evasion" charge is the most recent tactic used by the authorities to silence activists, in addition to numerous ways that have been deployed by Vietnamese authorities to clamp down on human rights activists and civil society organizations.



AI Germany's 'tiger cage' action © AI Germany



Activists in Togo in solidarity with Bach © AI Togo

Highlights of Đặng Đình Bách's campaign

Thanks to numerous creative events organized by national entities around the world, a remarkable wave of global solidarity has been demonstrated through the countless postcards, packages, and letters sent to Bách during his imprisonment. Amnesty International Germany has undertaken an impactful initiative, unveiling a striking "tiger cage" on the streets to vividly illustrate the harsh conditions Bách endures behind bars.

The Amnesty International Climate Justice Team also featured Bách's story in a public solidarity action at COP 29 to highlight his situation.

In addition, Bách is featured in Amnesty's Rights Arcade game, a human rights education tool that helps inform the public about his story and the current struggle of climate activism in Vietnam.

Total number of actions taken in support of Đặng Đình Bách: 407,206

Outcomes of Đặng Đình Bách's campaign

Since the end of 2024, Bach's prison condition has slightly improved. He was removed from the "tiger cage" and transferred to another cell with more light and space. He could leave the cell to socialize with other prisoners in the common area. Although there is no clear evidence of a direct impact of W4R on this improvement, we believe that the W4R campaign has contributed to international attention on Bach's situation, which helped his fights for justice inside the prison be heard. Bách is aware of Amnesty International's campaign and solidarity actions for him. This strengthens his spirit and belief in his activism.

In a letter to Amnesty International, Thao, Bach's wife, said:

'On my last visit with Bach on 14.12.2024, Bach asked me to send his love and wish to you and your families for a restful festive period, a Merry Christmas and a healthy, happy New Year. On behalf of Bach and my son, I would like to express our deep gratitude for all of your assistance during our life crisis.'

The prison has kept his paper and pens, preventing Bách from writing and expressing his thoughts and ideas. Bách and his family continue to file a complaint to resolve this issue.

Next steps

Amnesty International plans to continue to campaign and advocate for Bách's release after Write for Rights. A casefile will be developed.

MARYIA KALESNIKAVA – BELARUS



Introduction

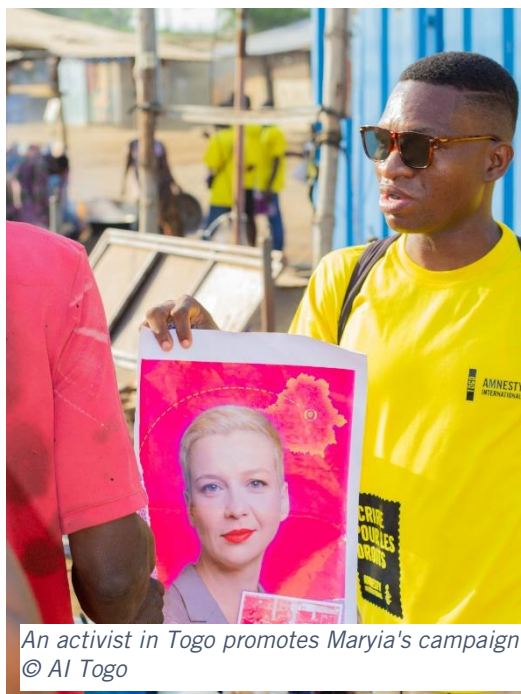
Maryia Kalesnikava is a Belarusian politician, musician and art director who is recognized as prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International. She was arbitrary arrested and prosecuted under trumped up charges and is currently held in prison in Belarus where she is serving an 11-year sentence for protesting against human rights violations, arbitrary arrests and prosecutions, and abuses of the electoral process and the widely disputed presidential election in Belarus in 2020. Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets. Maryia was a symbol of the Belarusian peaceful protest. When Maryia's case was put forward for Write for Rights, she had been held incommunicado for more than one year. We therefore thought a global campaign could give her case and the repression of the Belarusian people more attention internationally.

Context of human rights concerns in Belarus

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, who had been seen as more liberal than other politicians in Belarus, was changed in June 2024. Amnesties were given by the Belarusian president several times in July to December.

However, the number of people released through amnesties was not a sign of a more liberal regime, as the Belarusian authorities were arresting more people and continued their repression at the same time.

Presidential elections were held in January 2025. Before the election, from November to January, one propaganda television channel showed coverage about detained political opponents arrested after the protests in 2020 who had been incommunicado for more than 600 days. We believe that the Write for Rights campaign targeting the Belarusian authorities may have pressured them to show the political opponents alive.



*An activist in Togo promotes Maryia's campaign
© AI Togo*

Highlights of Maryia's campaign

Tatsiana, Maryia's sister, was heavily involved in the campaign. Tatsiana was happy to see many national entities participating in the first meeting about her sister's case held in mid-September. Tatsiana participated in many events organized by national entities:

- A video featuring Tatsiana was shown to the audience at the Literature House in Oslo where Amnesty International spoke about Maryia's kidnapping. It was good to see how the video affected people in the audience. Tatsiana was happy to hear that the event was held this day, marking the start of Maryia's Write for Rights campaign.



A demonstration at the Belarus embassy in Budapest © Szabolcs Nagy

- Tatsiana participated in Amnesty International Netherlands' letter-writing marathon event virtually and joined Amnesty International Belgium's event in person. Both events were attended by several hundred people and were impressive and inspiring, according to Tatsiana.
- Meetings with Amnesty International France's members and staff. This was important for Tatsiana as she lives in France most of the time. Amnesty International France also organized a film screening where Tatsiana spoke. Maryia was the symbol of the 2024 festival.
- Tatsiana enjoyed Salzburg Theatre's play on Belarus, co-organized by Amnesty International Switzerland.
- Tatsiana visited Amnesty International Bulgaria and attended a film screening in Sofia.
- A solidarity concert 'Jam for Rights', was held in Lillestrøm in Norway on 30 October where Tatsiana did a very powerful speech about her sister Maryia. A young flute player played a contemporary music piece which was very powerful. Tatsiana was touched by the music and artists playing for her sister.
- Lobby meetings were organized with politicians at the Norwegian Parliament where they held a photo of Maryia standing side by side with Tatsiana. The posters and cartoon with Maryia's story were used to tell her story to members of parliament as well as students during an event at the Law faculty in Norway.
- Tatsiana felt that the meetings she had with politicians and NGOs in Brussels and the US were very important. This included meetings with the UN.

Total number of actions taken in support of Maryia: 494,503

Outcomes of Maryia's campaign

During the exchange of political prisoners in August 2024 between Western countries, Belarus and Russia, no Belarusians were exchanged. This was a huge disappointment for Tatsiana and for other Belarusians feeling that Western countries had forgotten about Belarus.

In November 2024, Maryia was finally, after more than 600 days incommunicado, able to meet her father. The meeting was organized by a propaganda channel so there was uncertainty if the

pictures sent out were fake or manipulated. However, Tatsiana confirmed that the meeting happened. Tatsiana believes that her own #SOS-Maryia campaign, as well as the international campaigning done by others, such as the Write for Rights campaign, in addition to the UN's documentation, contributed to higher attention about Maryia's case, which



Activists in Guinea call for Maryia's release © AI Guinée

led to the BBC asking Lukashenka directly where Maryia was being kept and why no one heard from her in an interview in October.

Threats against family members means that it impossible to get frequent and more detailed information about detained political opponents and human rights defenders, making it difficult to assess the contribution of the Write for Rights campaign.

The global solidarity garnered through Write for Rights was very important in building Tatsiana's strength to continue her own fight for her sister. She has more hope now compared to when we started the campaign.



Tatsiana talking at an event in Bulgaria © A. Tarpanov, AI Bulgaria

Next steps

Amnesty International will continue to campaign for Maryia, alongside her sister Tatsiana. Due to the current geo-political situation, Tatsiana believes it is more important than ever to reach out and to remind our own governments about Maryia Kalesnikava and other Belarusians imprisoned so they are not forgotten.

ŞEBNEM KORUR FINCANCI – TURKEY



Introduction

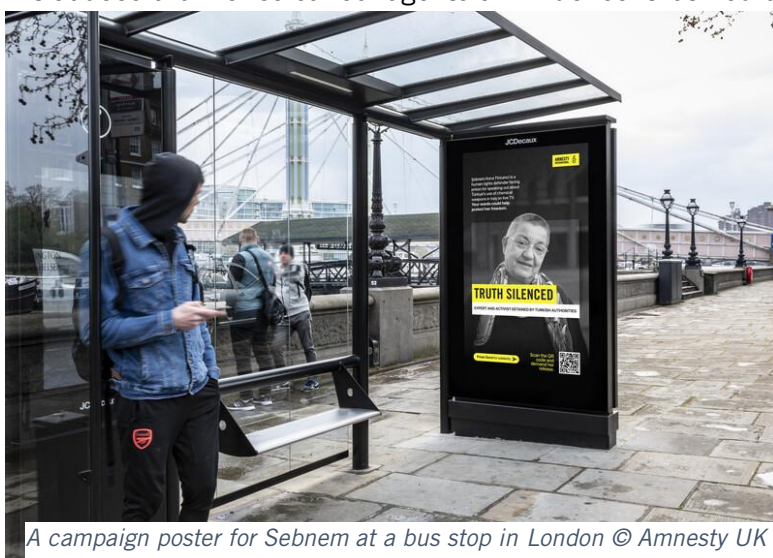
Şebnem Korur Fincancı is a prominent Turkish human rights defender and forensic medicine expert. In 2022, she was arrested and remanded in pre-trial detention after calling for an investigation into the Turkish government's alleged use of chemical weapons in northern Iraq, commenting on images she was shown during a TV interview. She was charged with 'making propaganda for a terrorist organization' and sentenced to over two years in prison. She was released from prison after being detained in pretrial detention for almost three months. Her appeal against her conviction is pending at the Court of Cassation. If her appeal is unsuccessful, she could be imprisoned. Her arrest and prosecution are part of a broader crackdown on human

rights defenders and critics of the government in Türkiye.

Şebnem's case was selected for Write for Rights due to her unjust imprisonment for speaking out against human rights abuses. Her detention, prosecution and conviction represent a dangerous attack on free speech and the work of human rights defenders. By featuring her in Write for Rights, Amnesty International mobilizes a global network of activists to amplify calls for justice and show solidarity with Şebnem and others unjustly imprisoned and prosecuted for standing up for human rights.

Context of human rights concerns in Turkey

Before and during the Write for Rights campaign, Türkiye's human rights situation continued to deteriorate, with increased repression against human rights defenders, activists, journalists, and critics of the government. In 2022, Türkiye introduced harsher laws restricting free speech, including the controversial disinformation law, which criminalizes the spread of 'false information' and has been used to target independent media and human rights defenders. At the end of 2024, the government introduced a bill of so called 'agents of influence' that would criminalize acts, such as obtaining, destroying or disclosing documents and/or classified information related to national security, and political or military espionage, threatening the functioning of civil society organizations, human rights defenders and journalists among others. Following huge public pressure, the proposal was withdrawn but the threat of its reintroduction in some form remains. The first few weeks of 2025 have seen attacks on the Istanbul Bar



A campaign poster for Şebnem at a bus stop in London © Amnesty UK

A student in Togo signs a petition supporting Sebnem © AI Togo



Association, an expansion of the Gezi Park prosecutions and arrests and imprisonment of lawyers, journalists and other civil society figures.

Şebnem's case is part of a broader crackdown in which the Turkish government has targeted those who expose human rights abuses, particularly regarding the Kurdish issue. This climate of repression has made it increasingly difficult for human rights defenders and

organizations like Amnesty to carry out their work freely. However, international attention and solidarity during the campaign applied crucial pressure on the Turkish government, highlighting the global demand for an end to the harassment she faces and for an end to such oppressive measures.

Highlights of Şebnem's campaign

During the Write for Rights campaign, Şebnem Korur Fincancı received strong support from Amnesty's national entities and global activists. She received thousands of letters and cards including handmade ones from across the world. Thousands of people participated in letter-writing events, stunts, and online actions calling for an end to the harassment she is facing. National entities, especially in the UK, Germany, and the US, organized rallies and petitions, amplifying the call for justice. Speaking to the Türkiye and Individuals at Risk campaigners at the Europe Regional Office, she expressed deep gratitude for this global solidarity, mentioning in particular cards she received from school children in Singapore which she set aside for replies as she was very touched by these. She said it was a huge boost to her morale to receive the correspondence. She also said the video produced for the Amnesty campaign was shared far and wide and people were still stopping her in the street, recognizing her after having seen it.

Şebnem participated in meetings and events in France and Germany in December 2024 at the time of the campaign peak. She shared that each and every individual who participated in these meetings has made a powerful impression on her. She underlined the importance of these actions in keeping her case alive and pressuring Turkish authorities. She was also particularly pleased to hear that the authorities would have received even more letters than her.

On 22 November 2024, as part of the International Women Human Rights Defenders Day, the event *"Human Rights Advocacy in Turkey: Gender-Based Challenges and Struggles"* took place in Istanbul organized by Amnesty Türkiye, featuring Şebnem as a speaker. Other speakers included a representative from *1000 Youth for Palestine* and two independent LGBTI+ activists. The event attracted significant interest, with a diverse audience including teachers, students, and LGBTI+ activists. Şebnem Korur Fincancı expressed her gratitude and shared her great pleasure in being with young LGBTI+ activists and a representative from *1000 Youth for Palestine*.

On 15 December 2024, Amnesty Türkiye organized the *"Stronger Together"* event for Human Rights Day on 10 December. The event featured art workshops and a reception. Throughout the event, the cases of other individuals featured in the Write for Rights campaign were introduced, and solidarity messages were written for Şebnem, Joel, Neth and Manahel.

Total number of actions taken in support of Şebnem: 406,294

Outcomes of Şebnem's campaign

While there has not been an outcome to her case and her appeal is still pending, Şebnem stated that the Write for Rights campaign had a profound positive impact on her. Although there are at least two ongoing prosecutions against her in addition to her conviction, the existence of worldwide movement ready to mobilize in her defence and in solidarity is very comforting to her and to the human rights movement in Türkiye.

On receiving mail, Şebnem said:

'Starting with hundreds, now reached thousands, of beautiful, some handmade, cards, letters empowering my stance, warming my heart.'

Next steps

We have not yet developed a casefile for Şebnem Korur Fincancı, but we plan to do so soon. We will continue working closely with her and her representatives, providing support through advocacy, legal assistance, and public campaigns. This will include monitoring her situation and pushing for accountability and justice for any violations of her rights. Updates will be shared as the case progresses.



OQBA HASHAD – EGYPT



Introduction

Oqba Hashad is an Egyptian student who has been arbitrarily detained since May 2019. He is being punished for the human rights activism of his brother Amr Hashad. Oqba Hashad, who lost his right leg in a childhood accident, was subjected to a litany of human rights violations. Prison authorities tortured him and continue to deny him a functional prosthetic leg as well as appropriate medical care.

Amr Hashad, Oqba's brother reached out to Amnesty International asking for the organization to campaign on his behalf. The Egypt team documented Oqba's arbitrary detention and issued several Urgent Actions to alert the movement about his ordeal. Amnesty International has also supported Amr in the Netherlands, including while he was in immigration related detention and following his release, to help him rebuild in life.

It was deemed that Write for Rights' coordinated campaigning could help in securing Oqba's release or at the very least improve his conditions of detention as Egyptian authorities continue to be sensitive to global criticism of its human rights record, and Oqba is not a detainee whose release is highly improbable based on political reasons, as in the case of some detainees from the Muslim Brotherhood who are excluded from any national releases or pardons. It was felt that his case could also alert a broader public about the ongoing human rights crisis in Egypt.

Context of human rights concerns in Egypt

Egypt is in the throes of protracted human rights and impunity crisis. Authorities continue to crush dissent and stifle civil society. Since 2013, the Egyptian authorities have severely restricted the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. The Egyptian authorities systematically abuse the criminal justice system and counterterrorism legislation to keep opponents and critics arbitrarily detained indefinitely. Thousands, including human rights defenders, journalists, lawyers, opposition politicians, women social media influencers and peaceful protesters, continue to be arbitrarily detained for exercising their human rights. Since 2013, thousands have been held in prolonged pretrial detention based on unfounded charges. Thousands of others have



An activist in Bulgaria reading Oqba's story © Anastas Tarpanov – Al Bulgaria

been convicted in grossly unfair trials, including by emergency courts, military courts, and terrorism-circuits of regular criminal courts, and sentenced to heavy prison terms or to death. Executions are carried out following grossly unfair trials, marred by reports of enforced disappearances and torture. Since October 2024, the Egyptian parliament has been discussing a government draft bill to replace the 1950 Criminal Procedure Code (CPC). The new proposed CPC undermines Egypt's already-weakened fair trial rights protections and further empowers abusive law enforcement officials. Several advocacy initiatives have been initiated by the Egypt team and Amnesty International's offices in the European Union to counter withdraw the most draconian article.

Highlights of Oqba's campaign

Amr is pleased with Amnesty International's campaigning on behalf of his brother. He believes that Amnesty's involvement can help in obtaining Oqba's freedom by putting sufficient pressure on the Egyptian authorities. The Egypt team has received thousands of solidarity letters from all over the world, to be passed on to Oqba's family. Amr is very



An activist in Togo promoting Oqba's campaign © AI Togo

happy with Amnesty International's involvement on his case in terms of campaigning activities, including digital campaigning and mobilization. Oqba's case was picked up by national entities who organized events and amplified our messages across the movement. Amr participated in two events organized by Amnesty Netherlands to speak about Oqba's case as well as the human rights situation in Egypt. Amr also participated in an event organized by Amnesty Chile where he presented Oqba's case through a video recording. Finally, Amr was involved in the campaign by giving feedback on the content produced as well as taking part in some internal and external activities. He is very grateful for everyone who is campaigning for Oqba's release.

Amr told us:

'Every letter, every signature, and every voice makes a difference. Through the Write for Rights campaign, Amnesty International members have helped change the lives of countless people facing in justice, proving that collective action can bring real change. Your support isn't just an act of solidarity—it's a powerful force that challenges oppression and demands justice. Together, we can keep fighting for human rights and stand with people like Oqba Hashad, ensuring that no one is forgotten and that justice prevails. The world needs voices like yours—let's keep making a difference.'

Total number of actions taken in support of Oqba: 401,862

Outcomes of Oqba's campaign



Activists in Algeria supporting Oqba © AI Algeria

At the time of writing, Oqba Hashad remains unjustly detained. However, on 6 February 2025, Amr informed the Egypt team that his brother received a visit by prison officials who took measurements to provide him with a functional prosthetic leg, one of our key long term asks. Pending his release, this would greatly improve his situation as it would allow him

to move freely and independently. We hope by that continuing to campaign for Oqba, we will be able to pressure the Egyptian authorities into releasing him.

On 4 February, the prison administration also called Oqba's mother to ask her to give them his previous prosthetic leg. During their phone call they threatened to arrest her other children living in Egypt and accused them of sharing information with people outside. While this is alarming and Amnesty will continue to monitor developments, it shows that the global campaigning has not gone unnoticed by Egyptian security forces, and that they are seeking to take steps to reduce the negative coverage.

Next steps

We have not yet developed a casefile for Oqba Hashad, but we plan to do so and will also continue issuing UA updates, as public calls are must more effective in the context of Egypt. We will continue working closely with Amr and his lawyers, providing support through advocacy and public campaigning. This will include monitoring his situation as well as continuing to call for his immediate and unconditional release. The Egypt team will share updates with the movement when they receive new information.



Activists in Guinée supporting Oqba © AI Guinée

MANAHEL AL-OTAIBI – SAUDI ARABIA



Introduction

Manahel al-Otaibi is a 30-year-old Saudi fitness instructor, human rights defender and blogger. She is a brave and outspoken advocate for women's rights who used her social media platforms to call for greater rights and freedoms for women in the country. Manahel was arrested on 16 November 2022 and charged with violating the Anti-Cyber Crime Law due to her tweets in support of women's rights, as well as posting photos of herself at the mall without an *abaya* (a traditional loose-fitting long-sleeved robe) on Snapchat. On 9 January 2024, the Specialized Criminal Court, the country's counter-terror court, sentenced Manahel al-Otaibi to 11 years in prison for "terrorist offences" based on these charges in a secret hearing.

Manahel had already been arrested for a year and half when we put her case forward for the campaign. We believed that including her case in the W4R campaign would help demonstrate to the Saudi authorities that Manahel's case is emblematic of the crackdown on voices calling for change. Amnesty International's campaigning on Saudi Arabia in the past decade has shown that the authorities are susceptible to international pressure and worry about damage to their "reformist" and "progressive" image internationally. The public outcry following the [detention of prominent women human rights defenders](#) (WHRDs) in 2018 on trumped-up terrorism-related charges led to significantly lower prison terms for these women who would have otherwise faced up to decades in prison. Further, Amnesty International's campaigning on the detention conditions of human rights defenders has in some cases led to better treatment of detainees by the authorities. Building on our documentation of the arbitrary detention of WHRDs imprisoned in Saudi Arabia, we sought to have as much global attention as possible on Manahel's case to discourage Saudi authorities from further violations against her and deter further crackdown on online expression.

Manahel's detention is happening as Saudi Arabia invests billions of dollars in an image laundering campaign. In 2017, the Saudi Information Ministry announced [a global campaign](#) "to promote the changing face of KSA (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) to the rest of the world and improve international perception of the kingdom". However, cases like Manahel's and the many other individuals unjustly detained in Saudi Arabia expose the hypocrisy behind Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman's promises to position his policies and practices to reform the country as progressive and inclusive.

Context of human rights concerns in Saudi Arabia

The broader political and human rights landscape in Saudi Arabia remained deeply challenging before and during the campaign. The authorities maintained a zero-tolerance approach to critical expression, however innocuous, continuing their relentless crackdown on freedom of expression. Despite the gravity of these violations, there has been little sustained pressure from influential figures, whether athletes, artists, influencers, or states, who continue to visit and engage with Saudi Arabia, without meaningfully using their platforms to advocate for detainees. We did not see any standout examples of this type of advocacy in 2024.

That said, there has been sustained interest and engagement on Saudi Arabia's human rights record around the world by others. We fear that Saudi Arabia's continued image-washing work could lead to its human rights record largely escaping scrutiny outside of this ongoing engagement by civil society, human rights activists, and engaged members of the public, such as Amnesty International supporters. Journalists

continue to put up this scrutiny, particularly in coverage of the country's entertainment and sports investments, where they regularly bring up human rights issues and contact our team for comment. However, it is still an uphill battle for campaigners, including Saudi voices, to be heard. We are far from witnessing the level of scrutiny on Saudi Arabia's human rights record that followed the brutal killing of Jamal Khashoggi in 2018.



Activists in Guinea calling for Manahel's release © AI Guinée

At the same time, Saudi Arabia's global influence continues to expand through its vast sovereign wealth fund, the Public Investment Fund, which remains a powerful vehicle for attracting foreign business. The political and economic interests at play, and Saudi Arabia's role as a regional power and economic force, will continue to help it deflect pressure over rights concerns. From our own trip to Riyadh and meetings with embassy officials in 2024, we gained the impression that diplomatic engagement on human rights remains weak, with little evidence that foreign governments are pressing Saudi authorities on individual cases or broader rights concerns. One of the members of our delegation left with the impression that diplomats perhaps felt that this repression was an acceptable price to pay for the fulfilment of Saudi Arabia's flagship socio-economic reform programme, Vision 2030.



Postcards written to Manahel by people in Thailand © AI Thailand

Highlights of Manahel's campaign

Although we have not had direct contact with Manahel, we view our support for her family, particularly through her sister Foz, as a crucial part of the campaign. Alongside our ultimate goal of securing Manahel's freedom, we also aim to ensure that her family feels supported and experiences tangible solidarity from around the world. This is especially important given the family's current isolation from each other. Foz faces charges and

prosecution in Saudi Arabia, and is in exile in the UK, while their third sister, Mariam, remains under a travel ban in Saudi Arabia after previously serving a prison sentence for her women's

rights activism.

Several key actions by national entities stood out:

- Amnesty International Austria's "Fitness for Freedom" Event: This initiative channelled Manahel's positive spirit and her love for fitness, which was evident in her social media posts before her arrest. Fitness instructors volunteered to lead classes outside the Saudi embassy, with Amnesty members showing up in solidarity to participate. The social media content from the event was moving, and Foz, Manahel's sister, shared them on her channel several times.
- Amnesty International Norway's Student-Led Action: Students gathered at the faculty of law before running to the Saudi embassy. Afterwards, they held a picnic at a nearby park, where they discussed Manahel's case and signed a petition.
- Letter-writing by AI Netherlands activists: These were received by Foz, who expressed how meaningful it was to see people's continued interest in Manahel's case.
- Perspective Pieces: Foz shared the [Perspectives](#) piece written in support of Manahel, commenting on the hope this solidarity gave her (see quote below).
- Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Riyadh: On 15 December 2024, the Saudi Arabia country team, Amnesty International Norway and Amnesty International Netherlands attended the IGF. We printed out case cards for Manahel and Neth Nahara, both of which were confiscated by UN security—an incident that, while highlighting the limits of expression even at international events held in Saudi Arabia, further helped raise awareness about the cases online and in media coverage of the IGF.
- Global Call with Amnesty International national entities: Foz participated in a call with Amnesty entities from around the world, including Taiwan, Peru, Portugal, and the Netherlands. She described the experience as moving, saying it made her feel like she had a "global family" standing with her.



An activist in Norway delivering petition signatures to the Saudi embassy © Amnesty International

Foz was moved by the diversity of actions from around the world, and the team shared with her actions with her from Burkina Faso, Togo, Nepal, Taiwan, Montreal and London.

Total number of actions taken in support of Manahel: 661,354

Outcomes of Manahel's campaign

Manahel was able to contact her family briefly on 15 March 2025, just three days after the global handover of the Write for Rights petition signatures gathered for Manahel, and one month

after an Amnesty International press release expressing concern over her enforced disappearance. Manahel still has not been permitted to resume weekly phone calls, but her family is relieved to have heard from her as they had absolutely no information for three months. Manahel's voice sounded well on the phone and she told her family that her treatment in prison has improved. She also said her trial hearings had resumed. This is good news, but it is worth noting that her phone calls are monitored and she cannot speak freely. That said, her sister Foz credits public pressure with the fact that they were finally able to hear from her.

Amnesty International requested a prison visit ahead of the Amnesty International delegation's travel to Riyadh for the IGF between in December 2024. This request, along with requests for meetings with authorities, have gone unanswered.

On 10 February 2025, Salma al-Shehab, a woman who was detained on quite similar charges as Manahel, was released after four years in prison. She had initially been sentenced to 34 years in prison on terrorism charges for social media activity on women's rights. Saudi activists credit public pressure with the reduction of her sentence and her release. We will continue to work on Manahel's case in order to secure her freedom and deter further prosecutions of similar cases.

Next steps

A [casefile](#) has been developed for Manahel and we will continue steady engagement on her case, keeping in close contact with her sister Foz. This will include regular UA updates, social media content, and press releases updating on Manahel's case. We will communicate these updates regularly to national entities.

A message from Manahel's sister Foz:

'On behalf of my sister Manahel, myself, my family, and all women in Saudi Arabia, I want to thank all Amnesty International members for their incredible solidarity. Your support for women in Saudi Arabia, who have faced threats because of their activism for women's rights, means so much to us. Thank you for everything you have done. Thank you for being a true voice for Manahel and for standing behind me, giving me the strength to keep going and to share Manahel's story with the world. I am deeply grateful for your efforts, and I remain hopeful that we will soon be celebrating Manahel's release together. I hope she will one day see your solidarity firsthand and know how much you contributed to her freedom.'



An activist in Burkina Faso supporting Manahel © AI Burkina Faso