Dear Activists,

I’m joining Write for Rights this year because I know first hand how powerful letters can be. As a death penalty lawyer, I received letters from activists across the country supporting me and telling me to keep up the good work. Each letter I received sustained me through days and weeks as I fought for human rights; I knew that each person who wrote was another person standing with me in the struggle for human rights. Take it from me: if you write a letter, you change a life.

Each of the 10 cases this year have inspired me to pick up my pen. From Jorge Lazo Nunes dos Santos in Bahia, Brazil, to the parents of 15-year old Hadiya Pendleton in Chicago, there are families and community members who have lost people to gun violence and need to know that we’re standing with them. I’m writing this year to make sure that the voices of Prisoners of Conscience and human rights defenders like Liu Ping in China, Raif Badawi in Saudi Arabia and Murad Shihwe in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are not silenced, and so that the stories of torture survivors like Darrell Cannon and Anthony Holmes in Chicago are not forgotten. I’m writing so that while Chelsea Manning waits behind bars in a U.S. military prison and Moses Akatugba languishes on Nigeria’s death row, both prisoners know that they have supporters across the world calling for justice. So that communities from India to El Salvador know that the Amnesty movement is amplifying their voices with our own.

Each of you picked up this toolkit, and in doing so you took a tremendous step in leadership within your community. I feel privileged to stand alongside activists like you as part of the largest grassroots human rights network in the world, and honored to be a part of putting the human face on human rights. You’re challenging systemic human rights abuses like torture, the death penalty, and gun violence, and standing up for women’s rights, LGBTI rights, and corporate accountability. Each letter you write can change a life, and together we’re changing lives across the world.

Over 50 years after the first call to action that inspired our movement, a hand-written letter is still one of the most powerful tools we have as activists. When thousands of people write the same letter, our voices united cannot be ignored. So don’t stop here, or with your 10 letters. Use this Toolkit to recruit others to join or host an event or plan a creative action to engage your community. Whatever you do, let us know how you’re taking action for human rights. Use our online Impact Form at amnestyusa.org/w4rImpact, or print, fill out, and mail the form at the end of this Toolkit to us. Each letter you write is a part of the cacophony that will change the world.

In Solidarity,

Steven W. Hawkins
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA
7 STEPS TO MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Together, we can help free Prisoners of Conscience, stand with human rights defenders and campaign alongside survivors of systemic human rights violations by putting a human face on human rights issues. Your letters are a huge contribution, and here are 7 ways that you can maximize your impact:

1. **SIGN UP & GET ON THE MAP**: Be sure to sign up at amnestyusa.org/writeforrights. You can sign up as an individual letter writer, and your 10 letters will be amplified by the power of a global movement. You can also join an event, and take action with others in your community. Or you can take your activism to the next level and lead an event. You will see yourself and your community on the online map, stay connected as crucial developments unfold, and more easily recruit others and make a difference. You’ll also build the power of your community to advance human rights and help change the world.

2. **GET CONNECTED & GET MATERIALS**: Once you’ve signed up, reach out to your Field Organizer—an Amnesty International USA staff member who has a wealth of experience with grassroots organizing—who will connect you with others in your area. Your Field Organizer can also mail you FREE resources, and help you stay informed about what is going on. Don’t know who to contact? Find contact information at the end of this toolkit!

3. **SET GOALS & START EARLY**: How many letters will it take for you to make a difference? Each new person you recruit can send up to 10 letters and 10 solidarity messages, so set targets with your friends and community members and add them to your profile on the Write for Rights map! When you’re done, please let us know how many letters you’ve written, either by using the online Impact Form at amnestyusa.org/w4rimpact or by printing, filling out, and mailing the form at the end of this Toolkit.

4. **PLAN YOUR EVENTS OR ACTIONS**: Hosting a letter writing party, setting up a table, or planning a creative action starts with picking a date and finding a venue. Host your event or action between December 1-17 to have the greatest impact, and do what you can to get as many letters written as possible. Check out our guide to Creative Actions and our Events Checklist at amnestyusa.org/writeforrights.

5. **PROMOTE**: Publicize your participation in Write for Rights to help grow the movement. That starts with creating your profile on the Write for Rights website, and making sure you get on the map. When you tell us about your events, people will be able to find them and join you. If you’re writing as an individual or hosting a private event, your pin on the map will help build momentum. Your participation will be amplified by others who care about human rights as passionately as you do. You can also make fliers, post on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram using #WriteForRights and #W4R, and most importantly, ask people to come!

6. **SEND YOUR LETTERS**: Each case sheet has important information about messaging, as well as mailing addresses for the government authorities that are responsible for upholding human rights. We want you to send your letters on behalf of Hadiya Pendleton and Murad Shtwei to our offices, so that Amnesty activists can hand deliver them and make the biggest impact. You can find all of the addresses that you need by downloading the case sheets and sample letters from amnestyusa.org/writeforrights.

7. **TRACK & REPORT**: You make a difference when you’ve got the power of a global movement behind you. Track every letter that you send and tell us your results using the online Impact Form at amnestyusa.org/w4rimpact or by mailing in the form at the end of this toolkit. We’ll take that information straight to the governments committing these abuses and make sure your voice is amplified.

**Bonus**: You could win t-shirts! If you report the number of letters your community writes, you’ll be entered in a drawing to win 5 free Amnesty International t-shirts!
TELL US YOUR STORY!

Why are you joining Write for Rights this year? You’ve chosen to be a part of the world’s biggest grassroots mobilization for human rights. Send us what you’re up to, why you’re writing, and why you’ve chosen to be a part of the world’s largest network of human rights activists, so that we can continue to amplify your voice and serve your activist needs! Email your story to your Field Organizer, and include it in your online profile!

ACT FOR RIGHTS!

Creative actions amplify your activism and inspire others to stand up for human rights. Help us tell the stories of the Prisoners of Conscience and human rights defenders in Write for Rights by organizing a flash mob, a projection action, a rally, street theater, or other form of demonstration. A well-executed action has the power to attract media attention, raise local and national awareness of an issue, influence government officials, and even speed up resolution on a case. Check out our guide to Creative Actions, and contact your Field Organizer to let us know what you’re planning!

YOUR LETTERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE—
YORM BOPHA RELEASED IN 2013!

Cambodian housing rights activist Yorm Bopha is a powerful voice for the Boeung Kak Lake community in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The Cambodian government imprisoned her in September 2012 on baseless, fabricated charges in response to her peaceful activism defending the rights to housing and freedom of expression. She was released during Write for Rights 2013, after Amnesty activists wrote more than 90,000 appeals on her behalf to the Cambodian authorities.

“THANK YOU TO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL’S SUPPORTERS! YOUR CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL, AS MY RELEASE SHOWS! BUT MY CASE IS NOT OVER YET. PLEASE KEEP PUSHING THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT TO END THE CASE AGAINST ME. AND PLEASE KEEP SUPPORTING ME, MY COMMUNITY AND OTHERS IN CAMBODIA! WE CAN ACHIEVE THE MOST SUCCESS WHEN WE ALL WORK TOGETHER!”

-YORM BOPHA — 2013 WRITE FOR RIGHTS CASE
GENERAL TIPS

We know that handwritten letters make the biggest difference - far more than form emails, form letters, or even unique emails. Not only are government authorities most likely to listen to you, but also we have heard over and again from former Prisoners of Conscience that handwritten letters are the most powerful way to give hope and to change lives. Here are a few more tips to keep in mind:

1. **USE THE CASE SHEETS AND SAMPLE LETTERS PROVIDED TO DRAFT YOUR LETTERS.** Handwriting each letter is the best way to have impact, even if you copy the sample letter. You can also write your own using the appeal points, and just be sure to include key messages about human rights and the case, as well as what you're asking for. If you are short on time, simply sign the sample letter. Address your letters to the government authorities listed for each case, and mail them to the addresses we provide.

2. **WHEN YOU SIGN YOUR LETTERS, PROVIDE NAME, ADDRESS, AND/OR COUNTRY.** If you get a response from authorities, send a copy to us at:

   Individuals at Risk Program
   Amnesty International USA
   600 Pennsylvania Ave, SE
   Washington DC, 20003

3. **WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED WITH YOUR LETTERS TO THE AUTHORITIES, WRITE A MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY TO THE PERSON THEMSELVES.** Look at the case sheets for guidance—each solidarity action is unique and tailored to the specific individual. Whether sending a letter or card, posting a message on Tumblr or tweeting in solidarity, your words have the power to shine a light of support and hope.

4. **TO MAXIMIZE IMPACT, WRITE AND MAIL YOUR LETTERS BETWEEN DECEMBER 1ST AND 17TH.** If this time doesn’t work for you, feel free to Write for Rights earlier or later.

5. **COLLECT DONATIONS FOR STAMPS AT YOUR EVENT OR ENCOURAGE ATTENDEES TO BRING STAMPS.** Seek in-kind donations from local businesses, such as pens, paper, stamps, and food.

6. **REMEMBER: SEND COPIES OF SOME OF YOUR LETTERS TO OUR OFFICE SO THAT AMNESTY ACTIVISTS CAN HAND DELIVER THEM!** Each case sheet has details about where to send them. The letters on behalf of Chicago gun violence victim Hadiya Pendleton and Palestinian Human Rights Defender Murad Shtewi should come directly to our Washington, DC office.

7. **TRACK YOUR IMPACT.** Track every letter that you send as an individual writer or that you generate at your event. Then tell us your results, using the online Impact Form at amnestyusa.org/w4rImpact or by printing, filling out, and mailing the form at the end of this toolkit.

POSTAGE RATES

Within the United States: $0.49 – Letters and Cards (up to 1 oz.)
To all other destination countries: $1.15 – Airmail Letters and Cards (up to 1 oz.)
THIS YEAR’S CASES

JORGE LÁZARO NUNES DOS SANTOS  BRAZIL
Father Seeking Justice for His Sons
Two of Jorge Lázaro Nunes dos Santos’ seven children were shot to death, and he has been struggling for justice ever since. Ricardo and Enio dos Santos were among thousands of young black Brazilians who die in gun related homicides every year. Hundreds are killed by military police, death squads or militias with links to the police. Some commentators refer to this phenomenon as the “extermination” of black youth in Brazil.

LIU PING  CHINA
Jailed for Fighting Corruption
Chinese human rights defender and Prisoner of Conscience Liu Ping has been sentenced to more than six years in prison for publicly calling on the Chinese government to step up the fight against corruption. She is one of many people who have been persecuted and detained for their links to the New Citizens’ Movement, a loose network of activists who aim to promote government transparency and expose corruption.

WOMEN & GIRLS OF EL SALVADOR  EL SALVADOR
Imprisoned and Tortured by Abortion Ban
In El Salvador, it doesn’t matter if you’re pregnant as a result of rape, or whether the pregnancy is a risk to your life: abortion is banned in all cases. If you have a miscarriage, you could be jailed for up to 50 years for aggravated homicide because the state suspects you of having a clandestine abortion. There’s no denying it – El Salvador’s abortion ban is torture.

RAMPYARI BAI & SAFREEN KHAN  BHOPAL, INDIA
Justice for Survivors of Bhopal Gas Leak
December 2, 2014 marks the 30th anniversary of one the world’s most devastating industrial disasters—the 1984 gas leak in Bhopal, India. Between 7,000 and 10,000 people died within three days after toxic gas containing deadly chemicals leaked from a pesticide plant. Three decades later, the people of Bhopal are still struggling for justice.

MOSES AKATUGBA  NIGERIA
Tortured, Beaten and Sentenced To Death
Moses Akatugba was sentenced to death for armed robbery, a crime he says he didn’t commit. He was just 16 when he was arrested, and says he was tortured by police officers. He told Amnesty that they beat him with machetes and batons, tied him and hung him up for several hours, and then used pliers to pull out his toe and fingernails. Moses was then forced to sign two pre-written confessions.
MURAD SHTEWI OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES
Community Leader Targeted for Activism
Palestinian activist and Prisoner of Conscience Murad Shtewi is an outspoken human rights defender from the Palestinian village of Kufur Qadum in the occupied West Bank. Every week, his community holds a demonstration to oppose Israel’s illegal settlements and demand that their main road be opened. As a result of his leadership, Murad was arrested in April 2014 and faces unfounded charges. His arrest is meant to intimidate Palestinians who dare to raise their voices against Israeli military occupation.

RAIF BADAWI SAUDI ARABIA
Imprisonment and 1,000 Lashes For a Website
In May 2014, Raif Badawi was jailed for 10 years. His sentence also included 1,000 lashes, a 10-year travel ban, and a ban from appearing on media outlets once he is released. The charges against Raif are related to articles he wrote criticizing religious authorities in Saudi Arabia, and pieces penned by others that Raif published on his website. Raif is one of many activists in Saudi Arabia persecuted for openly expressing their views online.

CHELSEA MANNING UNITED STATES
Jailed After Exposing Possible Human Rights Abuses
US Army Private Chelsea Manning was sentenced to 35 years in prison on August 21, 2013, after leaking classified US government material to the website Wikileaks. Some of the documents pointed to potential human rights violations by US troops abroad, the CIA, and Afghan and Iraqi forces operating alongside the US army. Chelsea says she was trying to spark a meaningful debate on the costs of war and raise awareness of US military conduct.

DARRELL CANNON & ANTHONY HOLMES UNITED STATES
Survivors of Chicago Police Torture Denied Justice
Between 1972 and 1991, Chicago police under the direction of former Commander Jon Burge systematically tortured more than 100 people. Darrell Cannon and Anthony Holmes are just two of the survivors of Burge’s legacy of racist torture. Neither Burge nor any of the detectives under his command have been prosecuted for torture, and not one of the torture survivors have received the reparations needed to make them whole, as required by international law.

HADIYA PENDLETON UNITED STATES
Pass the Youth P.R.O.M.I.S.E. Act to address gun violence
On January 29, 2013, just after finishing her final exams, sophomore Hadiya Pendleton went to Chicago’s Vivian Gordon Harsh Park with her friends. Soon after their arrival, an assailant opened fire on the group, mistaking them for a rival gang. Hadiya Pendleton was shot and killed at the age of 15. She is one of over 11,000 victims of firearm-related homicides in the United States every year.
FIELD ORGANIZER CONTACT INFORMATION

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IMPACT FORM

Please let us know the number of letters you and/or your group wrote, so that we can track our impact and improve next year’s Write for Rights.

Send your completed form to:

Individuals at Risk Program
Attn: Write for Rights
Amnesty International USA
600 Pennsylvania Ave, SE
Washington DC, 20003

NAME: ______________________________________

EMAIL: _____________________________________

AMNESTY GROUP NUMBER/NAME: ________________

1 HOW DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2014?
   [ ] I wrote letters on my own
   [ ] I organized an event that included others
   [ ] I attended an event

2 HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2014?
   [ ] Email
   [ ] Twitter
   [ ] Facebook
   [ ] Word of mouth
   [ ] Amnesty website
   [ ] I saw it mentioned in a news story
   [ ] My local Amnesty group
   [ ] Amnesty staff or volunteer
   [ ] Other __________________________

3 HOW MANY LETTERS DID YOU & YOUR GROUP WRITE FOR EACH CASE:

   Jorge Lázaro Nunes dos Santos  BRAZIL
   Appeal letters: _______
   Solidarity letters: _______

   Liu Ping  CHINA
   Appeal letters: _______
   Solidarity letters: _______

   Rampyari Bai & Safreen Khan  INDIA
   Appeal letters: _______
   Solidarity tweets: _______

   Moses Akatugba  NIGERIA
   Appeal letters: _______
   Solidarity letters: _______

   Murad Shtwei  OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES
   Appeal letters: _______
   Solidarity letters: _______

   Women & Girls of  EL SALVADOR
   Appeal letters: _______
   Solidarity letters: _______

   Raif Badawi  SAUDI ARABIA
   Appeal letters: _______
   Solidarity letters: _______

   Chelsea Manning  USA
   Appeal letters: _______
   Solidarity letters: _______

   Darrell Cannon & Anthony Holmes  USA
   Appeal letters: _______
   Solidarity photos: _______

   Hadiya Pendleton (USA):
   Appeal letters: _______
   Solidarity letters: _______

4 WHAT IS YOUR APPROXIMATE AGE RANGE?
   [ ] Under 12
   [ ] 12 - 17
   [ ] 18 - 24
   [ ] 25 - 34
   [ ] 35 - 50
   [ ] 51 - 64
   [ ] 65+
**IMPACT FORM, CONT.**

5. **IF YOU ORGANIZED OR PARTICIPATED IN AN EVENT, HOW MANY PEOPLE JOINED YOUR EVENT?**

6. **HOW MANY PEOPLE BECAME MEMBERS OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA AT YOUR EVENT, IF ANY?**

7. **DID YOUR EVENT RAISE ANY MONEY? HOW MUCH?**

8. **DO YOU PLAN TO ORGANIZE A WRITE FOR RIGHTS EVENT NEXT YEAR?**

**HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE FOLLOWING:**

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YOUR LETTERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE—
BIRTUKAN MIDEKSA RELEASED!

The leader of the Unity for Democracy and Justice Party, Birtukan Mideksa was arrested for protesting the 2005 elections in Ethiopia. After her release, the authorities arrested her again in 2008, imposing a life sentence on her. Following international pressure from Amnesty International, the Ethiopian government released Birtukan in 2010.

"THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND YOUR CAMPAIGNS TO SECURE MY RELEASE FROM PRISON. THROUGH YOUR WORK ON BEHALF OF THOUSANDS OF PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE AROUND THE WORLD, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONTINUES TO BE THE CONSCIENCE OF HUMANITY. YOU HAVE A HALLOWED MISSION TO PROTECT PEOPLE WHEREVER JUSTICE, FREEDOM, TRUTH AND DIGNITY ARE DENIED. YOUR LETTERS, PHONE CALLS, AND PETITIONS WERE MY PROTECTION DURING THE MONTHS I SPENT IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. YOU WERE MY VOICE WHEN I HAD NONE."—BIRTUKAN MIDEKSA

Write a letter
Change a life