You can help ensure justice for Janna Jehad and 9 other cases of human rights defenders and individuals at risk.

You can help Chow Hang-Tung and the 9 other cases of human rights defenders and individuals at risk.
WHAT IS WRITE FOR RIGHTS?

Write for Rights is Amnesty International’s largest annual human rights campaign, held throughout the fall to mark Human Rights Day on December 10th. The best thing about Write for Rights is that it works! Each year, we write letters to support people and help end other abuses, such as individuals who are wrongfully imprisoned for the peaceful expression of their beliefs or identity—people we call prisoners of conscience.

This year's ten cases focus on the theme of Protect the Protest. Chow Hang-Tung, on the cover of this Action Guide, is a courageous human rights lawyer and activist. On June 4, 2021, Chow asked people on social media to light candles in memory of the protesters killed in the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown. Chow was arrested for daring to commemorate their lives. Now she is serving 22 months in prison for her activism. What’s more, she faces further imprisonment for allegedly endangering national security, through her entirely peaceful actions.

Here’s how we help people through Write for Rights: millions of people around the world, like you, each write a letter to the government official responsible for the case. These letters pile up in their offices and can’t be ignored—imagine receiving a million letters! We supplement these letters with e-mail actions, lobbying, media attention, and social media to increase the pressure on those officials. We also write “solidarity” messages to the people we are trying to help, or their families, to give them hope.

One key component of Write for Rights is to report your letters. It’s important because we share the total number with the people we are trying to help and with the officials we are trying to persuade. You can report at write.amnestyusa.org/report or mail us the form in this guide.

Remember, even if you only have time to write one letter, it counts. You are joining a movement of people around the world using the power of collective action—millions of us, each doing a small part—to help people. Because of us, prison doors will open, families will be reunited, justice will be achieved, and human rights defenders will be safe and supported in continuing their important work to change the world.

Ready to get started? Here’s key information:

• Sign up now at write.amnestyusa.org/signup
• Read the Instructions page in this guide and go online for more materials at write.amnestyusa.org
• Write from November 14, 2022 until January 31, 2023
• Report your letters by January 31, 2023 at write.amnestyusa.org/report
• Ask questions and get help by contacting me at w4r@aiusa.org

Thank you again for taking part!

Andrew Fandino

Andrew Fandino
Senior Program Officer, Individuals at Risk Program at AIUSA
INSTRUCTIONS

1) SIGN UP NOW AT WRITE.AMNESTYUSA.ORG/SIGNUP

- You can sign up to host or join a letter writing party, as an individual, or as an educator
- Once you sign up, you can fill in your profile to get added to our activism and events map
- Our website has a Resources page with helpful tips and information for hosting a party or classroom project

2) WRITE AND REPORT YOUR LETTERS

- Use this Action Guide and the sample letters, case sheets and addresses available on our website
- For each case, write and mail one letter to a government official and one to the person we are helping
- You do not have to write on every case; do as many as you can!

- Report online at write.amnestyusa.org/report or mail us the form in this guide
- Reporting is just as important as writing because we use the total numbers for lobbying on each case

3) SEND YOUR LETTERS BY JANUARY 31, 2023

- Mail your letters to the addresses listed on the Case Sheets (preferred option for greater impact).
- Educators have the option to send all letters in one envelope to:
  AIUSA, Attn Classroom W4R
  600 Pennsylvania Ave SE, 5th Floor
  Washington, DC 20003

Are you a teacher? If so, please consider holding Write for Rights with your class. Our Educator’s Guide makes it easy and fun to build a lesson with the cases: write.amnestyusa.org/classroom

Are you a student? Please ask your teachers to hold Write for Rights in their classes!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Go to the Resources page of the website for more information and tips: write.amnestyusa.org/resources
- Additional resources include videos, party ideas, tips for earning media attention, and much more
- Do you have questions? Contact us at w4r@aiusa.org
**THIS YEAR’S 10 CASES**

**BANGLADESH:** SHAHNEWAZ CHOWDHURY

*Facing prison for a Facebook post*

In May 2021, Shahnewaz Chowdhury’s village was swept up by a storm. Homes were destroyed. Shahnewaz wrote a Facebook post about the impact of a local power plant, linking it to the environmental destruction of his region. He was arrested for his Facebook post and detained for 80 days under Bangladesh’s oppressive Digital Security Act. Shahnewaz was granted bail, but if convicted, he faces many years in prison.

**CAMEROON:** DORGELESSE NGUESSAN

*Jailed for attending her first protest*

Two years ago, Dorgelesse was busy running her hairdressing business and supporting her family. She had never attended a protest. In September 2020, concerns about the state of Cameroon’s economy led her to protest for the first time. During the peaceful demonstrations, Dorgelesse was arrested. She was charged with “insurrection, assembly, meetings and public demonstrations” and sentenced to five years in prison. She is desperate to be reunited with her family.

**CUBA:** LUIS MANUEL OTERO ALCANTARA

*Artist jailed for protecting freedom of expression*

Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara is a self-taught Black Cuban artist. He loves to paint, dance, and wear bright pink suits. On 11 July 2021, Luis Manuel posted a video online, saying he would be joining one of the largest demonstrations Cuba had seen in decades. Luis Manuel was arrested and taken to Guanajay maximum security prison, where he remains to this day. In prison, Luis Manuel’s health is declining, and he needs proper medical care.

**FRANCE:** ZINEB REDOUANE

*Killed by a tear gas grenade*

In December 2018, Zineb was preparing dinner in her fourth-floor apartment. In the streets below, police officers were using tear gas to disperse a protest. As Zineb went to shut her window, a police officer pointed a tear gas grenade launcher in her direction and fired. She was hit in the face by a grenade and died from her injuries. No one has been charged or suspended over her tragic death.

**HONG KONG:** CHOW HANG-TUNG

*Jailed for remembering victims of deadly crackdown*

Chow Hang-tung is a courageous human rights lawyer and activist. On 4 June 2021, Chow asked people on social media to light candles in memory of the protesters killed in the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown. Chow was arrested for daring to commemorate their lives. Now she is serving 22 months in prison for her activism. What’s more, she faces further imprisonment for allegedly endangering national security, through her entirely peaceful actions.

SIGN UP FOR WRITE FOR RIGHTS AT WRITE.AMNESTYUSA.ORG

W4R@AIUSA.ORG #W4R2022
IRAN: VAHID AFKARI
Tortured and unjustly jailed for protesting
Vahid Afkari comes from a close-knit family. On September 17, 2018, Vahid and his brother Navid were arrested for peacefully attending protests in Shiraz. Three months later, his brother Habib was also arrested for peaceful protesting. Vahid, Navid and Habib were tortured repeatedly and forced to “confess” to crimes they said they did not commit. Navid was executed in September 2020, and Habib spent 550 days in solitary confinement, and was released from prison in March 2022. Vahid has been in solitary confinement since September 2020, unjustly convicted of various baseless crimes and sentenced to decades in prison and 74 lashes.

MOROCCO/WESTERN SAHARA: NASSER ZEFZAFI
Locked up for 20 years for demanding change
Nasser Zefzafi is from Rif, Morocco; a region struggling with poor healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. When protests broke out in 2016 demanding change, the Hirak El-Rif protest movement was born, and Nasser became a prominent figure. On May 29, 2017, Nasser was arrested for interrupting a sermon at a mosque and accusing the prayer leader of acting as a mouthpiece for the authorities. He was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

PARAGUAY: YREN ROTELA AND MARIANA SEPÚLVEDA
Don’t tell us who we are
Yren and Mariana want to live their lives freely, but as trans women they are busy fighting for their rights. Trans people in Paraguay can’t legally change their names or obtain identity documents that match their gender identity. The state is trying to make them invisible. What’s more, it is difficult for trans groups to protest and speak out about the barriers they face.

RUSSIA: ALEKSANDRA SKOCHILENKO
She opposed the war, now she faces prison
Aleksandra (or Sasha for short) fills her life with art and music, playing all sorts of musical instruments. On March 31, 2022, Aleksandra peacefully protested against Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. She replaced price tags in a local supermarket in Saint Petersburg with little paper labels containing facts about the invasion. Aleksandra was arrested and charged for her peaceful action. She has been held in detention ever since, in terrible conditions.

ZIMBABWE: JOANAH MAMOMBE, NETSAI MAROVA, AND CECILLIA CHIMBIRI
Abducted, beaten, sexually assaulted, and jailed for protesting
Joanah, Netsai and Cecillia have a lot of things in common: they love playing board games, watching Netflix and are passionate about politics. Sadly, they also share horrific memories of a terrible attack. On May 13, 2020, after leading an anti-government protest, the women were arrested and then abducted and allegedly tortured, including by sexual assault. The women have been charged with faking their own ordeal and face years in jail.
GOOD NEWS!

“I am delighted by the release of Germain but also fear for his safety. From the bottom of my heart, I want to thank you all to have mobilized and made it possible for Germain to reunite with us soon” by Emelyne Mupfasoni, wife of Germain Rukuki.

Germain Rukuki, human rights defender released from prison after being found guilty of a slew of sham charges and sentenced to 32 years in prison. 2020 Write for Rights - Burundi.

“For more good news stories from previous Write for Rights go to: write.amnestyusa.org/good-news

“...your colleagues have lighted up my life. Pass them all my regards and thanks.”

Magai Matiop Ngong. On July 29, 2020, Magai was removed from death row after an appeal's decision to quash the death sentence due to the fact that Magai was a child at the time of the crime. 2019 Write for Rights - South Sudan.

“Thank you very much each and every one of you. Not just for campaigning for my release, and the release of other prisoners, but for helping to keep our hope and our beliefs alive.”


“I’d like to thank our friends at Amnesty International and Amnesty USA for their remarkable support these last years, culminating just recently in the Write for Rights Campaign”

Albert Woodfox. Freed after 43 years in solitary confinement in Louisiana. 2015 Write for Rights - USA.
Please let us know the number of letters you wrote and, if you hosted a party or other letter writing event, the number of letters by all participants.

- Either use our online form at write.amnestyusa.org/report (preferred)
- Or complete and mail this form to:
  
  Amnesty International USA  
  Attn: Write for Rights  
  600 Pennsylvania Ave SE, 5th Floor  
  Washington, DC 20003

Reporting is important because we share the total number of letters with the government officials we are trying to persuade. We will also let our cases and their families know how many letters were written for them!

Have questions? Contact us at w4r@aiusa.org

NAME:_______________________________________

EMAIL:_______________________________________

AMNESTY GROUP NAME OR #  
(IF APPLICABLE):_____________________________

SCHOOL NAME, CITY AND STATE  
(IF APPLICABLE):______________________________

HOW DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN WRITE FOR RIGHTS THIS YEAR?  
☐ I hosted a letter writing party or event  
☐ I joined a party or event  
☐ I wrote on my own  
☐ I am an educator and my students wrote letters in class

HOW MANY PEOPLE JOINED YOUR EVENT? ________

HOW MANY LETTERS DID YOU (OR YOUR GROUP) WRITE FOR EACH CASE?

1) Bangladesh: Tell Bangladesh to drop the charges today
   Appeal Letters_______ Solidarity Messages_______

2) Cameroon: Tell Cameroon to free Dorgelesse today
   Appeal Letters_______ Solidarity Messages_______

3) Cuba: Tell Cuba to immediately free Luis Manuel
   Appeal Letters_______ Solidarity Messages_______

4) France: Demand justice for Zineb now
   Appeal Letters_______ Solidarity Messages_______

5) Hong Kong: Ask Hong Kong to free Chow today
   Appeal Letters_______ Solidarity Messages_______

6) Iran: Tell Iran to free Vahid Afkari
   Appeal Letters_______ Solidarity Messages_______

7) Morocco: Tell the Moroccan authorities to free Nasser today
   Appeal Letters_______ Solidarity Messages_______

8) Paraguay: Tell Paraguay to legally recognize the identity of trans people so they can exercise their rights
   Appeal Letters_______ Solidarity Messages_______

9) Russia: Tell Russia to free Aleksandra now
   Appeal Letters_______ Solidarity Messages_______

10) Zimbabwe: Demand justice for Joanah, Netsai and Cecilia
   Appeal Letters_______ Solidarity Messages_______
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How many letters do I write and where do I send them? 
There are 10 cases, so if you write both a letter to the
government official and a solidarity note to each case, you
will total 20 letters. It is fine to do fewer though! Each case
sheet and sample letter give you suggestions for what to write;
please make them personal as it shows it’s not a form letter
and you really care. Addresses are listed on each case sheet
and sample letter; you will have to get envelopes and stamps
to mail the letters. If you receive a reply to one of your letters,
you do not need to send it to us. We likely have received the
same reply!

Can I just sign the sample letters? 
You can, but it will be more effective if you take a little longer
to copy the letter in your own writing—or, even better, craft
your own personal letter from the points on the case sheets.
Unique and personal letters show the government official that
you really care about the case and increases the pressure
on them to act, so try to write as many as you can. If you run
out of time or steam, then please at least sign and send the
sample letters (and report them as well!).

Can I send the letters to an Amnesty office? 
We strongly prefer that you send your letters directly to the
intended recipient and not to our office unless the case sheet
indicates otherwise. However, if due to financial hardship or
lack of time, you can send everything back to our office. If you
send all of your letters to us, please be sure to either use the
paper reporting form in this guide or let us know that you used
the online form—but please don’t use both.

Does it really matter if I report my letters? 
Yes! It is essential to let us know how many letters you wrote
and, if you hosted a party, how many letters your guests wrote.
We share the total number of letters with the people we are
trying to help and their families, as well as with the govern-
ment officials we are trying to persuade. Reporting also helps
us evaluate how we can improve Write for Rights and get more
people involved. To report, please use the feedback form that
was included in your pack, or go online at:
write.amnestyusa.org/report

How much is postage? How do I get money for stamps? 
Within the United States, letters and cards (up to 1 oz.) are 60
cents each. To all other countries, airmail letters and cards (up
to 1 oz.) are $1.40 each. We recognize that postage for many
letters can be expensive. You are welcome to ask for donations,
hold a fundraiser, or ask guests to bring stamps.

Do I have to use my full name and address on the letters? 
You do not have to include your full name or address. It is
sufficient to give your first name and country. However, some
governments will send formal form letters replying to you, so
you wouldn’t receive those. We have no record of anyone being
denied entry to a country due to participating in Write for
Rights. Also, if you include your address in a solidarity note,
sometimes you’ll receive a reply from the person we are trying
to help, which can be inspirational especially once the person
is released.

Do our letters really make a difference? 
Yes! A letter may seem a little old-fashioned in this age of
online activity, but that is also a source of its strength. When
authorities receive thousands of letters about a particular
person, they know that the world is watching them.
Individuals who have experienced these human rights abuses
tell us that our solidarity letters have a huge impact.

What are some ideas for W4R events? 
Every year, groups across the globe come together to host W4R
events. Here are some ideas for inspiration: Write for Rights is
a good way for people new to human rights activism to get
involved. You could hold a virtual event at work at lunchtime
and ask people to sign action cards or write letters; Human
Rights Day is on December 10th and can be used as a hook to
get people involved in the campaign; think about links you can
make between the case and your local community. For
example, if there is a large diaspora community of people from
the country you are focusing on, you could work with them!