



WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2023

GLOBAL REPORT

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WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2023 – SOME FACTS

The Write for Rights campaign was back again for its 23rd edition in 2023, working hard to bring positive change in the lives of eleven individuals at risk, and their families and communities.

At least **5,828,323** actions were taken worldwide – about **500,000** more than in 2022.

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

We saw **MURALS** painted depicting the individuals, **FLASHMOBS**, school tours, concerts, running events, meetings with embassies, and letter-writing marathons (that's where it began after all!).

What's more, an incredible **1.4 MILLION PEOPLE WORLDWIDE** were mobilized through human rights education alone. 2023 also saw the International Secretariat digitally collect 1.2 million actions, the highest number so far.

It's early days to assess the human rights impact of the campaign, but we have already seen small positive changes in a few of the individuals' cases. One example is that of Ana Maria in Brazil, who has been campaigning for justice for her son Pedro Henrique who was killed by police in 2018. It is thought that the increased international pressure put on the Brazilian authorities to investigate Pedro Henrique's murder resulted in access being granted to his police investigations file. Until this point, that file had been kept secret and was inaccessible by the family.

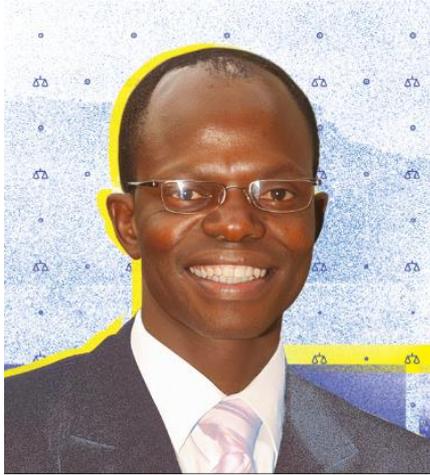
Beyond human rights impact, Write for Rights is a **SOLIDARITY** campaign, showing the individuals at risk featured that people in all corners of the world are supporting them. Of the total numbers of actions, at least **250,500** were cards and letters of solidarity.

INDIVIDUAL CAMPAIGN WRITE-UPS

On the following pages you will find write-ups of the campaigns for each of the ten individuals and groups featured in the wider campaign. The write-ups give a brief overview of the individual or group's story and how they were 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 the 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.

THULANI RUDOLPH MASEKO – ESWATINI



Introduction

Thulani Maseko was a courageous human rights defender, lawyer and state critic who refused to turn a blind eye to the government's oppression of the people of Eswatini. He stood up against the state's abuse of power, including what many see as the mismanagement of the country's resources, and called for the authorities to prioritize developing the country.

In 2014, Thulani was sentenced to two years in prison, alongside veteran news editor Bhekithemba Makhubu, for contempt of court, after publicly criticizing what they perceived as the judiciary's lack of independence and integrity. Amnesty International had declared him a Prisoner of Conscience.

In 2021, there were mass protests for political reform against absolute monarchy following the death of a law student, Thabani Nkomonye. Eswatini's monarchy is strongly opposed to activism and political reform. Following months of unrest, a Multi-Stakeholder's Forum was established to facilitate dialogue on political reforms, with Thulani as its leader. For this, Thulani was subjected to ongoing harassment by the government of Eswatini. The day before Thulani was killed, King Mswati III reportedly said that those calling for democratic reform in the country would be "dealt with".

Thulani was shot by unknown gunmen at his home in Luyengo, Mbabane, on 21 January 2023. Although the motive behind his killing remains unclear, Amnesty International has reason to believe that he was attacked in relation to his work as a human rights defender. Thulani was previously targeted by the state for demanding justice and criticizing the country's judiciary.

No investigation into Thulani's death had been made. The silence surrounding this case is deeply troubling, reflecting a broader pattern of impunity and disregard for human rights in Eswatini. Justice delayed is justice denied, and the failure to act only perpetuates a culture of impunity.

Given this, Thulani's case was put forward to Write for Rights, to urge on the Eswatini government to conduct a prompt, thorough, impartial, independent, transparent and effective investigation into his death. This investigation was also called for by Thulani's wife, Tanele, who served as a key figure in the campaign.

Context of human rights concerns in Eswatini

Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) is an absolute monarchy ruled by King Mswati III since 1986, together with his mother Queen Mother Ntombi, who is seen as the spiritual head while Mswati is the administrative head. Eswatini's monarchy is strongly opposed to political reform and activism. Repressive laws and excessive state violence have long been used to silence peaceful protest in the Kingdom of Eswatini. Protesters, dissidents, journalists, and human rights defenders and people who are critical of the monarchy have been and continue to be subjected to arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, and criminal prosecution.

Highlights of the campaign for Thulani

The Amnesty International Southern Africa Regional Office hosted its first Write for Rights letter writing "power hour". The Write for Rights team in Johannesburg spent an afternoon walking the staff and supporting team through the campaign, inviting guests to speak and encouraging people to take action.

The rationale behind this was to introduce the new members of the team to the Write for Rights campaign, gather actions and build a sense of solidarity for Thulani's case and others in the region.

Total number of actions taken in support of Thulani: 394,121

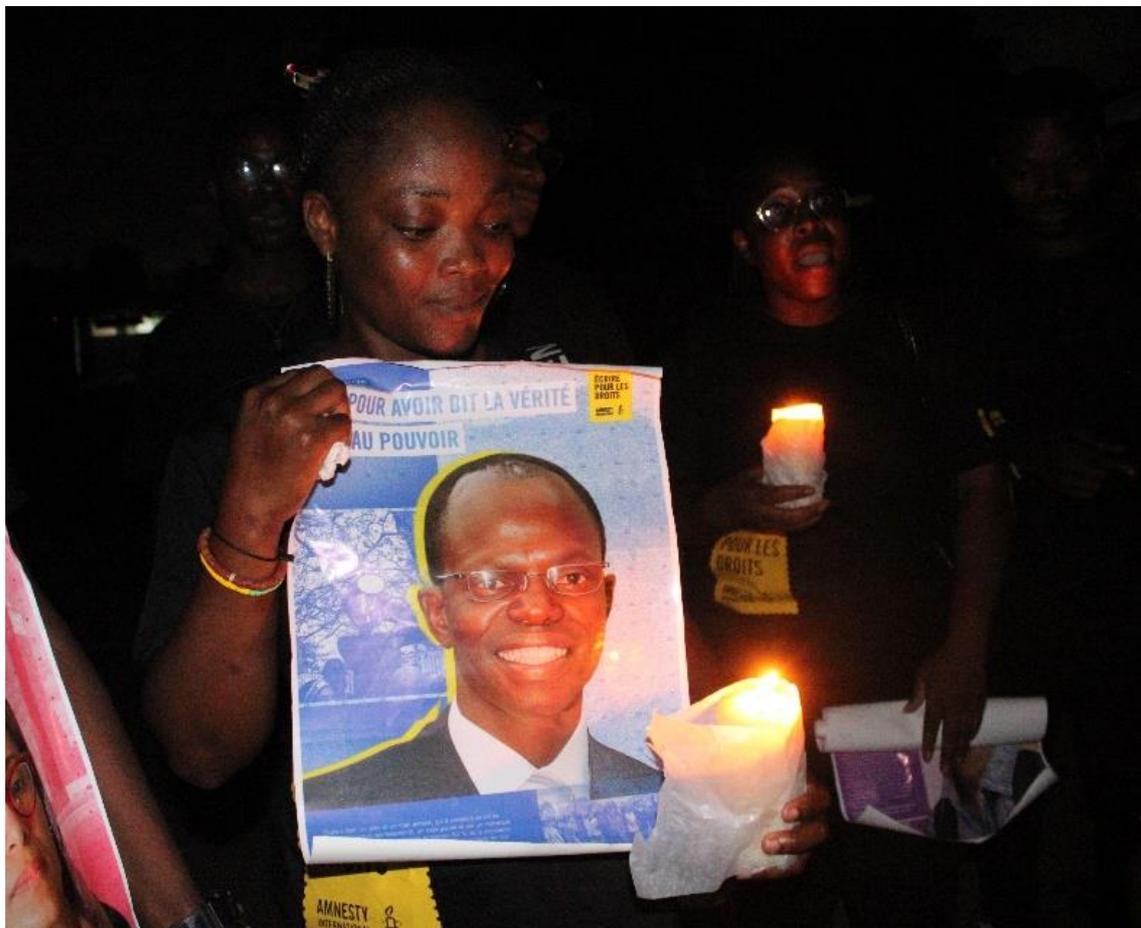
Outcomes of the campaign for Thulani

In August 2023, Eswatini police released a statement stating the investigation into Thulani's death was progressing and that there would be a breakthrough once "all the technicalities are sorted", but Thulani's family have not received any updates from the authorities since then.

Tanele, Thulani's wife, has spoken of the support she has felt from the campaign, which has loudened the call for justice for her husband and supported the #JusticeForThulani campaign.

Next steps

Amnesty International is continuing to call on the Eswatini government to establish an independent investigation into the murder of Thulani Maseko, ensuring justice for his family.



THAPELO MOHAPI AND ABAHLALI BASEMJONDOLO (ABM) – SOUTH AFRICA



Introduction

Human rights defender (HRD), Thapelo Mohapi is the General Secretary of Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM), a grassroots movement that saw its beginnings in 2005. Thapelo is currently in hiding after facing ongoing threats and intimidation for his activism work. Thapelo and AbM operate in eKhenana, a commune established in 2018 that is situated in Cato Manor, a suburb of eThekweni in South Africa's eastern province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). eKhenana is located just six kilometres from the centre of eThekweni and is close to middle class suburbs, offering proximity to key sites of employment. Cato Manor has a complex and troubled history of political unrest, racial tension and forced removals under apartheid. It is well known for its activism and resistance. Cato Manor in post-apartheid South Africa continues to be plagued by housing shortages, forced evictions, contestation over land and poor service delivery.

AbM has reported that 25 of its activists, supporters, members, and leaders have been killed since its inception, some of them directly because of their human rights work. Out of these, eight people killed were from the eKhenana branch. Three of the killings in the branch occurred in 2022 alone. Countless other members have been attacked and their properties destroyed. To date, there has only been one conviction for the killings in eKhenana. Leaders of the movement have alleged that the targeted killings are a direct response to the movement challenging the status quo of the communities in which they reside and operate by speaking out against corruption at the local government level and organising themselves independently outside of party politics.

Following the recent killings of AbM members in eKhenana, in 2022 the movement's leadership contacted Amnesty International South Africa requesting its support to shine a light on the killing, harassment, intimidation and threats its members face daily. AbM's leadership saw Amnesty International as a way to shine a global spotlight on government failures to protect human rights defenders, particularly leaders within the AbM movement. It was agreed with the AbM leadership that mobilising the global Amnesty movement through Write for Rights could play a key role in increasing AbM's protection and security.

In 2023, following the ongoing threats faced by AbM, Amnesty International South Africa put Thapelo and AbM forward to feature in Write for Rights. Throughout the campaign, Thapelo's safety was Amnesty International South Africa's priority. This guided the strategy, activities and communication developed by the team, and included ongoing engagement with Thapelo and AbM leadership.

Context of human rights concerns in South Africa

The threats and targeting of Thapelo and members of AbM in eKhenana must be seen against a backdrop of a greater pattern of violence and killings of human rights defenders (HRDs) in South Africa. South Africa's high levels of poverty and inequality, compounded with widespread unemployment and the lack of access to adequate services, has led to a breeding ground of social, political, and economic unrest. The KZN province where Thapelo operates is a hotbed for political killings. One of the contributing factors to political violence in KZN is competition over local councillor positions. Councillors have access to political power that can be used to acquire resources – for example, through tenders – which can lead to corruption.

While AbM is not a political party nor politically affiliated, HRDs, like Thapelo, that expose wrongdoings, often face severe risks from the people they seek to hold accountable. Further, as South Africa heads to national elections in 2024, fear and the reality of increased threats, intimidation, and killings of HRDs, will see AbM leaders go further into hiding.

Highlights of Thapelo's campaign

Some highlights from Thapelo's campaign included:

- In October 2023, Amnesty International South Africa launched its national Write for Rights campaign which saw over 100 AbM members in attendance, including Thapelo. During the event, Thapelo's appeal to the world, including Amnesty supporters was, "look we are here and subjected to this, and maybe it's time to not turn a blind eye". Each person attending took two actions for Thapelo, which saw over 200 actions calling for Thapelo's protection and for the police to thoroughly and effectively investigate the harassment and killings of AbM members.
- Amnesty International Canada (English speaking) engaged with the South African Embassy on Thapelo's case. This followed hundreds of Write for Rights letters received from Amnesty members. The Embassy representatives assured the team the letters would be forwarded to the appropriate authorities in Pretoria.



Total number of actions taken in support of Thapelo and AbM: 517,028

Outcomes of Thapelo's campaign



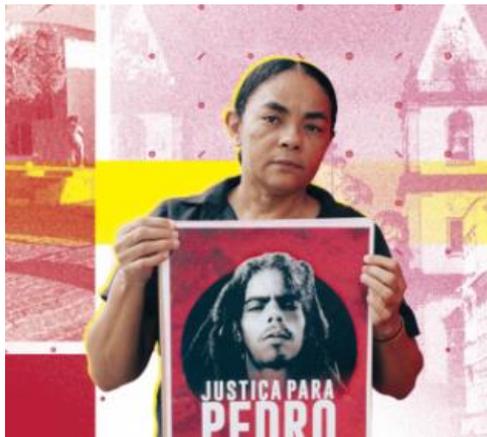
Following the running of social media ads, Thapelo received thousands of comments online in support of his work and the calls Amnesty International was making for his protection. Thapelo was overwhelmed by the amount of support he received for his activism work, motivating him to continue his fight, despite the ongoing threats he was receiving.

Next steps

Amnesty International will work with Thapelo to organise a handover of the petition to the Minister of Police. Further details will be communicated to the movement in due course.

Amnesty International South Africa will continue to mobilise its supporters and increase its advocacy efforts to push for the police to start conducting thorough, timely, impartial and effective investigations into killings of AbM members that lead to prosecutions. Support for Thapelo will also continue until he receives protection.

ANA MARIA SANTOS CRUZ – BRAZIL



Introduction

Ana Maria's son, Pedro Henrique Santos Cruz, was 31 years old when he was killed. As a young Black man, he was a human rights defender widely recognized in his small city as an activist in the field of confronting police abuses and the promotion of racial justice.

Pedro Henrique's activism was not well received by public security forces. He was killed on 27 December 2018, in the city of Tucano, in Bahia (a northern state of Brazil), by three hooded men who shot him eight times in the head and neck. Eyewitness to the crime recognized the three men as police officers.

Ana Maria's indignation with the history of police abuses suffered by her son, the impunity of the complaints made by him in life, and the absence of an outcome in the investigation of his killing, compels her to speak out publicly through social media and interviews, criticizing and denouncing police abuses and demanding accountability for those involved in the killing of her son.

Ana Maria's persistent search for justice for her son made her the target of threats, intimidation and procedural violence. Her activism, coupled with the recurring pattern of police violence and impunity in Brazil, highlighted the urgent need for international attention and solidarity.

Ana Maria approached Amnesty International Brazil after receiving letters from the organisation to her home, as Pedro Henrique was a donor and received regular communications. Over the years, Amnesty International Brazil and Ana Maria have maintained regular contact. In addition to Write for Rights, they have worked together to organise Walks of Peace, an annual march against police abuse that Pedro Henrique started in 2013.

Amnesty International Brazil remains in close dialogue with Ana Maria's lawyer and supports dialogue with the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Government of the State of Bahia and other interested parties as necessary.

Context of human rights concerns in Brazil

During the campaign period, the state of Bahia faced a profound public security crisis. Between 28 July and 27 September 2023, at least 83 people were killed through different police operations carried out by Military, Civil, Federal and Federal Highway Police. In September alone, 52 deaths were recorded.

Figures released by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security show that in 2023 an average of five people died in Bahia every day as a result of police intervention, an increase of 15% on the previous year. In total, 1,689 people were killed in 2023.

In December 2023, Brazil was visited by the UN Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement (EMLER). During the EMLER visit to the state of Bahia, in Brazil, Amnesty International Brazil prepared Ana Maria to take part as a witness. Although it was a difficult moment, which involved reporting on her deep pain and coming into contact with the stories of many other people directly affected by police violence in Bahia, in particular other mothers of lethal victims of violence, Ana Maria considered her participation in the event to be of great importance, with the expectation that her testimony, in composing the general report presented by the EMLER experts to the UN Human Rights

Council, will contribute to increasing international pressure for justice for Pedro Henrique and so many other families.

Highlights of Ana Maria's campaign

During Write for Rights, Ana Maria and her campaign for justice for Pedro Henrique received widespread support and solidarity from Amnesty International national entities, partners and activists globally. Activists around the world organised letter-writing events, solidarity actions and awareness campaigns to amplify Ana Maria's demands for justice.



Ana Maria, her family and Amnesty International Brazil were delighted to receive letters of solidarity from people all over the world. It was also very special to see the solidarity of the Brazilian audience.

The podcast entitled "[Fincar o Pé](#)", broadcast by Rádio Novelo in partnership with Amnesty International Brazil to tell the story of Pedro Henrique and Ana Maria's fight for justice, had received 95,960 listeners by November 2023, and the numbers are still growing. In October 2023, Amnesty International Brazil launched the Write For Rights Campaign as part of the programme of the [WOW - Women of the World festival](#), held in Rio de Janeiro. Ana Maria her daughter Mariana travelled from Salvador, Bahia, to Rio de Janeiro to accompany the activity. Activist groups from all over Brazil travelled from their home states to be in Rio, mobilising everyone present to write letters. As part of the festival, in addition to dialogues with the press and connections with civil society, Ana Maria had the opportunity to talk to the Minister of Racial Equality, Anielle Franco, as well as federal deputy Benedita da Silva, a recognised leader of the Brazilian black women's movement. In December 2023, Amnesty International Brazil's [national activism meeting](#) took place in Salvador and ended with a beautiful activation event for the Write for Rights campaign on Itapuã beach. Friends of Pedro Henrique and Ana Maria, from the city of Tucano, Bahia, Ana Maria's family and Amnesty International Brazil activists joined forces with local activists, such as the group As Ganhadeiras de Itapuã, to organise this beautiful event.

Total number of actions taken in support of Ana Maria and Pedro Henrique: 509,017



Outcomes of Ana Maria's campaign

It is believed that the increased international attention, and pressure put on the Brazilian authorities to investigate Pedro Henrique's murder, resulted in access being granted to his police investigations file. Until this point, that file had been kept secret and was inaccessible by the family or their representatives.

Ana Maria, her family and legal representatives have received the international solidarity brought by the Write

for Rights campaign with great joy and emotion. Ana Maria feels strengthened to know that her struggle and her son's story are being celebrated and recognized in various parts of the world. These actions renew hope in a just outcome, and also increase feelings of security.

Ana Maria said: *“ I always say that Pedro taught me a lot, including how to be a tireless fighter for justice. It was also Pedro who connected me with Amnesty International, as he was a supporter of the movement. He used to say to me, joking, that Amnesty International would one day take him to countries of Africa, to Jamaica and other places to do human rights work. Who would imagine that he was right? After his murder, through the Write for Rights campaign, Pedro Henrique and I were, in a way, taken to different countries through this story of the fight for justice. I'm very happy and feel strengthened by this wave of solidarity, which comforts my heart.”*

Next steps

Amnesty International intends to hand deliver the signatures to the targets of the campaign, namely the Attorney General of the state of Bahia and the Governor of the state of Bahia, at advocacy meetings, scheduled to take place in the last week of May 2024.

Amnesty International will continue to work closely with Ana Maria and her representatives to provide ongoing support for her quest for justice.



ROCKY MYERS – USA



Introduction

Rocky Myers, a Black man, has been on death row in Alabama, USA, since 1994. A nearly all-white jury convicted and sentenced him to life without the possibility of parole for the murder of his white neighbour. The trial judge overrode their decision and imposed a death sentence – a practice now outlawed in Alabama.

Rocky Myers grew up in New Jersey in poverty and is illiterate at primary school level. At 11, he was diagnosed with an intellectual disability. His assigned lawyer for post-conviction appeals abandoned his case without notice, making him miss key deadlines for judicial appeals. The courts relied primarily on IQ tests, a standard which the US Supreme Court found in another case to be inadequate in 2014, to reject his request for a deadline extension submitted on the grounds that he had an intellectual disability.

No evidence linked Rocky Myers to the murder, except for a video-recorder stolen from the victim, which he maintains he had found abandoned in the street. Key testimonies against him were tainted by inconsistencies and allegations of police pressure, with one later recanted as untrue. Rocky Myers faced execution in 2004 and again in 2015. This latter time the execution was halted due to litigation on Alabama’s lethal injection method. In 2018, Rocky Myers and others on death row were given 30 days to choose if they wanted to die by nitrogen gas asphyxiation – a method that has been found by international human rights bodies to amount to cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment – or by amended lethal injection protocols. Rocky Myers chose the former, and his execution could be reset at any point now, since the first execution by nitrogen asphyxiation was carried out in Alabama in January 2024.

Rocky Myers has exhausted all his legal appeals and the only recourse available to him is the commutation of his death sentence by the Governor of Alabama through the clemency procedure. Since only one clemency request was accepted in the past decades in Alabama (that of a white woman, incidentally), our assessment has been that it is unlikely that targeting the Governor of Alabama alone will lead to any positive results. Generating momentum around his case is a key element to spring others into action as well and encourage the Governor of Alabama Kay Ivey to commute his death sentence.

Amnesty International began working with Rocky in April 2021 and the Governor of Alabama is well-aware of the involvement and support of our movement. Write for Rights was therefore an unmissable opportunity to help regenerate and increase mobilisation for his campaign.

In addition to increasing national and international attention, it was believed that Write for Rights would help raise awareness on violations of international human rights law and standards in the case. The objective was to mobilise activists as well as influential actors, inside and outside Alabama, to express concern about issues such as; racial discrimination; use of the death penalty on those with intellectual disabilities; inadequate legal representation; the result of judicial override of jury recommendation, which is now outlawed in Alabama;



and by pursuing execution through a method of execution that amounts to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment.

By building pressure on the Governor/state legislature, it was hoped they would mandate a review of all existing cases to provide effective remedy and commutations of death sentences, as well as to amend legislation to grant protections of the rights of those facing the death penalty.

The lawyer of Rocky Myers contacted Amnesty International USA in mid-2020, seeking support for his case. At that point, Amnesty International USA and the Death Penalty team at the International Secretariat had already begun identifying possible cases for long-term campaigning and, following preliminary assessments of some selected few, had an initial conversation with Rocky's legal team in October 2020. Between then and March 2021, Amnesty International looked into case documentation and the death penalty situation in Alabama with a view to preparing a campaign strategy and casefile for Rocky.

Context of human rights concerns in the U.S.

Kenneth Smith, 58, [was executed](#) in Alabama on 25 January 2024. This was the state's second attempt to execute him, after the first attempt by lethal injection failed in 2022. This time, the state used the new method of nitrogen hypoxia.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty unconditionally, regardless of the method used to implement it. Prior to the execution, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights highlighted how this new untested method could be extremely painful, result in a botched execution, and could amount to torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, thereby violating international human rights treaties that the U.S. has ratified.

On 1 December 2023, House Representative Chris England filed [House Bill no.27 \(HB27\)](#), which would allow for the 2017 ban on judicial override to be retroactively applied. This would mean that those on death row as a result of a judge imposing a death sentence over the jury recommendation for life imprisonment without parole would be resentenced. The bill was first read on 6 February and is currently pending at Committee level. It is expected to move for consideration of the House between mid-March and May.

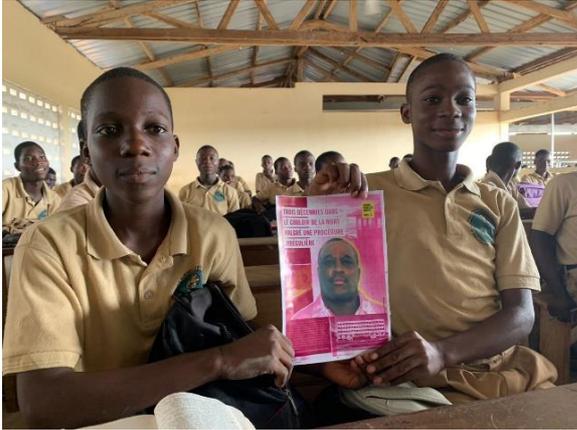


Highlights of Rocky's campaign

From the start, it was clear that solidarity actions had to be an important component of the work due to Rocky's long-term isolation on Alabama's death row. Therefore, Amnesty International activists were invited to take Rocky on a world tour, by sending him travel postcards with photos of their hometowns, holiday locations or even an event that they might be attending, like a film festival. On the back of the postcards, activists could include a short description about the location depicted in the postcards, and the reason they wanted to share it with Rocky.

The action was well received and resulted in a heartfelt message from Rocky – delivered via his lawyer – thanking Amnesty International for the many cards he received.

In addition, Amnesty International USA arranged for a photographer/filmmaker to go to Alabama and interview important people involved in Rocky's campaign, including several family members, his lawyer and paralegal, a former member of the jury and the granddaughter of one of the victims of the attack that resulted in the murder case against Rocky. Some of these materials were used by Amnesty International UK to produce a powerful [8-minute-long video](#), which allowed the viewer to get an insight into Rocky's personality, as well as the many concerns on the proceedings against him.



Amnesty International USA was also able, as part of its “Spotlight” campaign in November, to highlight Rocky’s case through a series of radio and print ads and billboards in Alabama.

On 21 March 2024, Amnesty International USA delivered thousands of petition signatures collected through Write for Rights to Alabama Governor Kay Ivey following a rally that took place at the Alabama state house, where dozens of people gathered to ask the Alabama legislature to support HB27.

Total number of actions taken in support of Rocky: 692,205

Outcomes of Rocky’s campaign

At this stage it is difficult to assess if there has been any movement in Rocky’s case specifically, as there have been no overt signals of his execution nor commutation by state officials. External events led to campaigning priorities and media attention in Amnesty and externally to shift to cover events in Gaza, which directly impacted the capacity of Spotlight campaign lead at Amnesty International USA’s assigned to work on action on behalf of Rocky. Similarly, in Alabama the media agenda in November 2023 to January 2024 was dominated by the steps taken by the authorities to implement the first execution by nitrogen hypoxia.

As a result of the solidarity action, Rocky received many cards and letters from around the world.

Kacey Keeton (Federal Defenders, Middle District of Alabama), Rocky’s lawyer said: *“Rocky and his legal team are incredibly grateful for his inclusion in Amnesty’s Write for Rights campaign. We know it raised awareness about his situation, and we hope that awareness continues to grow and eventually impact a change in his case status. More personally, the outreach to Rocky from around the world has had a profound impact on Rocky. He has been incredibly touched by all of the letters and cards. He has expressed amazement that so many people have learned about him and care about what happens to him. As his lawyer and friend, I am in awe of the kindness and so grateful to all of the people expressing their care for Rocky.”*

Miriam Bankston, paralegal in Rocky’s legal team said: *As a member of Rocky’s legal team, and as someone who spends a lot of time online, I know the Write for Rights campaign raised an incredible amount of awareness about Rocky. Not only did this campaign bring awareness to his case, but it was done in such a way that honored Rocky as a person, father, and grandfather. I know the outpouring of support meant the world to Rocky, and to know that so many people felt called to action is truly inspiring and serves as motivation for his entire team. I am so grateful Rocky was included in this campaign.”*

Next steps

The legislature of Alabama is due to consider in March-May 2024 House Bill no.27, that would render the 2017 ban on judicial override retroactive and commute death sentences imposed against recommendations by juries for life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

Amnesty International will continue working in support of Rocky Myers and against the death penalty in Alabama through the many tools available.

UNCLE PABAI & UNCLE PAUL – AUSTRALIA



Introduction

Wadhuam Pabai Pabai (Uncle Pabai) & Wadhuam Paul Kabai (Uncle Paul) are First Nations leaders from the remote islands of Boigu and Saibai of the Guda Maluyligal Nation at the northernmost part of Australia in the Torres Strait. Their Indigenous ancestors have lived on the islands for thousands of years. Now, because of climate change, their way of life, traditional knowledge systems, cultural practices and spiritual connections that have been passed down from generation to generation could be broken forever. They are taking the Australian Government to court in a bid to prevent

destruction of their communities from climate change, arguing that the government has a legal responsibility to ensure Torres Strait Islander Peoples are not harmed by the climate crisis. They want courts to order the government to protect their homes and community by cutting greenhouse gas emissions. This is the first climate class action brought by First Nations People in Australia.

What Uncles Pabai and Uncle Paul and their communities are facing is emblematic of what Indigenous Peoples around the world are dealing with as peoples living on the front line of climate change, and the consequences of industrialization and colonization. Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul's case was submitted for Write for Rights as it was felt that the campaign would bring the opportunity for global solidarity as they progress their case against the government and also for Amnesty International supporters to make direct calls on the Australian government to rapidly reduce carbon emissions.

In July 2021, Amnesty International Australia was approached by [Grata Fund](#), a public interest advocacy organisation, to work with them as a campaigning partner around the strategic litigation case they were planning but had not yet announced, to be called [The Australian Climate Case](#).

On 26 October 2021, the class action was filed at the Federal Court, and The Australian Climate Case was publicly announced. Plaintiffs Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul are arguing that the Australian Government has a legal 'duty of care' toward Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and that by failing to prevent climate change the Australian Government has unlawfully breached this duty of care.

By March 2022, Amnesty International Australia and Grata Fund had developed a campaign plan and key messaging to promote The Australian Climate Case through media and social media, mobilise Amnesty International supporters to take action and call on the Australian Government to do more to curb greenhouse gas emissions, and encourage the Australian community to engage with the case and [share their climate stories](#).

During 2023, Amnesty International Australia and Grata Fund continued working closely together, culminating in two days together in June in Cairns, Far North Queensland, with Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul as they prepared to spread the word of their court case across the Pacific by sailing to Vanuatu on the Rainbow Warrior, Greenpeace's iconic ship. Their case was submitted for Write for Rights 2023 by Amnesty International Australia, in partnership with Grata Fund.



Highlights of Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul's campaign



An important aim of having Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul's case as part of Write for Rights was to make them feel they weren't alone and had the support of the Amnesty International global movement supporting them while they progressed their court case.

When the three weeks of expert witness hearings began in Melbourne on 8 November 2023, Amnesty International Australia staff and activists, along with Grata Fund staff and supporters and many others from the community, were there to support Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul as they

entered the courthouse. The forecourt was full of people and media, supporters were wearing specially designed t-shirts, and holding banners.

In seeking evaluation from Grata Fund for this report, Grata Fund said that Amnesty International's collaboration was essential in gaining such attention, as Grata Fund is a small organisation. Amnesty International Australia providing high resolution footage from the event outside the courthouse to show the family and community in the Torres Straits gave Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul and everyone pride in what they are doing.

In late November, Amnesty International handed over the solidarity messages that started coming in from around the world, at the conclusion of the Melbourne hearing. By this stage Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul had been away from their island homes and families for three weeks and were missing them dreadfully. Amnesty International filmed a [thank you message from Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul](#) on their last day in Melbourne.

Total number of actions taken in support of Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul: 518,078

Outcomes of Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul's campaign

As of early April 2024, it is too early to assess the impact of Write for Rights, as the court case is ongoing and closing arguments are set for late April 2024 in Cairns, in Far North Queensland.

In discussing with Grata Fund the development and impacts of being part of Write for Rights, these things were raised:

- Greater awareness of Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul's court case in Australia and around the world.
- Increased presence at the Melbourne hearings, bringing both attention to the case and solidarity to Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul.
- It was felt that the Amnesty International's supporters' letters to target generated pressure on the Australian Government.
- The community in the Torres Strait felt heard when they saw what was happening at the Melbourne hearings, seeing all the support.
- For Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul and Grata Fund, collaborating with a larger organisation like Amnesty International brings awareness that they can't achieve alone.



On receiving solidarity letters from around the world, **Uncle Pabai said:** *“On behalf of Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul, our deepest thanks from the bottom of our hearts to the organization of Amnesty that organized and stand their force and are helping to support our case, on our journey, and for helping the Torres Strait Islanders. Thank you very much.”*

Next steps

Amnesty International Australia will continue to support Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul and will be present when they travel to Cairns for the closing arguments at the end of April 2024. They will also deliver more solidarity messages to Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul from across the world.



MAUNG SAWYEDDOLLAH – MYANMAR



Introduction

Maung Sawyeddollah is an ethnic Rohingya refugee who fled Myanmar in 2017 after the Myanmar military launched a campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya population in Northern Rakhine State, killing thousands and displacing over 700,000 – the vast majority of Rohingya living in Rakhine State at the time. Since 2017, Sawyeddollah has been living in a vast refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Since fleeing Myanmar in 2017, Sawyeddollah has become one of the leading youth activists in his community. One of Sawyeddollah's most significant achievements to date is the establishment of the Rohingya Students Network in 2019. The network serves as a platform for Rohingya students to come together and collectively fight for the rights of their

community. Through this network, Sawyeddollah has been able to empower Rohingya youth to take a more active role in advocating for their rights, amplifying their voices and giving them a platform to speak out against injustice.

Sawyeddollah has also become one of the leading activists in his community's pursuit of justice and remediation from Meta Inc., Facebook's parent company, for the company's role in the suffering and displacement of his community.

Amnesty International investigated Meta's role in the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya and found that the company bears responsibility for contributing to the atrocities. Amnesty International concluded that Meta therefore owes a remedy to the community according to international human rights standards. Amnesty International has been campaigning for Meta to fulfil its responsibility by remediating the Rohingya.

In September 2022, Amnesty International published a report [The Social Atrocity: Meta and the right to remedy for the Rohingya](#). At this time, Sawyeddollah was brought to the attention of Amnesty International by partners [Victim Advocates International](#), a not-for-profit collective of lawyers with the aim of providing legal assistance to victims' groups. Sawyeddollah is featured prominently in the report, and [his voice and story](#) took a central place in the campaign to launch the report. From early on, Sawyeddollah showed great enthusiasm for the research and supported the Amnesty Tech team to conduct additional interviews with more Rohingya survivors. He also displayed a great passion for justice and human rights and became a close partner of the Amnesty Tech team throughout the research and campaign launch and implementation. He joined the report launch event hosted by Amnesty International France in Paris remotely from Cox's Bazar and gave several media interviews afterwards.

Meta is a global Big Tech company with registrations in many jurisdictions around the world, it was felt that a global campaign such as Write for Rights would really amplify the voice of the affected community through Sawyeddollah's case.

Context of human rights concerns

To escape the violence at the hands of the Myanmar military, around one million Rohingya refugees fled to Bangladesh in August 2017. The situation in the camps has always been dire, but it took a turn to worse with dwindling funding for the Rohingya during the last few years. There have been several rounds of discussions on repatriations, but this have never been implemented due to continued security concerns in Myanmar. Relocation to an island in the Bay of Bengal called Bhasan Char was carried out,

ignoring the rights groups request to visit the place to ensure that it abide by the basic standards for habitat.

The Rohingya in the camps in Bangladesh have security and protection concerns, little access to education and their freedom of movement is restricted. Due to the situation in the camps getting worse, some Rohingya refugees leave the camps to take a perilous journey on boats, fleeing to other countries such as Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia. According to UNHCR, approximately 569 Rohingya individuals lost their lives at sea while attempting the journey by boat in 2023. Some of the boats were turned away by the authorities in these countries. Those who make it on these countries' shores often face hostile reception and do not receive adequate protection, safe shelter or a clear legal pathway on their status.

In December 2023, a large group of local students stormed the Rohingya temporary shelter in the city of Banda Aceh, aggressively and violently demanding that the refugees be removed. UNHCR reported that this incident was a result of “a coordinated online campaign of misinformation, disinformation and hate speech against refugees”.

Highlights of Sawyeddollah's campaign

The inclusion of Sawyeddollah in the Write for Rights campaign 2023 has had a great awareness raising impact through Human Rights Education and public outreach activities. Sawyeddollah was invited by various Amnesty International entities to talk about his pursuit of justice from the tech giant Meta. One of the biggest highlights was Amnesty International Germany's invitation to Sawyeddollah to participate in two online sessions with German-speaking youth from a network of over 500 schools in Germany, Luxembourg, Austria and Switzerland.



Amnesty International Ireland also organised a webinar in December at which Sawyeddollah was joined by the Head of the Big Tech Accountability Team, Pat de Brun, and a representative of the Irish Council for Civil Liberties, to discuss the Rohingya case and wider issues related to the business model of Big Tech. This was especially welcomed because Ireland has been selected as a key focus jurisdiction for the Big Tech Accountability team due to its unique role as the global headquarters of many of the world's largest tech companies.



Amnesty International Malaysia invited Sawyeddollah to speak at the Write for Rights event in Kuala Lumpur with over 100 university students from the Amnesty International Club of Brickfields Asia College and the Amnesty International Club of Multimedia University in Melaka.

There are also plans to turn Sawyeddollah's story into an educational tool through an already existing game called Rights Arcade that has been developed by Amnesty International in the South Asia region.

The events were truly inspiring and Sawyeddollah managed to raise the voice of the Rohingya community in a very powerful way. There are plans to involve Sawyeddollah in other activities, such as the Amnesty International Sweden's General Assembly later this year.

Total number of actions taken in support of Sawyeddollah: 476,869

Outcomes of Sawyeddollah's campaign

So far, there has been no direct impact on Meta's accountability. Amnesty International's strategy has been to put pressure on Meta to comply with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's requirements to respect human rights and pay reparations to the affected community. That is a long-term goal, and this campaign has certainly created the necessary public pressure to move towards this.

Throughout the campaign, Sawyeddollah felt moral support thanks to the solidarity messages and campaigning, especially during some difficult months when he faced security risks.

Sawyeddollah wrote a wonderful message about his experience of the Write for Rights campaign:

"I'm Maung Sawyeddollah from Myanmar. My journey as a Rohingya human rights activist began as a small voice in a corner of the world largest refugee camp in Bangladesh, fighting for justice amidst the challenges faced by my community. I didn't know that my voice would resonate globally, thanks to the incredible platform provided by Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign.



There was a turning point in my advocacy efforts last year when Amnesty International selected me as one of their Write for Rights focal points, among a distinguished group of 10 individuals. The recognition was not just an acknowledgment of my activism but also a spotlight on the plight of the Rohingya people, who have endured immense suffering.

My focus within the campaign centred on holding Meta, the parent company of Facebook, accountable for its contribution to the plight of the Rohingya. Meta's role in facilitating the dissemination of misinformation and hatred against my community has been a significant concern, and the Write for Rights campaign provided a powerful avenue to amplify this message.

Through the campaign, I found myself receiving an outpouring of motivation, support, encouragement, and solidarity from individuals and groups across the globe. The global community's response was heartening, as people from diverse backgrounds united in the fight for justice and human rights.

One of the campaign's remarkable outcomes was the numerous opportunities it provided for me to engage with various groups of activists, students, and educators through online platforms. These interactions served as invaluable moments to raise awareness about the challenges faced by the Rohingya community, shedding light on the need for concerted efforts to address the issues at hand.

The collaboration fostered by the Write for Rights campaign went beyond mere words of support. It translated into collective action, with many individuals and groups joining forces, calling on Meta to take responsibility and provide remedy to the Rohingya. The campaign's impact was not just in elevating my voice but in creating a chorus of solidarity that resonated across borders.

One of the most profound outcomes of Write for Rights was the bonds it forged, connecting me with like-

mindful individuals who stand shoulder to shoulder in the fight against Meta and the injustices faced by the Rohingya. The campaign brought together a diverse range of voices, turning it into a global movement advocating for change.

As a Rohingya human rights activist, I am profoundly grateful for the Write for Rights campaign, which has not only elevated my platform but has become a catalyst for change. The journey from a small corner of the world's largest refugee camp to a global stage has been transformative, and it reaffirms the power of collective action in addressing human rights issues.

Write for Rights has not just amplified my voice; it has woven a tapestry of global support, solidarity, and friendship, standing as a testament to the indomitable spirit of those committed to the cause of justice and human rights.”

Next steps

Amnesty Tech is committed to continuing to work on Sawyeddollah's case to support him and the Rohingya in their fight for justice. This work will be done through a mix of campaigning, communications and advocacy. Sawyeddollah will be invited to public forums by Amnesty International to represent his community as a witness and expert on online advocacy of hatred. His case has already been included in Amnesty International's submission to the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and included in the report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders "We are not just the future": challenges faced by child and youth human rights defenders.



Amnesty International plans to organize an online awareness raising event with Sawyeddollah and representatives of other affected communities, bringing these voices together to send a warning message that Meta's current business model in conflict-affected communities is dangerous, and that if Meta doesn't make drastic changes to its algorithmic amplification model, human rights abuses similar to those in Myanmar will be repeated.

RITA KARASARTOVA – KYRGYZSTAN



Introduction

Rita Karasartova is a human rights defender and expert in civic governance from Kyrgyzstan. She leads the non-governmental Institute for Public Analysis and is a member of the United Democratic Movement of Kyrgyzstan. She was arrested on 23 October 2022 along with other activists and politicians who demanded transparency for a new border demarcation agreement with Uzbekistan that would cede control of the Kempir-Abad (Andizhan) fresh-water reservoir to Uzbekistan.

Now Rita Karasartova is under house arrest, having spent months detained in a cramped cell unable to see or speak to her family. She has been charged with attempting to “violently overthrow the government” and faces 15 years’ imprisonment.

The Kempir-Abad case is the first mass case of political persecution in Kyrgyzstan in many years. Amnesty International’s Central Asia researchers have been following this case since the first arrests in October 2022.

Despite the deteriorating human rights situation, Kyrgyzstan remains a country that relies heavily on support, including financial support, from other countries and international institutions, and is also concerned about its public image. Therefore, Amnesty International felt that international attention on the case of Rita Karasartova and the other Kempir-Abad detainees may change the situation for the better.

Context of human rights concerns in Kyrgyzstan

The situation with freedom of expression in Kyrgyzstan has become even more alarming. Activists and journalists continue to be persecuted. Authorities publicly explain that the criminal persecution is a measure to “educate” journalists.

Moreover, two parallel draft bills proposed by the presidential administration and members of parliament aim to tighten existing restrictive legislation regulating the activities of non-governmental organisations and strengthen state control over civil society. Both would violate Kyrgyzstan’s international human rights obligations pertaining to the right to freedom of association, freedom of expression, and other related human rights and pose an acute threat to the ability of civil society organisations to offer vital support to all people, particularly at-risk groups, in accessing their rights. Both draft laws are pending approval in Parliament.

On 25 October 2023, parliament passed, in a first reading, a draft “Foreign Representatives” law despite significant objections by civil society, government representatives, the Human Rights Ombudsperson, the Supreme Court, the Prosecutor General and international experts. The contested draft law obliges all organisations who receive funding from abroad and engage in vaguely defined “political activity” to register as “foreign representatives” and introduces a new category of “foreign non-governmental organisations” (FNGO). Under the proposed legislation the authorities could suspend the activities of an NGO for six months without a court decision or deregister the organisation if it failed to register as a “foreign representative”. The draft law also imposes onerous, semi-annual, and annual reporting obligations on all “foreign representatives”, regardless of the size of the organisation, its purpose, and the scope of its operations, making compliance with these requirements extremely difficult and costly,



especially for smaller NGOs. Most NGOs in Kyrgyzstan rely on foreign grants due to a lack of domestic funding opportunities. UN Special Rapporteurs warned in October 2023 that the wide powers the draft legislation on NGOs grants to the authorities “could be used against organizations that voice criticism or dissent against the Government, and that, if adopted, it “could have a chilling effect on the operations of all associations”.

Highlights of Rita’s campaign

Amnesty International UK joined up with The Guilty Feminist Podcast to create an episode titled “[Write for Rights: Why we should care about Kyrgyzstan](#)” guest-starring Rita Karasartova herself and Amnesty International’s Central Asia researcher Maisy Weicherding.

Amnesty International UK also secured an [interview](#) with Rita in the Metro, a UK newspaper, in which Rita emotionally recalled the terrible conditions she faced whilst being held in a cramped prison cell with nine other women for eight months, leading her to eventually go on hunger strike.

Despite the risks they faced, in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, partners, schoolteachers and activists held solidarity events for Rita and the other individuals featured in Write for Rights 2023. Some schools even held school-wide events for all students.

In Luxembourg, billboards in support of Rita were posted at the train station in Luxembourg. Rita's colleagues saw these billboards and sent photos to Rita, telling her that the billboards demonstrated “international recognition of Rita’s human rights work”.

Total number of actions taken in support of Rita: 405,204

Outcomes of Rita’s campaign

In autumn 2023, it became known that there were informal threats that Rita could be returned to the pre-trial detention centre. Amnesty International assumes that the fact that there has been no deterioration in the circumstances of Rita and her close ones is due to widespread international attention.

Rita shared photos of the solidarity letters and postcards she received via her Facebook page. In the comments many users expressed support for Rita. In a post on Facebook, Rita shared photos of letters she had received from around the world. She said: *“I understood the power of universal support. This strengthens you and gives you the strength to move further towards your goal. Thanks a lot, everyone.”*



Next steps

Amnesty International is continuing to campaign for Rita’s freedom.

JUSTYNA WYDRZYŃSKA – POLAND



Introduction

Justyna Wydrzyńska is human rights defender and a doula who accompanies people through abortions in Poland. She is one of the founders of Abortion Dream Team, an activist collective that campaigns against abortion stigma in Poland and offers trainings and non-judgmental advice on how to get a safe abortion. Abortion Dream Team is part of Abortion Without Borders, a grassroots feminist network in Europe that provides information, counselling, funding and practical support to people in Poland who need an abortion abroad, or access to reliable online sources to obtain abortion pills that enable safe self-managed abortions at home.

In March 2023, Justyna Wydrzyńska was convicted to eight months' community service for helping a pregnant woman to access abortion pills in Poland, as per article 152.2 of the Penal Code that criminalises those who aid an abortion. She has appealed the conviction. Throughout the trial she defended her actions to help with safe abortions. Amnesty International believes that Justyna should have never been charged for helping with an abortion and has called for charges against her to be dropped.

The campaign to support Justyna Wydrzyńska started long before Write for Rights. When the prosecutor charged Justyna with helping with an abortion in March 2022, Amnesty International was prepared and ready to respond with an Urgent Action. Since then, Amnesty International has been in close contact with Justyna, with Amnesty International Poland attending her trial hearings in 2022 and 2023. Abortion Dream Team has remained a key partner for Amnesty International Poland for the broader work around abortion rights in Poland.

Justyna's case was put forward for Write for Rights to increase international attention on her situation, particularly from outside Europe, since Poland is sensitive to international pressure. Justyna's case is emblematic of the risks that human rights defenders and abortion rights activists face in Poland and the impact of criminalisation. By campaigning on Justyna's case through Write for Rights, Amnesty International wanted to bring positive change for her, by quashing the conviction, increasing the solidarity she received, and bringing renewed attention to the harmful restrictive abortion laws in Poland and the impact of criminalisation onto HRD and access to safe abortions in the country.

Context of human rights concerns in Poland

The major external development happening alongside the Write for Rights 2023 campaign was the Polish general election in October. Access to abortion was one of the key topics of the campaign. Amnesty International carried out a tactical campaign to increase conversations around abortion rights and fight against the stigma during the election period. Results of the elections confirmed a change in government and the election of a new prime minister who had committed to address the restrictive abortion laws during their election campaign. Abortion rights being a major priority nationally and internationally during the elections campaign gave more visibility to Justyna's case. Justyna and Abortion Dream Team were very involved in a campaign to demand that political parties and candidates made clear commitments to ensure legal and safe access to abortion in Poland.

As of March 2024, there are four bills tabled that propose the expansion of access to abortion and the decriminalisation of abortion. They are yet to be discussed in the parliament, but the topic remains a key issue in national politics.

Highlights of Justyna's campaign

A great number of national entities have engaged with Justyna's Write for Rights campaign. Justyna was invited to meet with national entities and attend events in various countries including France, Belgium, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, the Netherlands, and South Korea. She also participated in online events organised by colleagues in different entities. Feedback received from Justyna about the activities organised by Amnesty International in various places has been very positive. As an example, after her trip to France in 2023 she said about Amnesty International France colleagues: *"They both took care about me like real friends. It was very exhausting but successful on many levels."*

Justyna particularly valued efforts by Amnesty International Spain/Catalunya to adapt their original plans and coordinate an encounter between her and Vanessa Mendoza Cortes, a human rights defender from Andorra, who was facing defamation charges for speaking out about abortion rights at a UN forum.

Justyna also appreciated meetings with and support from health providers in various countries.



During a Write for Rights event in Poland, Justyna said that although previously she did not believe that such action could make a change, when she realised the number of letters being sent to the prosecutor and received thousands of solidarity letters herself, she no longer felt alone in her struggles and felt stronger to fight for abortion rights.

Total number of actions taken in support of Justyna: 582,655

Outcomes of Justyna's campaign

There have not been any changes to Justyna's case so far. She has appealed the conviction, but the hearing hasn't happened yet, hence, the situation remains the same. However, global solidarity has had an enormous positive impact on her. She feels extremely supported, which is giving her more strength and confidence. Justyna said: *"I just got to the Polish Amnesty International office, and I went to the room with thousands of letters. And the one thing I want to tell all those people who wrote them is 'Thank you, thank you very much. This means a lot to me. Even thank you is not enough, in my opinion. All those letters melted my heart'."*

Next steps

Amnesty International's Europe Regional Office will continue working alongside Amnesty International Poland to support Justyna, and continue campaigning for her unjust conviction to be overturned.

AHMED MANSOOR – UAE



Introduction

Blogger and poet Ahmed Mansoor is a prominent human rights defender who received the prestigious Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders in 2015. He is a member of the advisory committee of Human Rights Watch's Middle East and North Africa Division, as well as of the advisory board of the Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR). He has documented the human rights situation in the UAE since 2006 and has publicly spoken out in defence of international human rights on his blog, via social media and in interviews with international media. Ahmed Mansoor is a long standing and trusted friend of Amnesty International and other human rights

organizations. He was a trusted source of information who continued his human rights work despite knowing the risk he incurred following the UAE's crackdown on freedom of expression.

Up until his arrest in March 2017, Ahmed Mansoor was the last human rights defender in the UAE who was still criticizing the authorities publicly.

He was arrested at his home in the emirate of Ajman in northern UAE on 20 March 2017. On 29 May 2018, the State Security Chamber of the Federal Appeal Court in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the UAE, sentenced him to 10 years in prison on charges including "insulting the UAE and its symbols". The verdict was upheld on 31 December 2018. Since his arrest, Ahmed Mansoor has been held in solitary confinement without access to books, television, or radio, and since December 2017 the prison authorities have denied him a bed. He is held in Sadr prison in Abu Dhabi.

As the UAE were hosting COP28, the United Nation's conference on its Framework Convention on Climate Change, between 30 November and 12 December 2023, featuring the case of Ahmed Mansoor in Write for Rights 2023 was a strategic decision. The UAE government was likely to use its COP28 presidency to cynically promote an image of openness and tolerance despite its persistent failure to respect the rights to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly. The case of Ahmed Mansoor is purely a case relating to freedom of expression and unfair trial.

The Write for Rights campaign was also accompanied by a campaign calling on the release of 26 prisoners of conscience in the UAE, 24 of whom were convicted in 2013 in the UAE94 mass trial, ahead of COP28.

Amnesty International has had no contact with Ahmed Mansoor's family regarding the Write for Rights campaign and all details have been obtained indirectly, in accordance with the family's request that they not be contacted after the arrest.

Context of human rights concerns in the UAE

Since 2011, the UAE authorities have mounted an unprecedented crackdown on

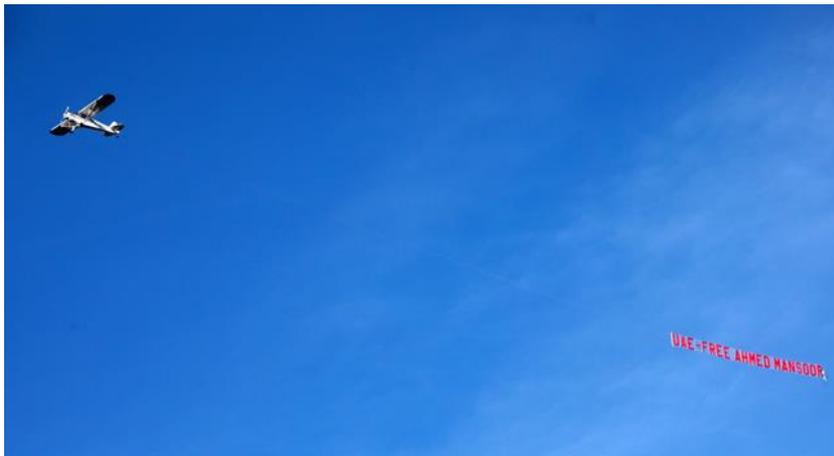


freedom of expression and association in the country. The space for dissent has shrunk severely and many people, both Emiratis and non-Emiratis who have criticized the UAE authorities, government policies, or the human rights situation in the country have been harassed, arrested, tortured or otherwise ill-treated, or subjected to unfair trial and imprisonment. The authorities have arrested, detained, and prosecuted more than 100 activists, human rights defenders and other critics of the government, including prominent lawyers, judges and academics, on vague and overly broad national security-related or cybercrime charges and in proceedings that fail to meet international fair trial standards.

The largest-scale act of repression, a mass trial known as the “UAE-94” case, concluded with the conviction and sentencing of 69 men receiving prison sentences of up to 15 years. Sixty of these men have now completed their sentences, yet they remain unlawfully held.

The United Nation’s Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has found that all defendants in the case are arbitrarily detained. Amnesty International issued a detailed report in 2014 documenting violations of the right to fair trial.

Highlights of Ahmed’s campaign



Amnesty International UK supported Ahmed Mansoor in their Write for Rights campaign. To highlight his case, on 25 November 2023, they [flew a plane](#) over Manchester City Football Club’s Etihad Stadium shortly after kick-off in their home game against Liverpool Football Club. Manchester City is majority-owned by the Abu Dhabi United Group, run by Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, a member of the

Emirati royal family and the UAE’s vice-president and deputy prime minister. The plane circled the pitch for 15 minutes and carried a large banner saying “UAE - Free Ahmed Mansoor” in giant red lettering.

As Write for Rights and COP28 coincided for a time, it was decided that Amnesty International would highlight Ahmed Mansoor’s story at the COP conference in the UAE. On 9 December 2023, Amnesty and Human Rights Watch organized the [first officially UN-authorized "advocacy action" about a domestic Emirati human-rights issue at COP28](#) for unjustly held Emirati prisoners. Those who attended the action wore T-shirts with a portrait of Ahmed Mansoor and held posters for another unjustly imprisoned Emirati, Mohamed al-Siddiq, and for Alaa Abdul-Fattah from Egypt.

Total number of actions taken in support of Ahmed: 577,852

Outcomes of Ahmed’s campaign

Sadly, as COP28 was happening, on 7 December 2023, the UAE authorities began a [new mass trial](#) of over 80 Emiratis before the State Security Chamber of the Federal Appeal Court in Abu Dhabi on charges of establishing a terrorist organization and supporting and/or financing it, under the 2014 Federal Law on Combating Terrorism Crimes. The defendants in this new mass trial include prisoners of conscience Ahmed Mansoor, Nasser bin Ghaith and Mohammed al-Roken, as well as other prisoners arbitrarily detained following the previous “UAE-94” mass trial. The new mass trial is still ongoing in March 2024.

With this new mass trial, the UAE are again seeking to intimidate anyone who might think of speaking



out in criticism of the authorities. Starting this new mass trial while the COP28 climate conference had brought representatives of every state in the world into Dubai sends a clear message that, no matter how much international attention there may be on the UAE, dissidence by Emiratis will continue to be severely punished.

There are no quotes to share from Ahmed Mansoor as he remains held in solitary confinement and is now facing a new trial along with over 80 Emirati men. His family cannot make any comments either as this would

put them in danger, but it is hoped that they may be aware of the campaigns calling to free Ahmed Mansoor through social media.

Next steps

Petition signatures for Ahmed's campaign will be delivered to embassies of the UAE, and on social media. Going forward, Amnesty International will continue working with various partners on Ahmed Mansoor's case, firstly to exchange information about any developments in the case, and secondly to strategically work together to highlight his case and call for his release.

CHAIMA ISSA – TUNISIA



Introduction

Chaima Issa is a prominent Tunisian activist and leading opposition figure in the National Salvation Front (NSF), one of the main opposition coalitions in Tunisia. She is an emblematic case of the Tunisian authorities' latest crackdown on political opponents.

When Tunisian president Kais Saied suspended parliament, dismissed the prime minister and took executive control of the country in July 2021 citing emergency powers, Chaima was one of the first to publicly oppose him. After meeting foreign diplomats along with other Tunisian opposition figures to discuss the political situation in Tunisia, Chaima was arrested on 22 February 2023 as part of an investigation for alleged “conspiracy”. She was released on 13 July after more than four months of arbitrary detention, but the legal case is ongoing, and the authorities have banned her from travelling abroad and “appearing in public spaces”.

Chaima’s case was chosen to be a part of Write for Rights 2023 as analysis showed that coordinated campaigning could help in having the charges and other restrictions against Chaima dropped. It was also decided that the campaign provided a unique opportunity to alert the broader public about the ongoing targeted arrests of critics of President Saied and the attacks on freedom of expression and independence of the judiciary in Tunisia.

Amnesty International’s campaigner on Tunisia reached out to Chaima’s close relatives to ask for their consent to feature Chaima’s case in the Write for Rights 2023 global campaign. The relationship was maintained with the family until Chaima was released in July 2023. When Chaima was released, the Tunisia team contacted Chaima herself and remains in touch with her.

Context of human rights concerns in Tunisia

Two and a half years since President Kais Saied’s power grab, the state of human rights in Tunisia has never been more fragile. Institutional safeguards for the protection of human rights were almost entirely dismantled, the judiciary has lost guarantees for its independence, military courts have increasingly targeted critics of the president with repressive laws, while public discourse has been restricted with dozens of high-profile opponents prosecuted under spurious charges.

Total number of actions taken in support of Chaima: 509,761

Outcomes of Chaima’s campaign

On 13 July 2023, Chaima Issa was released from prison after over four months of arbitrary detention. Whilst this occurred before the Write for Rights campaign began, Amnesty International believes its research and campaigning





played an important role in securing Chaima's, release by putting coordinated pressure on the Tunisian authorities, including by consistently documenting the human rights violations she was subjected to.

However, Chaima remains under investigation and still faces charges for "conspiracy" for which she could face years in prison or even the death penalty.

A very positive outcome of the campaign was the solidarity that Chaima felt from around the world.

Chaima said: *"First, [the solidarity letters] remind me of the universal principles that everyone shares and lives with. They give me more hope in humans. As you see, there is a lot of backsliding in the world, and a lot of things that make you lose hope in humanity and unity. When I receive a letter from Canada, Japan, or Morocco, they feel for us, they feel our pain. They feel that humans need to be free and live in a democracy. This only gives me more trust and hope to continue. This gives me hope in humans in general.*

The Amnesty campaign, in addition to helping me be part of this universal unity, it has an important impact on me. It encourages me and encourages my friends in detention. Because it's not only Chaima Issa, and it's not only my case. It's the case of a nation under the claws of populism and the coup. The achievements of the revolution are crumbling down in front of us. And the most difficult part is that there are people in cells in the dark. Their freedom is taken away, they are detained without charges and without crimes. This is what hurts me. When I see these letters of support and solidarity, it can only give me hope for tomorrow."

Next steps

Amnesty International will continue to monitor the developments on Chaima's case, including the potential opening of her trial under the so-called conspiracy case, and will continue to campaign for her freedom.



ACTIVITIES AROUND THE WORLD



ALGERIA

Write for Rights took on a special flavour at AI Algeria in 2023, because it is the first time since that of 2019 that we have finally resumed offline activities. Despite the few activities organized and the relatively low number of actions generated by these offline events, there is still a good feeling of satisfaction among members and for the entire section. They also continued work online and shared the petitions widely, resulting in many further actions.



AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

In Aotearoa New Zealand, advocates and supporters organised different events across the North and South Islands during their summer. From a movie screening fundraising and stands in public libraries to letter-writing events in cafes, churches and at home with family and friends, they acted in solidarity with this year's human rights defenders. Many also participated online by signing petitions and writing messages of hope through a dedicated campaign website and Social Media channels. This year, from all the people at risk featured in the campaign, Rocky Myers was the individual that New Zealand supporters took the most actions in support of. Thousands stood in solidarity with Rocky and urged the Governor of Alabama to grant him clemency and commute his death sentence.

ARGENTINA

Amnesty International Argentina mobilized their campaign events in formal, non-formal and informal educational spaces, and achieved digital participation through lead generation ads and actions on their website. As with every year, the most successful at-risk individual cases were local national cases.

AUSTRALIA

Write for Rights is established as a fully integrated campaign across the organisation. Almost 53,000 supporters took at least one action, of which more than 24,000 people were new to Amnesty. This was a drop of 56% from last year's all-time high engagement rate of 120,000 supporters. The total action number of 160,000 was also down by 30% from last year. There was much happening in the world that rightly-so took people's attention to other places.

AI Australia supplemented the global 10 IAR's cases with 14 additional IAR's cases, which contributed 20% of their total action figure. With the global 10 IARs, they asked supporters who had signed the online petition for someone to step-up and send an email or write a solidarity message for seven of the people, deepening their engagement and generating 5,600 actions, which is a 65% increase from last year.

Over 40 events were held across the country, both online and offline. Most of the offline events were activists going out into their local community and setting up stalls at pre-existing events and gathering petition signatures, providing a great opportunity to engage with new people on Amnesty International's work.

AUSTRIA

AI Austria had a very eventful Write for Rights 2023; they provided a comfortable writing studio in a "Write for Rights" branded shipping container for the public to write letters. It allowed them to engage with a large number of citizens, raise awareness and collect signatures and letters for the Global 10. Additionally, they had several community building events that brought the Amnesty International community in Austria closer together.

BELGIUM (FLEMISH)

The Flemish section of Amnesty International Belgium had a successful Write for Rights 2023. More than 29,034 letters and 11,798 postcards were written. This exceeds the previous year's total by a remarkable 8,687. The campaign kicked off on 2 December with a big event at the College in Antwerp, where the doors remained open for 12 hours. Hundreds of individuals came together to collectively write for human rights, creating a warm atmosphere of solidarity heightened by live music. Additionally, both Justyna Wyrzyńska and Idil Eser visited the event to share their stories and testify about the impact of writing letters. The event resulted in an outstanding 3,164 letters and cards written!



The Section provided writing kits, including all the necessary materials for people to organize their own 'Write for Rights' events during the whole month of December, whether public or private. More than 1,300 writing kits were ordered online, leading to the hosting of more than 150 public events throughout Flanders and Brussels.

BELGIUM (FRENCH-SPEAKING)

AI Belgium (French speaking) and their local groups established numerous partnerships with schools, municipal administrations, and associations to highlight the 75th anniversary of the UDHR. More than 40 stands and public events were organized to attract the public to the situation of people featured in the Write for Rights campaign. Cabaret events, improvisation shows, conferences, and musical performances were held. This enabled the public to be brought together around the theme of human rights on 10 December and increased the number of events and partnerships with a clear objective: to reach new audiences, especially young people, and those from diverse backgrounds. The Section set up a human rights education workshop linked to the cases featured. Several workshops were held in literacy and French as a foreign language (FLE) centres to raise awareness about the human rights to people who otherwise may not have been aware. After collecting actions in January, the Section sorted and counted the letters and solidarity cards at the beginning of February. Nearly 300,000 actions were counted, making 2023

the year of the highest total reached since 2019.

BENIN

AI Benin organized the Write for Rights 2023 campaign from November 25 to December 15, 2023, mobilizing activists from 40 groups across the entire national territory for 20 days. The campaign involved selecting four cases from 10 global cases and retaining cases from Brazil, South Africa, Eswatini, and Tunisia, along with a local case in Benin. Capacity building was organized online for 200 coordinators, and the campaign took place digitally since 2020. A link was set up to collect petition signatures on the AI Benin website. An official launch was organized in collaboration with a beach fitness association, bringing together over 300 people to discuss selected cases. The 40 groups also held local launches in their localities, using tablets and phones to bring people together. At the end of the campaign, 117,740 signatures were collected for the selected 5 cases.



BRAZIL

AI Brazil had a successful Write for Rights campaign with many cultural events in support of Ana Maria from all regions of the country. There was wide participation in events, with nationwide podcasts and a soon to be held "peace walk", an event that Pedro Henrique started organising in 2013.

BURKINA FASO

The Write for Rights Campaign went very well within Amnesty International Burkina Faso. The campaign was officially launched on 20 November 2023 and generated enthusiasm among members and supporters.

Several events were carried out during the campaign. Among the flagship events, a highlight was the Art and Human Rights competition and the inter-university Human Rights Moot Court competitions. The arts competition was in its

sixth year and mobilized more than two thousand students from five secondary schools in the City of Koudougou. The moot court competitions saw hundreds of students from Ouagadougou and Bobo Dioulasso taking part. The university teams argued on the theme: “Universal Declaration of Human Rights: 75 years of contribution to a more just, peaceful and respectful world of Human Rights”.

In view of the security and humanitarian context experienced in Burkina Faso, the Section paid particular attention to digital actions. More than 15,000 people took part in offline and online actions. In addition to educating people about Human Rights, the campaign also made it possible to expand the activist base of Amnesty International Burkina Faso.

CANADA (ENGLISH SPEAKING)

The English section of AI Canada’s Write for Rights campaign was a resounding success, restoring participation to pre-pandemic levels. Members and activists engaged in more than 125,000 actions that supported the ten global individuals and a local campaign urging Canada to end the criminalization of Wet’suwet’en land defenders. Supporters organized at least 210 events nationwide, transforming local spaces into advocacy hubs—from libraries to schools, homes to cafes, each venue became a beacon of hope.

Hosts and participants went above and beyond by incorporating ‘potlucks’, games, music, poetry, and art to mobilize and inspire their communities. The campaign received 118 media mentions across Canada, with a potential reach of more than 36 million people.

CANADA (FRENCH-SPEAKING)

Amnesty International Canada (Francophone) had a superb campaign for Writing for Rights 2023. Many letter-writing events were organized across French-speaking Canada, with 222 organized by schools, associations and activist groups and 36,068 cards produced. A poster campaign for Write for Rights was carried out from December to January in collaboration with communications agency ‘Cossette’ across the streets of Quebec. Several positive points came out of the Write for Rights 2023 campaign, notably during the major letter-writing event organized by the French-speaking section of AI Canada, where the record for the number of messages written was equalled. This event organized on 9 December attracted many people and was appreciated by everyone, particularly due to the presence of musicians as well as circus artists and other performances. Also, new letter writing events were organized by new supporters. This campaign was also an opportunity to do human rights education work in schools, notably via workshops.

CHILE

Amnesty International Chile did not achieve as great a reach in 2023 as they would have liked. Despite working on individual cases that they considered would reach new audiences and would be of public interest

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Amnesty International Côte d'Ivoire launched its "Write for Rights 2023" campaign on November 25, marking the International Day for the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women. The campaign involved over 60 actions across eight high schools, three partner universities, local groups, a football tournament, and a concert for human rights in public spaces in Abidjan and Ivory Coast. The campaign began with a silent march for women victims of violence, and later, on December 10, marking the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Amnesty International Côte d'Ivoire organized a football tournament and concert for human rights activities.



CZECHIA

Amnesty International Czech Republic had a marathon full of events that took place in schools, cafes, theatres, libraries, scout groups, leisure clubs, and AI local groups. An animated spot was played in cinemas and attracted people to the campaign. Important public figures from the Czech Republic also participated, among them journalists and actors. Write for rights was also supported by several non-profit organizations from the Czech Republic, featuring cases close to their areas of focus. The most popular cases for Czechs were Justyna Wydrzynska from Poland, Ahmed Mansoor from the United Arab Emirates, and Idris Arsamikov from Chechnya. More than 700 actions were registered on our website and more than 19,000 letters were written.



DENMARK

AI Denmark had a successful Write for Rights 2023, with a huge presence in schools with a strong Human Rights Education effort. They also managed to encourage many members to write letters as well.

EASTERN EUROPE & CENTRAL ASIA HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION TEAM

This year the Human Rights Education Eastern and Central Asia team (HRE ECA) conducted 12 online booster sessions, five of which were delivered fully in Kyrgyz for the first time with 39 schoolteachers from Kyrgyzstan, two activists and one university teacher from Uzbekistan, and staff from 11 partner NGOs from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan taking part. In 2023, they did not have a blended-learning course for educators in Central Asia and focused on engaging the existing network of teachers, activists, and partners. These results show the capacity and reach of the educators the team are working with in Central Asia, as well as their committed engagement with Amnesty campaigns. In the online-booster session the HRE ECA team delivered Write for Rights stories selected for the regional campaign, where the story of Rita Karasartova was one of their top priorities. All the participants had taken part in this campaign before, and these sessions were meant as a space to focus on teaching human rights highlighted by Write for Rights HRE resources. They were also provided with training, digital and print learning materials, and other resources in regional and relevant local languages.

Despite all the security concerns in Kyrgyzstan, teachers and partners were able to conduct the lesson and events. 2063 school pupils and youth have been reached through the HRE activities conducted by teachers, activists and partners we are working with in the region.

FAROE ISLANDS

This year AI Faroe Islands hosted an online and offline event. Two high schools arranged their own events.

FINLAND

In 2023, Amnesty Finland campaigned to support four individuals: Rocky Myers, Justyna Wyrzyńska, Ana Maria Santos Cruz and Ahmed Mansoor. Write for Rights in Finland was implemented in two languages, Finnish and Swedish (Kirjeitä vapaudelle / Skriv för frihet). The core of the campaign was Amnesty activists and supporters and school students around the country writing solidarity messages and petition letters. It was also possible to join the campaign by signing a petition or writing a solidarity message on the campaign website.

Comprehensive human rights education material and teacher's manual was produced for secondary and upper secondary schools, both as an online and printed version. Many regularly participating schools took part again in 2023.

An action tool kit for activists and supporters participating in the campaign was provided both as an online and a printed version. On-line campaign trainings were provided to support campaign participants writing letters and teachers holding campaign related lessons at schools. The number of activists and supporters participating in the campaign increased compared to 2022.

The campaign closed by celebrating the International Day of Human Rights in a national online event and local get-togethers organized by local groups.

FRANCE

AI France collected hundreds of thousands of petition signatures online and on the ground. Over 200,000 signatures were collected thanks to our activists who organized around 300 events between the end of November and the beginning of January.

Thanks to the implementation of a communication campaign strategy that saw each person as being able to "change their story" by signing a petition, they gained a very significant number of signatures. This campaign was deployed in the streets thanks to AI France's activists, but also on social networks, on the radio and in cinemas.

In October, AI France launched the campaign by welcoming Justyna Wyrzyńska to Paris as part of a tour to talk about her fight for abortion rights in Poland. Thanks to these meetings with parliamentarians and the media, they were able to boost the petition to demand her acquittal.

GERMANY

With Write for Rights 2023, Amnesty Germany started to become more digital and sustainable. The number of online participations increased by 50%, while orders for printed materials have fallen by around 60%. The results have remained stable. Amnesty Germany also introduced a new print material: A solidarity postcard, which has greatly increased the proportion of solidarity messages.

GHANA

AI Ghana had a successful write for Rights 202 event, they hosted the Launch at Accra Girls Senior High School in Accra and had over 1,900 signatures on the first day. The Team at AI Ghana engaged all 16 regional coordinators from all 16 regions of Ghana to commit to engaging members and supporters across Ghana for this flagship national campaign. They held other events in schools as well where students participated in the letter writing marathon. This year Amnesty Ghana together with their members and supporters were able to get about 80,000 signatures for six of the selected individuals.



GREECE

Activists at AI Greece once again showed particular interest and solidarity with individuals facing violations based on their gender and environmental justice.

GUINEA

The campaign was a success in Guinea in 2023. The Section carried out activities for three months throughout the territory with activists, clubs and supporters mobilizing massively. In 2023 AI Guinea was able to partner with the Ministry of Higher Education which allowed the section to reach more than 5,000 students through conferences, press tables, cultural activities (Slam, sketch, theatre). AI Guinea has also gained good visibility and exposure.



HUNGARY

AI Hungary organized seven events and collected over 12,000 actions during the Write for Rights campaign. Amnesty Hungary established two new regional offices in two Hungarian cities in 2023 and early 2024 to increase engagement and interest in the campaign.

The office used new tools, such as co-operating with local coffee shops, engaging with local magazines and media outlets, and launching a crowdfunding campaign, to promote the campaign and contribute to upcoming Write for Rights success stories. AI Hungary is hopeful that these efforts will contribute to many upcoming Write for Rights success stories.

ICELAND

AI Iceland organized several successful events, which were filmed for a documentary to be screened at the Section's 50th anniversary in September. A mural of Justyna Wyrzyńska was painted on a large outdoor wall outside a coffee house in Reykjavík, while a flashmob with LFMH, a college theatre group, took place at the largest shopping centre. Youth activists and Amnesty Iceland staff members collected 1,000 signatures during the flashmob. On 10th December, Amnesty Iceland collaborated with a play-reading society to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The section collected signatures for Write for Rights after the play, and many guests wrote letters. AI Iceland collaborated with a marketing firm to publish paid ads on social media, online media, billboards, and bus shelters. Human Rights Education events were held in 23 schools, with at least 1,200 students learning about individual cases in Write for Rights. Over 11,000 signatures were collected among students in Iceland, and the total actions taken in 2023 were over 50,000.



INDONESIA

AI Indonesia worked with Green School Bali to launch their 2023 Write for Rights campaign. They opted for a participatory approach where the teachers at the school chose the cases. This is a continuation of a longstanding partnership between AI Indonesia and Green School Bali that have been ongoing for four years.



IRELAND

Amnesty Ireland achieved a record-breaking number of actions for Write for Rights. They increased action numbers mainly through successful digital activism. They held an engaging online event with Sawyedollah which became a podcast on the Big Tech podcast of a national newspaper. Their offline presence was less successful. However, local groups held stands in several of Ireland's main cities and towns (Dublin, Blackrock, Letterkenny and Galway). School groups also participated and over a thousand students wrote letters. AI Ireland also engaged in human rights education with school students.

ITALY

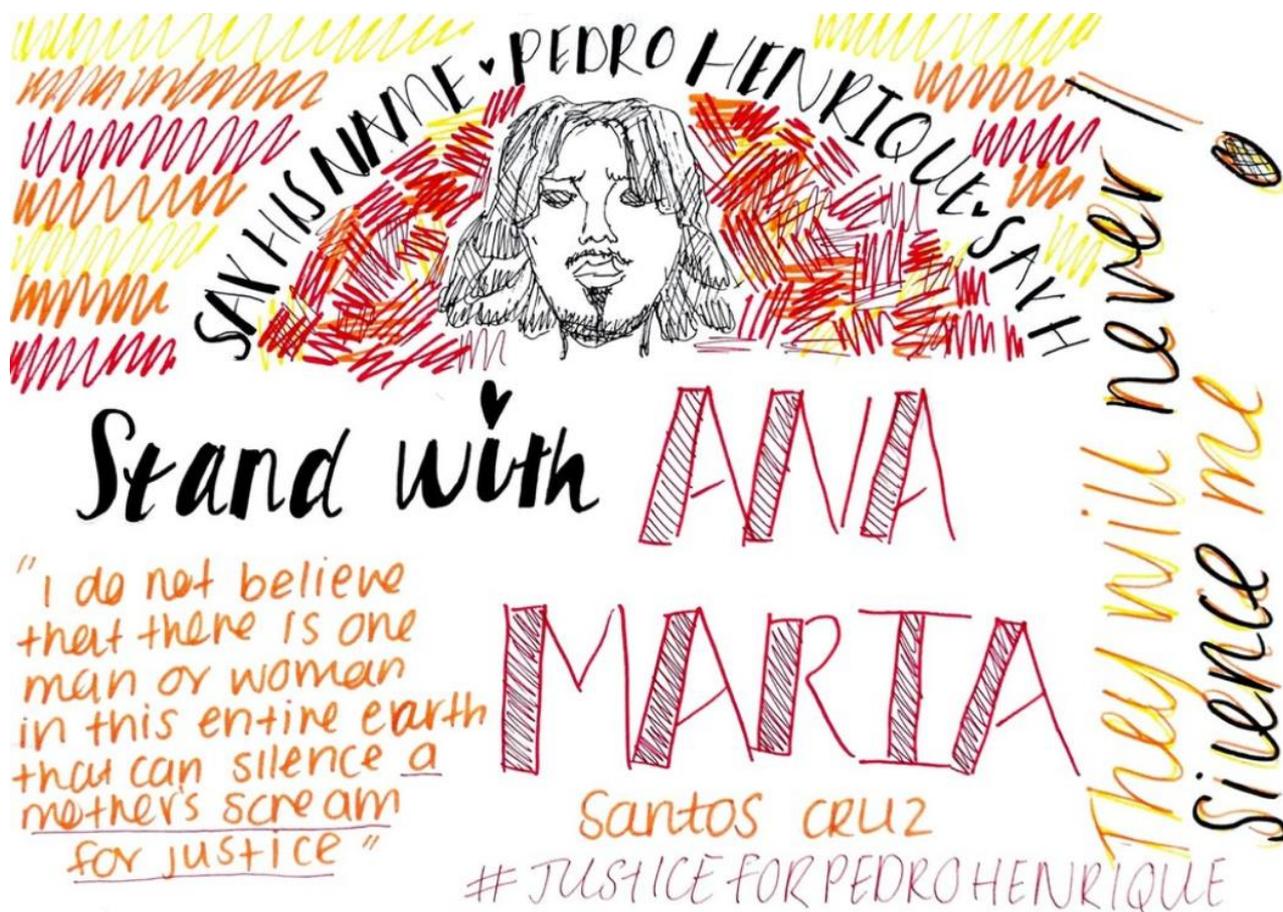
Amnesty Italy joined the Write for Rights 2023 with 77 groups of activists spread across Italy. Thanks to the events organized by them, the stories of Thapelo, Chaima, Justina, Ana Maria, Uncle Paul & Uncle Pabai were promoted with over 131,000 signatures (offline and online) collected. In schools, initiatives were organized on the issue of climate justice in which students took action for Uncle Paul and Uncle Pabai, collecting around 1,400 messages of solidarity. Write for Rights continues to be an important event that reminds our activists that they are part of a great international movement!

KENYA

Amnesty Kenya held a robust Write for Rights campaign in 2023 that mobilized students and Amnesty members nationwide. The campaign was anchored on a local case #Justice4Eugene that seeks to target the President and the Ministry of Education to bring about reforms within the education sector. The aim was to ensure that all students in schools are safe and free from any form of violence. By directing their letters to the highest levels of government, the campaign sought to influence policy changes that would prioritize the safety and well-being of students across the country.

Amnesty Kenya held its annual delegates conference in September 2023 bringing together more than 200 delegates to launch the campaign. This event was strategic as it represented the face of governance and representation from the entire country and the different tiers of members. As a result, many amnesty members went to learn about the Write for Rights cases and acted by signing online petitions and writing letters.

Further to this Amnesty Kenya organized letter-writing events in learning institutions with case files and sample letters printed and hung on walls guiding the students on the global and local cases. Teachers and amnesty staff offered guidance and more insights about the individuals featured in the campaign, making it easier for students to write the letters. This event allowed the students to not only learn about human rights but also to take action in solidarity with other children across the world towards a human rights-respecting society.



KOREA

AI Korea had a successful Write for Rights featuring two letter writing events, including a visit from Justyna Wydrzynska to Korea. The Section held a letter writing event in Seoul with over 100 participants, and another event in Gwangju led by a group. During Justyna's visit to Korea,

AI Korea organized a meeting with the National Assembly, a protest in front of the Polish embassy in Seoul, a panel discussion with relevant local civil society organisations, a university lecture, and a series of media interviews. AI Korea distributed more than 30,000 copies of letter writing toolkits, including but not limited to school, donors, and members, etc. Overall, AI Korea collected almost 120,000 online petitions.



LUXEMBOURG

Amnesty Luxembourg's Write for Rights campaign was lower key in 2023 as they had to divide attention with many other important priorities, such as the campaign for the ceasefire in Gaza.

MALAYSIA

As part of Amnesty Malaysia's Human Rights Day festival, "We Make Our World", the section had letter-writing booths for people of all ages to take part in this year's Write for Rights campaign in various creative ways, including through face painting, postcard colouring, photo actions, and other fun and exciting activities.

The festival also included an art and photography exhibition on the death penalty in Singapore, as well as moderated discussion circles, lively band performances and spoken word poetry that focused on the human rights violations present in this years' campaign. The sections' youth groups also took the lead on carrying out activities within their own schools and communities.

They held an in-person Write for Rights gala with 100 attendees where Maung Sawyeddolah participated via Zoom to be part of a panel discussion, a creative writing action where students wrote poems and prose for the campaign, as well as an online petition event where 400 signatures were collected.



MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA REGIONAL OFFICE

With Ahmed Mansoor featuring in the campaign, the Middle East and North Africa regional office took his case to COP28 to be highlighted inside the UAE, a closed country, where no criticism of the authorities is allowed. On 9 December 2023 Amnesty and Human Rights Watch organized the first officially UN-authorized "advocacy action" about a domestic Emirati human-rights issue at COP28 for unjustly held Emirati prisoners. Those who attended the action wore T-shirts with a portrait of Ahmed Mansoor and held posters for another unjustly imprisoned Emirati, Mohamed al-Siddiq, and for Alaa Abdul-Fattah from Egypt.

Featuring Ahmed Mansoor's case was welcomed by partner organizations focusing on the UAE. Write for Rights materials and videos were shared on partners' platforms and number of talks/ debates/ conferences highlighted Ahmed Mansoor's case and that of the other detainees and the ongoing clampdown on freedom of expression and dissent in the country. As Ahmed Mansoor and over 80 other Emiratis are now facing a new mass trial, all the attention garnered through Write Rights will now be channelled and fed into the continuing work on prisoners of conscience in the UAE.

MEXICO

Yet again this year Write for Rights activities went very well at AI Mexico. They were able to incorporate advocacy, activism, human rights education, and communications in a strategic manner, and as a result their set campaign objectives were all reached. This year's success can additionally be attributed to the time they invested before the launch.

The Section started planning almost three months ahead to have their website landing page ready and a robust contact list to set up human rights education workshops and offline events with schools and universities. A participatory process to consolidate this year's landing page was also facilitated with the activism, human rights education, communications, and fundraising areas to build a platform that could respond to the necessities of each tactic. The result of this process was a landing page that was responsive and easy to use with various elements that reflected the spirit of the campaign; like a calendar with the date, time and place of upcoming offline events and individual digital mailboxes for each case where users were able to upload solidarity actions.

MOLDOVA

Amnesty International Moldova's Write for Rights 2023 campaign was a remarkable success, reaching over 40 schools nationwide, with 12 schools joining the initiative for the first time. This marked a notable expansion of the program. For the 13th consecutive year, students exhibited exceptional solidarity and engagement, recognizing the potency of their letters in effecting tangible change, and saving lives. Their unwavering commitment underscores the enduring impact of grassroots activism in advancing human rights globally.

MONGOLIA

AI Mongolia organized offline letter-writing events in various locations, including Zavkhan, Arkhangai, Bayan-Ulgii, Darkhan-Uul, Erdenet provinces, and the capital city, Ulaanbaatar. Additionally, young activists from AI Mongolia organized an outstanding Amnesty Day event, brimming with excitement, featuring a human rights quiz, photo booth, and letter-writing booths on 7 December at the University of Medical Science. Over 300 students participated in the event and signed petitions for Write for Rights 2023 and at the same time advanced their human rights knowledge. Furthermore, young students at the Mongolian National University of Education hosted a letter-writing event during their New Year party. Some activists also organized letter-writing events at their offices, bringing the human rights agenda to their colleagues.

AI Mongolia worked on all ten global cases and collected more than 19,800 signatures on these petitions. They also gathered signatures on a petition urging the Prime Minister of Mongolia to ensure the inclusion of human rights education in national school curriculum, along with improving ongoing human rights education programs such as providing training to all government agents and officials.

MOROCCO



AI Morocco launched their Write for Rights 2023 campaign on 10 December, a symbolic date that aligns perfectly with World Human Rights Day and the prestigious National Youth Forum. This event brings together young leaders from diverse groups to orchestrate strategies for this exciting campaign and mobilize individuals around global solidarity. This year, the section took three individuals at risks under its wing, and they aspire to raise Moroccan awareness of their plight.

NEPAL

AI Nepal launched its campaign shortly after the planning workshop on 10 November, successfully collecting approximately 205,000 offline petitions. The campaign focused on six global cases involving individuals at risk, in addition to a local case – a call to the government of Nepal to establish accountability in cases of custodial tortures and deaths. Over the years, the inclusion of the local case has brought new zeal and enthusiasm and strengthened Amnesty Nepal's Write for Rights campaigns.

AI Nepal selected cases of individuals for the campaign based on factors such as gender, diversity focus, compelling stories, and local and regional relevance. Most participants in AI Nepal's Write for Rights campaign were youths and students under 25. AI Nepal engaged with them through its vibrant Groups and Youth Networks, primarily focusing on Human Rights Education activities to engage the audience. Before launching the campaign, AI Nepal adapted the available materials into Nepali to make them more accessible for participants.

NETHERLANDS

Over 500 letter-writing events took place across the Netherlands. Each year, the Section explores innovative methods to attract new event organizers. This year, they produced a promotional video detailing how to organize a Write for Rights event, and the new Youth Project team collaborated with Student Councils to support in hosting their own events, yielding positive results. The volume of handwritten, online letters and cards continues to increase annually, with a total of at least 417,857 this year! However, this figure may in fact be higher as some organizers don't always report their letter counts. The kick-off event, organized by their education department at the Museum of Humanity during the Rohingya exhibition, allowed AI Netherlands to spotlight the case of Sawyeddolah for students and tell them more about Write for Rights. A total of 320 schools, comprising 48,501 students, participated in the initiative. Additionally, on December 10th, the Section hosted a 10-hour letter-writing event at their headquarters, drawing nearly 470 attendees.



NIGERIA

AI Nigeria's Write for Rights 2023 was unique. With the support of the Section's state coordinator/volunteers they took the campaign on a tour of 11 secondary schools and 9 universities across 20 Nigerian states, with 1,401 students participating in the Write School tour, taking actions both online and offline for individuals at risk. The tour also highlighted Amnesty International's work and provided a platform for Amnesty Nigeria to raise awareness of human rights issues and empower young people.

The campaign culminated at the Human Rights Fiesta on December 6, 2023, themed "UDHR at 75: The State of Human Rights in Nigeria." The event aimed to address Nigeria's human rights landscape in light of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The keynote speech discussed Nigeria's historical context of human rights activism, current challenges, and the need for collective action. The event utilized drama, art, and music to draw attention to human rights issues and inspire collective action.

NORWAY

This year's Write for Rights campaign went very well at AI Norway where all their goals regarding the number of activists and students that participated in the campaign were met.

AI Norway reached a total of 5,300 students with their physical and digital human rights education work. The volunteer course holders organized events in 116 physical classrooms and 40 classes participated digitally.

AI Norway's activists and employees organized in total 46 activities to collect signatures, letters, and support for this year's individuals at risk. The activities were intended for both existing activists and new audiences. The activities ranged from collecting signatures in public spaces (such as libraries, city malls, main city streets) to letter writing events and public rallies. They also organized a "Write for Rights and clothes swapping-events" and "Write for Rights and gingerbread house building-events". AI Norway estimate that they reached between 5,000-10,000 people with the activities.

As the Irani human rights defender Narges Mohammadi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, AI Norway chose her as a fifth person to feature in the campaign as a strategy to utilize the momentum and media attention on Narges and the situation for women in Iran (including from celebrities from all over the world). The inclusion of Narges Mohammadi was very successful and created a lot of attention as well as new supporters.

PARAGUAY

Amnesty International Paraguay participated in several events with large attendance where the individuals featured in Write for Rights 2023 were publicized and signatures were collected.

PHILIPPINES

As 2023 was also the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Amnesty Philippines commemorated this as both a celebration of our shared humanity and a recognition of the persistent and ever important need for a global community who believes in and defends human rights. AI Philippines and their activists used this to tell the story of Write for Rights 2023. After a joint planning of campaigners in every region, activists reached out to their communities and schools. In the community activists knocked on doors to get signatures, partnered with religious groups and grassroots movements and even organized motorcades.

In schools, youth activists held musical gatherings, street art actions, learning sessions, and action booths. The Section engaged at least 3,500 people, gathering more than 10,000 actions. Through the cases of Rocky, Maung, Uncle Paul and Uncle Pabai, Thapelo and the AbM, and Ana Maria, activists acted in solidarity, and refocused and grounded human rights on the issues of climate justice, indigenous rights, police impunity, and freedom of expression that are also felt and lived by many Filipinos.

POLAND

Write for Rights in Poland (the country that started the whole campaign) was, as always, big! More than 70,000 participants attended 576 events throughout the country, writing nearly 184,000 letters sent in support of all the people featured in the campaign this year! Events were organised by schools, at universities, in libraries, cafes, law firms, day care centres, and others, contributing to spreading around the idea of writing letters to save lives. As every year, it was schools that formed the core of the action: schools organised the most of letter writing events and gathered most of the letters. In most cases letter-writing events were accompanied by educational activities.

For International Human Rights Day, Amnesty Poland teamed up with other NGOs, celebrating the occasion by organising a 'Rally of Human Rights Defenders'. Alongside letter-writing, it was an opportunity to talk on women rights, freedom of speech, arbitrary detentions, and our role in standing up for those who pay the biggest price for defending human rights.



PORTUGAL

Amnesty International Portugal launched Write for Rights 2023 on the 1 November. Over 3 months more than 280 schools and local groups all over the country took action for the campaign, sharing the individual's stories and collecting the largest number possible of signatures and solidarity messages. There was also a big focus on online engagement, strategically using social media to raise awareness about the individuals and communities at risk and inviting people to take action to support them. One of the main achievements this year was the opportunity to publish five opinion articles in one of the biggest newspapers in Portugal: one opinion article per IAR case, allowing the section to explain more in detail the human rights issues at stake and reaching a wider public. There was also an extensive article about the 2023 edition of Write for Rights on "Visão" a very popular news magazine in the country.

SENEGAL

AI Senegal mobilized its activists in 65 local groups, online groups, and networks; university groups; professional groups in the country. The political context, marked by presidential elections initially scheduled for 2 February did

have an impact on the collection of signatures on the ground. However, the campaign saw a strong mobilization of diverse activists from across the national territory to collect signatures and popularize Amnesty International's message. Young people set up stands in several schools and in the streets.

They also attended the Dakar international fair, which this year had the theme of women's empowerment for sustainable economic and social development. The opportunity was taken to discuss with visitors and exhibitors and submit the different cases to them for signature. Despite the political context, AI Senegal had a successful Write for Rights campaign.

SLOVAKIA

Amnesty International Slovakia collected almost 7,000 signatures and letters of solidarity. The campaign promoted in many schools and thousands of people participated. They also organized workshops in high schools and other public events, including 12-hours 'marathon' at their office where activists and the public wrote letters of solidarity.

SLOVENIA

Amnesty Slovenia had a successful Write for Rights 2023, with most success coming from online signature gathering. They conducted extensive work in schools, where youth wrote numerous letters to the people featured in the campaign.

SOUTH AFRICA

AI South Africa had a successful Write for Rights 2023 that started with a national launch attended by over 100 people, the majority of which were from the Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM) movement. Thapelo Mohapi was also present at the launch, and over 200 actions were taken.

Across South Africa, over 20,000 people took action calling for the protection of Thapelo and the AbM movement, and the section received thousands of messages of support from people in South Africa standing in solidarity with AbM.

SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL OFFICE

As a regional office, the Johannesburg team hosted its first Write for Rights "letter writing power hour" in which the Write for Rights team in Johannesburg walked the staff and supporting team through the campaign, invited guests to speak and encouraged them to take action.

Being a letter-writing campaign works well in Southern Africa. With two IAR cases being close to home, ABM and Thapelo Mohapi in South Africa and the case of Thulani Maseko in Eswatini, the added relevance was key in getting sections and members mobilized. On-the-ground activations and letter-writing events were carried out by both the South Africa and Zimbabwe sections. The regional office supported these events by attending where possible as well as providing full digital support through reshared and posts on social media.

Getting on the ground, with the printed materials made taking action by a more varied audience easier and more effective. The on-the-ground audiences were able to interact and draw relations to the cases and take impactful action. This method too works well to help fill the digital gap in Southern Africa. Brand visibility is also increased through these activities.

SPAIN

This year, AI Spain's Write for Rights campaigned for four individuals: Rocky Myers, Maung Sawyeddollah, Justyna Wydrzyńska and Ahmed Mansoor. Different activities were promoted: a solidarity action to send postcards to Rocky Myers, an action on Facebook for Sawyeddollah's case, and collecting and sending signatures and an action on their website for Justyna and Ahmed.

Once again, numerous Groups (58 in total) took to the streets in their localities to collect signatures and disseminate information on the individuals featured in the campaign. As the campaign was united with the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, it made this year a really special campaign, with many outreach activities and other events as well.



SWEDEN

AI Sweden had a successful Write for Rights 2023. Thirty-six schools and over 40 activist groups campaigned for the four individuals that the section worked on. The campaign was visible in several cities, libraries, universities, markets, etc. around Sweden during November - December.

SWITZERLAND

In Switzerland the campaign performed less well this year. Due to the person previously responsible for Write for Rights leaving, a project team came together rather late to work on the campaign. This year the Section focused a lot on developing a digital framework for Write for Rights with five petitions for five cases. Overall, they gathered more than 13,000 signatures. However, due to the Israel-Petition, the outcome was less than expected. AI Switzerland provided material for 23 events led by activist groups.

TAIWAN

AI Taiwan had a fruitful Write for Rights 2023. They held four letter-writing events in four different cities on the island - Taipei, Tainan, Hualien and Taichung. In these two-day weekend events people enjoyed music performances, artists' drawings and human rights speeches while writing letters for the individuals featured in Write for Rights.

AI Taiwan welcomes educators and activists to participate in their teacher's program and self-led letter writing party. People take action with their friends and families every year. Over 10,200 people joined the offline events; over 1,100 educators from over 650 schools participated in the teacher's program; over 120 individuals held their own

letter writing parties.

More than 97,000 people participated in Write for Rights 2023 in Taiwan; more than 111,200 letters/postcards were sent out from Taiwan to show solidarity and to hold abusers accountable.



THAILAND

Amnesty Thailand had a successful Write for Rights 2023, with many special events. There was a "YOUR WORDS CHANGE LIVES" kick-off Write for Rights event in November 2023 and an event called "4 Senses of Rights" Closed the campaign in February 2024. and This year there were many events held around Thailand. The Section worked closely with 15 Amnesty clubs and Thai activists. Another special event was held with "Cheser (volunteers) and partner shop" to do about Write for Rights actions. In total AI Thailand managed to collect over 10,000 actions!



TOGO

The Write for Rights campaign at Amnesty Togo had two main phases, the first was the launch, which took place on 1 December 2023 in Baguida, a locality located about forty kilometres from the capital of Lomé. This place, once inhabited, is today occupied by the sea which has advanced considerably and swallowed up houses. It was chosen to alert the public to the effects of climate change on the Togolese coasts, characterized by the advance of the sea, coastal erosion, and the displacement of local populations. This place was chosen to make the link with the case of Uncle Paul and Uncle Pabai from Australia who also risk losing their land due global warming. Around a hundred volunteer activists and supporters were present for this launch. They also noted the presence of a few indigenous participants. The second phase saw AI Togo visit nearly 60 schools, informing students about the campaign, and collecting signatures.



UK

AIUK had a successful Write for Rights, focusing on four key cases they were able to plan impactful events that aimed to deliver both Human Rights impact and solidarity for in the individuals - they organised a plane to fly carrying a banner reading 'UAE: Free Ahmed Mansoor' over the Etihad Stadium during a match.



URUGUAY

As every year, Amnesty International Uruguay joined Write for Rights 2023 through a powerful social media

campaign.

USA

2023 was a transitional year for AIUSA's Individuals at Risk (IAR) advocacy. The Section are in the process of rebuilding overall member engagement in the campaign, which includes reinvesting in new staff roles to support increase advocacy on IAR, build member engagement, and increase diversity among action takers. 2023 Write for Rights was a year to assess and learn. Their approach was to not make any changes to how this initiative was carried out in the previous year, so they could learn how activists were engaging post pandemic. Given competing priorities such as the Gaza/Israel Crisis Response and the onboarding of a number of new staff across the organization, they kept things simple. One highlight is that AIUSA are starting to see more in person events being held and this was encouraging!

VENEZUELA

Amnesty International Venezuela held several digital events for Write for Rights 2023, it involved scanning a QR code to access the information on the individuals featured and give the digital signature. The Section attended activities such as Nocturneando, Cúsica Fest and the Urban Music Festival where they engaged with audiences to raise awareness of injustices in the world and invite people to join in demanding human rights for all people.

ZIMBABWE

AI Zimbabwe had an outstanding Write for Rights in 2023 which involved both physical and online actions. The physical campaigning included 5 cases of individuals at risk adopted by the section, however the online petition on AI Zimbabwe's website featured all the 10 global cases. To kick start the campaign, AI Zimbabwe held many events which were led by members, activists, and human rights clubs at schools. The Section launched the campaign on 18 November 2023 in Bindura where a university chapter of the section has been established. Human Rights Education enabled the students and activists to participate in activities meaningfully and effectively from a more informed position. AI Zimbabwe provided materials to Human Rights Foundation clubs in Bulawayo and Harare. A 'Run4Rights marathon' attracted more than 420 runners in two of Zimbabwe's largest cities, Harare and Bulawayo. After 'running for rights', the activists then went into the different exhibition tents that had been set-up by AI Zimbabwe and runners participated by writing letters and signing petitions.



PHOTO CAPTIONS

Please note, the captions appear in the same order as the photographs.

Front Cover – An activist rides a horse at the AI Benin Write for Rights launch event in Cotonou, 25 November 2023.
© AI Benin

An activist holding a poster for Thulani at an event held by AI Togo © Amnesty International Togo

Members of the public look at a poster of Thapelo Mohapi © Amnesty International Taiwan

An activist in Togo takes action © Amnesty International Togo

Ana Maria talks at the Women of the World Festival © AI Brazil

Activists support Ana Maria and Pedro Henrique at a letter-writing and petition-signing event in Salvador, Brazil © AI Brazil

Activists in Morocco take action for Rocky Myers © AI Morocco

An activist posts a letter in support of Rocky Myers © AI Morocco

Students in Togo take action for Rocky Myers © AI Togo

A solidarity card sent to Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul from Italy © AI Italy

Activists in Togo do a solidarity action on the beach for Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul © AI Togo

An activist in Korea writes a letter to the Australian authorities © AI Korea

Students in Kyrgyzstan take action for Uncle Pabai and Uncle Paul © Amnesty International

Participants of an event in Taiwan read about Sawyeddollah's story © AI Taiwan

An activist in Taiwan writes a letter to Rita © AI Taiwan

Cards and letters received by Rita © Rita Karasartova

Justyna meets Idil Eser, former director of AI Türkiye © Esther Genicot

A mural portraying Justyna painted on a wall in Reykjavik © AI Iceland

Activists campaigning for Ahmed's release outside Manchester City's stadium © M-A Ventoura/AI UK

A plane with a banner supporting Ahmed © M-A Ventoura/AI UK

Activists in Morocco take action for Ahmed © AI Morocco

Activists in Morocco take action for Chaima © AI Morocco

Idil Eser, former director of AI Türkiye, supports Chaima © Esther Genicot

An activist in Taiwan paints a portrait of Chaima © AI Taiwan

AI Malaysia invited Sawyeddollah to speak at a Write for Rights event in Kuala Lumpur with over 100 university students © Amnesty International

AI Malaysia invited Sawyeddollah to speak at a Write for Rights event in Kuala Lumpur with over 100 university students © Amnesty International

Activists in Togo take action for Sawyeddollah Copyright © Amnesty International Togo

AI Malaysia invited Sawyeddollah to speak at a Write for Rights event in Kuala Lumpur with over 100 university students © Amnesty International

Members of AI Algeria at a W4R event in their office in Algiers, on the 10 December 2023. © AI Algeria

Idil Eser and Justyna Wydrzyńska attending the High-Level Conference of the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration for Human Rights, at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium and promoting Write for Rights 2023 © Esther Genicot

W4R launch event organised by AI Benin in Cotonou, November 25 2023. The event brought together about three hundred activists and supporters. Participants took part in sport activities and signed petitions. © AI Benin

AI Cote d'Ivoire activities during Write for Rights 2023. On Saturday, 2 December 2023 the Youth and Women's Commission collected signatures for the 2023 Write for Rights IAR cases at Grand Bassam © Astrid Chitou/Amnesty International

AI Czechia event 'Writing letters with friends' © Valerie Mirić

A Christmas tree at a Christmas market in Munich was decorated by AI Germany with portraits of W4R Global 10 IAR cases and was a central feature of that Christmas market for several weeks. © Amnesty International Germany.

An action taken by delegates of AI Guinea's General Assembly, Write for Rights 2023. © Amnesty International Guinea.

The artist Julia Mai Linnéa Maria in front of her mural in Reykjavik that she dedicated to the Polish women's rights activist Justyna Wydrzyńska. The text in Icelandic on the top says: Your name saves Justyna. © Amnesty International Iceland

Students from Green School, Bali, participated in the Write for Rights event, March 2024 © Private

Artwork from an AI Kenya Write for Rights school club © Private

A letter writing event organised by AI Korea on 9 December 2023 in Seoul, South Korea © Amnesty International South Korea

Amnesty Malaysia invited Sawyeddollah to speak at the Write for Rights event in Kuala Lumpur with over 100 university students from the Amnesty Club of Brickfields Asia College and the Amnesty Club of Multimedia University (Melaka). January 2024 © Amnesty International

Youth members of Amnesty Morocco participate in Write for Rights 2023 during the Section's annual event 'the National Youth Forum' on December 10, 2023. © Amnesty International Morocco

Amnesty Netherlands supporters and members take part in Write for Rights events at the organisations Amsterdam office, 10 December 2023. © Anne Harbers

Write for Rights event in Warsaw, 9 December 2023. © Przemysław Stefaniak/Amnesty International

Write for Rights event organised by AI Spain in Murcia, 10 December 2023. © Amnesty International Spain

Write for Rights events in Taichung, Taiwan on 23-24 December 2023 included weekend-long letter writing, an exhibition, music performances, and human rights talks. © Amnesty International Taiwan

Write for Rights 2023 at Thai Pride event Thailand. © Amnesty International Thailand

An activist in Togo takes action for Thulani at an event organised by AI Togo in 4 December 2023. © Amnesty International Togo.

Write for Rights 2023 action organised by AIUK in London, 7 December 2023. © Amnesty International

A Write for Rights event held at the Harare and Bulawayo half marathon. © Amnesty International Zimbabwe