

EMIL OSTROVKO

BELARUS

Emil Ostrovko was waiting for his girlfriend at a bus stop on the outskirts of Minsk in April 2018. They were going to spend the day together. Suddenly police officers arrived. They beat Emil and arrested him for distributing illegal drugs. He was just 17.

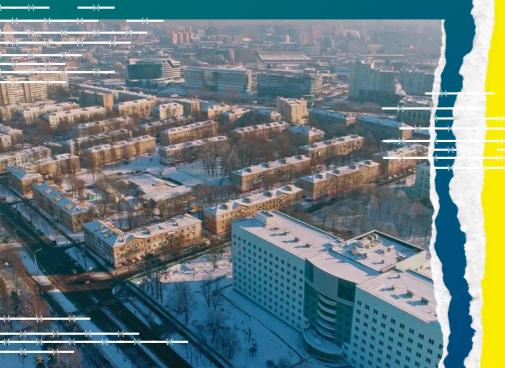
Weeks earlier, Emil had started an after-school job as a courier for an online company. His employer had told him the parcels he was delivering contained legal smoking mixtures.

After spending months detained, Emil received a 10-year prison sentence for drug trafficking. Investigators never looked for the owner of the company, nor anyone else. Emil was the only one prosecuted. The sentence was later reduced to 8 years when some charges were dropped. He is held in Correctional Colony number 2 in Bobruisk. He struggles with chronic bronchial asthma.

Before his arrest Emil was an energetic, caring young man who loved studying, reading and taking care of his little sister. Now in prison, he hasn't been allowed to finish high school and his plans to study business and economics in Poland have been crushed.

Emil is one of around 15,000 people serving lengthy prison sentences in Belarus for minor drugs offences. They are treated far worse than other offenders. President Lukashenko has publicly advocated for prison conditions so awful that, in his words, the prisoners will "pray for death." Young offenders in juvenile colonies are forced to do long hours of hard labour. Emil wasn't allowed to carry his asthma medicine with him, and got frostbite from carrying snow with his bare hands and injured his feet when the shoes he was forced to wear were two sizes too small. Things got a little better in adult prison. He can now receive paperbacks and study, and he can keep his medication close by. But Emil's youth and potential are being wasted.

Ask Belarus to free Emil.



#W4R19

WRITE TO THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL

Draw his attention to the detention of Emil on a minor drug offence and to the inhumane conditions that he and other youth endure in custody.

Urge him to immediately release Emil and to clear his criminal record. Insist that children are no longer imprisoned for minor drug offences.

Prosecutor General Alexander Koniuk

Internatsionalnaya Str. 22 220030 Minsk, Belarus

Email: info@prokuratura.gov.by **Twitter:** @prokuraturaby

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR EMIL

Send your messages of solidarity and strength so he knows he is not alone. Please avoid the topic of drugs, but you may send a Christmas card or other type of greeting. He enjoys biographies, poetry, animals, and articles on economics, cryptocurrentcy and innovation.

Emil Vadimovich Ostrovko

Correctional Colony Number 2. Ul. Sikorskogo 1, otryad 1 Bobruisk

Mogilevskaya oblast 213800 Belarus



December 2019

Index: EUR 49/0754/2019 English Images: cover: © Private (Main image)

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GRASSY NARROWS YOUTH

CANADA

Jianne Turtle, 13, is a member of the Indigenous Anishinaabe community of Grassy Narrows in Ontario, Canada. While the community's youth are fighting for a better future, she says the government "has been talking a lot but hasn't done anything."

The people of Grassy Narrows have been hard-hit by mercury poisoning, after the government allowed a pulp mill to dump 10 tons of waste into a river in the 1960s. The damaging effects are still seen today. Rodney Bruce, aged 25, says, "I've always been taught that if you do something wrong, you have to fix it."

Fishing is an essential part of their way of life. But for over 50 years, mercury has contaminated the fish, making them dangerous to eat. This has robbed the Grassy Narrows people of their health and eroded their culture and traditions. The government has done very little to improve what is currently the country's worst health crisis.

In 2017, the government promised to deal with the crisis "once and for all." This requires cleaning up the river, providing specialized health care and compensating the community.

The youth of Grassy Narrows won't give up their fight until the government keeps its promises. Canada must help restore what mercury has taken from the people of Grassy Narrows.

Demand a healthy future for Grassy Narrows youth.



#W4R19 #FreeGrassy

WRITE TO THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TODAY

Ask Canada to restore what mercury has taken from the people of Grassy Narrows. The community and their future generations must be allowed to live in a thriving community and healthy environment.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau 80 Wellington Street Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE YOUTH OF GRASSY NARROWS

Post a solidarity message on your social media accounts like this one: "Support from [insert your country] for the youth of Grassy Narrows. It's time for #mercuryjustice – #freegrassy".

For more solidarity ideas, visit www.writeathon.ca/grassynarrows



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YILIYASIJIANG REHEMAN, WRITE CHINA **FOR RIGHTS** TORN FROM HIS FAMILY (((((((((·>>>>> **>> > {{{**{{{}}}}} >>>> >> >>>>>>>>> (((((() >>>>>>>> e comment in the contraction of /////// >

YILIYASIJIANG REHEMAN

CHINA

Yiliyasijiang Reheman and his wife Mairinisha Abuduaini were expecting their second baby when Yiliyasijiang disappeared.

The young couple were building a new future for themselves, studying at a university in Egypt and looking after their growing family. But their lives were shattered in July 2017 when China ordered the Egyptian government to round up about 200 Uyghur people in the country and force some back to China. Uyghurs are a predominantly Muslim ethnic group from China's Xinjiang region. Mairinisha believes her husband is now among the many mainly Muslim people locked up in secret camps in China.

Three weeks after Yiliyasijiang disappeared, Mairinisha gave birth to a second daughter. Since 2017, she has been searching for her husband, never losing hope that their family will one day be reunited.

Mairinisha, who now lives in Turkey, learned through friends that Yiliyasijiang had been sent back to Xinjiang in China. She suspects he's in one of China's secret internment camps where Uyghurs are brainwashed with Chinese government propaganda.

Up to one million mainly Muslim people have been torn from their families and locked up in these camps since 2017-a scandal that has unleashed a powerful movement to uncover the truth about the arbitrary detentions.

Mairinisha just wants her husband back safely. "My husband should be released as soon as possible," she says. "We need a warm and complete family. I will never give up until we can be reunited with my husband."

Tell China to release Yiliyasijiang now and close the camps.





WRITE TO THE PRESIDENT TODAY

Request information on the location of Yiliyasijiang Reheman and assurances that he is good health. Insist on his immediate and unconditional release.

Urge him to close the internment camps, disclose the whereabouts of the people detained, and ensure that they have access to family and lawyers.

Xi Jinping

< << </

President of the People's Republic of China Zhongnanhai; Xichangan'jie Xichengqu, Beijing Shi 100017 People's Republic of China

Fax: 011 86 10 6238 1025
Email: english@mail.gov.cn
(If returned, try again or mail your appeal.)
Salutation: Dear President

LET YILIYASIJIANG'S FAMILY KNOW YOU'RE WITH THEM

Mairinisha is passionate about music. Tweet a non-religious message of hope to her @munzira717 or post on www.facebook.com/ mansura.elyas.9 or send by mail.

Amnesty Turkey

Hacımimi Mh., Kemeraltı Cd. Ada Han No.31, Kat:2 Daire:2 34425 Karaköy Beyoğlu/Istanbul Turkey

If writing in a group, please mail all messages in one package to better ensure delivery.



December 2019 Index: ASA (c) English All images: (c) Private IBRAHIM EZZ EL-DIN,

THE STREETS OF GAIR O

WRITE





IBRAHIM EZZ EL-DIN

EGYPT

Ibrahim Ezz El-Din loved his job. The 26-year-old human rights researcher reported on people's access to safe and affordable housing in Egypt - a basic human right. Recently, he was documenting forced evictions. After work, Ibrahim loved to draw and was interested in design and computer science. He was a huge soccer fan, especially of his local team, Zamalek Sporting Club.

On the evening of June 11 2019, Ibrahim was walking home. Suddenly four security officers dressed in plain clothes surrounded him and arrested him. When his mother found out, she went straight to the local police station, but the police told her Ibrahim was not there and denied that he was detained at all. Ever since, Ibrahim's family have been trying to find out what happened to him. They've had no answers at all.

Ibrahim is the fifth person linked with his organization, the Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms, to have been arrested in just three years. Hundreds like Ibrahim have been forcibly disappeared and held in prison for months, without ever being brought to trial. Many — from journalists to soccer fans and even politicians - have been arrested simply for expressing their opinions peacefully, for criticizing the authorities, or for standing up for human rights.

Ask the Public Prosecutor where Ibrahim is.



WRITE TO THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR

Describe Ibrahim Ezz El-Din to the Prosecutor by his job or date of disappearance.

#W4R19 #WhereIsIbrabhimEzzel-Din

Ask him to reveal where Ibrahim is, to give him access to his family and lawyers and to protect him from torture. Urge him to release Ibrahim unless he is charged with an internationally recognized crime.

Public Prosecutor Nabil Sadek

Office of the Public Prosecutor Madinat al-Rehab Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt

Fax: 011 20 225 774 716

Salutation: Dear Sir

SHOW IBRAHIM'S FAMILY YOU'RE WITH THEM

Use a message of friendship and hope to encourage them to continue their search to find out what has happened to Ibrahim.

The family of Ibrahim Ezz El-Din

c/o: The Egyptian Commission for Rights and Freedoms AA, Al-Saraya al kobra Garden City Cairo, Egypt

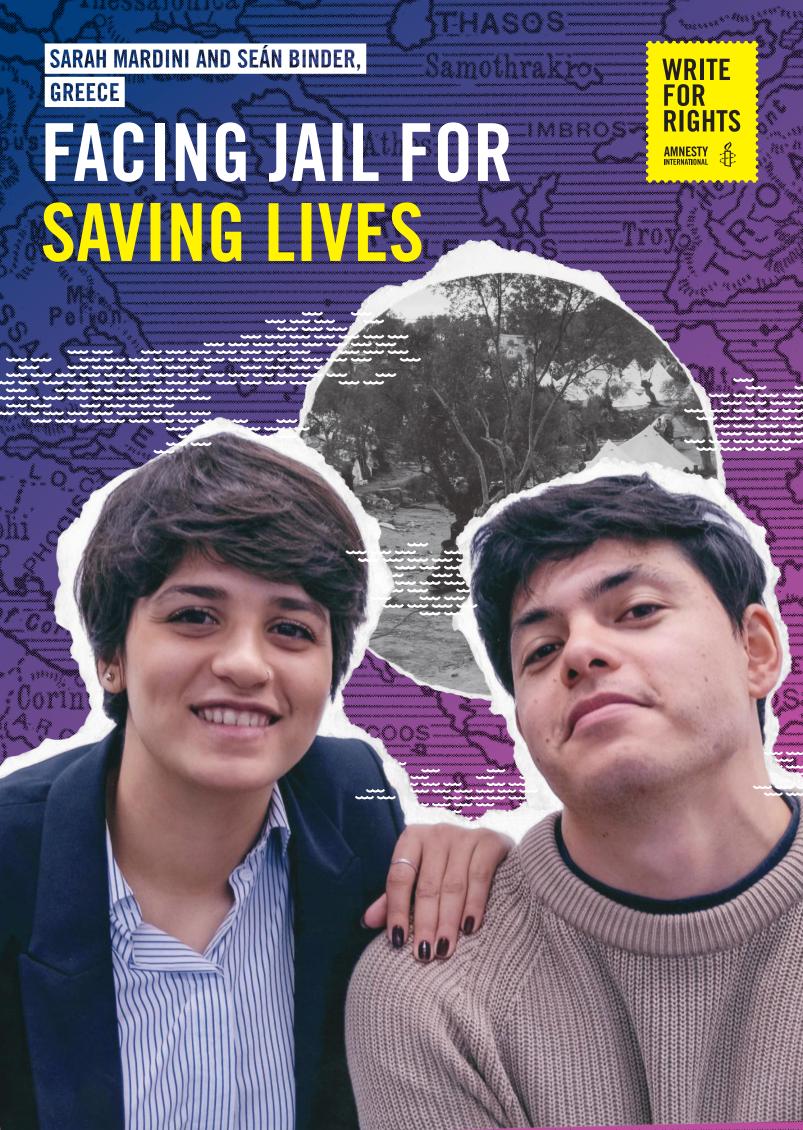


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Index: MDE 12/0909/2019 English Images:

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SARAH MARDINI AND

SEÁN BINDER

GREECE

In Greece, you can go to jail for saving lives. It happened to Sarah Mardini, 24, and Seán Binder, 25, when they volunteered as rescue workers for an organization in Lesvos. Their job was to spot boats in distress at sea and to help refugees who were fleeing abuses in their home countries.

Sarah and Seán ended up in prison charged with spying, people smuggling and belonging to a criminal organization. They spent more than 100 days in prison before being released on bail in December 2018. Their case is still under investigation. When it closes, a Greek judicial body will decide whether to send them to trial. If found guilty, they could go to prison for 25 years.

Seán was born in Germany, but has lived in Ireland since he was 5. He is there today. Seán says the scariest thing about what happened to him "is not that it put me in jail, it's that this can happen to anyone." Governments should protect a refugee's right to find a safe place to live instead of turning people who try to help refugees into criminals. When people need to escape conflict, torture or other abuses in their countries, they often have no option but to make highly dangerous journeys to reach safety.

Sarah is a refugee from Syria and is now in Germany. She knows all about such dangers. In 2015, she fled Syria's war, crossing the Aegean in a dinghy which nearly sank. She and her sister towed the boat to the shores of Lesvos, saving everyone on board.

Stigmatizing and criminalizing rescue workers has a chilling effect on individuals and organizations who have stepped in to help where the state has failed. This not only poses huge personal and psychological costs for them, but makes the situation of refugees and migrants more precarious.

Tell Greece to drop all charges against Sarah and Seán.



#W4R19

WRITE TO THE GREEK MINISTER TODAY

Explain why you are concerned about the charges against Sarah Mardini and Seán Binder. Ask him to drop all charges against them.

Minister of Citizens' Protection Michalis Chrisochoidis P. Kannellopoulou 4, 101 77 Athens, Greece

Twitter: @chrisochoidis Email: minister@yptp.gr

Salutation: Dear Minister

SHOW SARAH AND SEÁN YOU'RE WITH THEM

Send encouragement to Sarah and Seán or, as is their wish, donate to the Greek Council for Refugees at www.gcr.gr/en, or help refugees in Canada in some way. Neither Sarah or Seán wish to be portrayed as heroes: "Helping others should be absolutely normal," says Seán.

Sarah and Seán

c/o Amnesty International Europe Regional Office 1 Easton Street London WC1X ODW, UK



December 2019

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(Main image)
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YASAMAN ARYANI, WRITE IRAN 16-YEAR PRISON TERM FOR SPEAKING UP FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

YASAMAN ARYANI

IRAN

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A flower generously shared, a headscarf gently removed: two simple gestures that Yasaman Aryani dared to make on a public train in Iran. It was March 8, 2019, International Women's Day, and Yasaman, an actor who loves mountain climbing, took action to peacefully protest an Iranian law that forces women to wear a veil or headscarf (hijab) and loose clothing.

With her mother, Yasaman walked through a women-only train carriage, hair boldly visible as she handed out flowers. She spoke of her hopes for a future when all women would have the freedom to choose what to wear so that one day they could walk together "me without the hijab and you with the hijab". These moments, captured on video, quickly went viral.

On April 10, Iran's authorities arrested Yasaman. They held her alone in a cell for days while interrogators questioned her. They told her to "confess" that foreign elements were behind her activism and to "repent" her actions. If she didn't, they said they would arrest her friends and family. On July 31, Yasaman learned to her shock that she has been sentenced to 16 years in prison. She must serve at least 10 years of her sentence.

Yasaman's cruel punishment is part of a wider crackdown on women campaigning against forced veiling. Since 2018, dozens of women, including Yasaman's mother, Monireh Arabshahi, have been arrested. Everyone has the right to freedom of religion and freedom of expression, including Muslim women to decide whether to wear the hijab or other forms of Islamic dress.

Iranian authorities must not be allowed to persecute Yasaman simply because she believes women should have the right to choose what they wear.

Call on Iranian authorities to free Yasaman now.

Amnesty International firmly opposes all forms of Islamophobia and condemns any and all acts of white supremacist racism and violence against Muslim communities.



WRITE TO THE AUTHORITIES TODAY

Describe your concern that Yasaman is being persecuted for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression in order to promote women's rights.

Urge them to release Yasaman Aryani immediately and unconditionally.

Head of the Judiciary Ebrahim Raisi c/o Permanent Mission of Iran to the UN

Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28 1209 Geneva, Switzerland

Twitter: @khamenei_ir **Instagram:** www.instagram. com/

khamenei_ir

Salutation: Dear Mr. Raisi

SHOW YASAMAN YOU'RE WITH HER

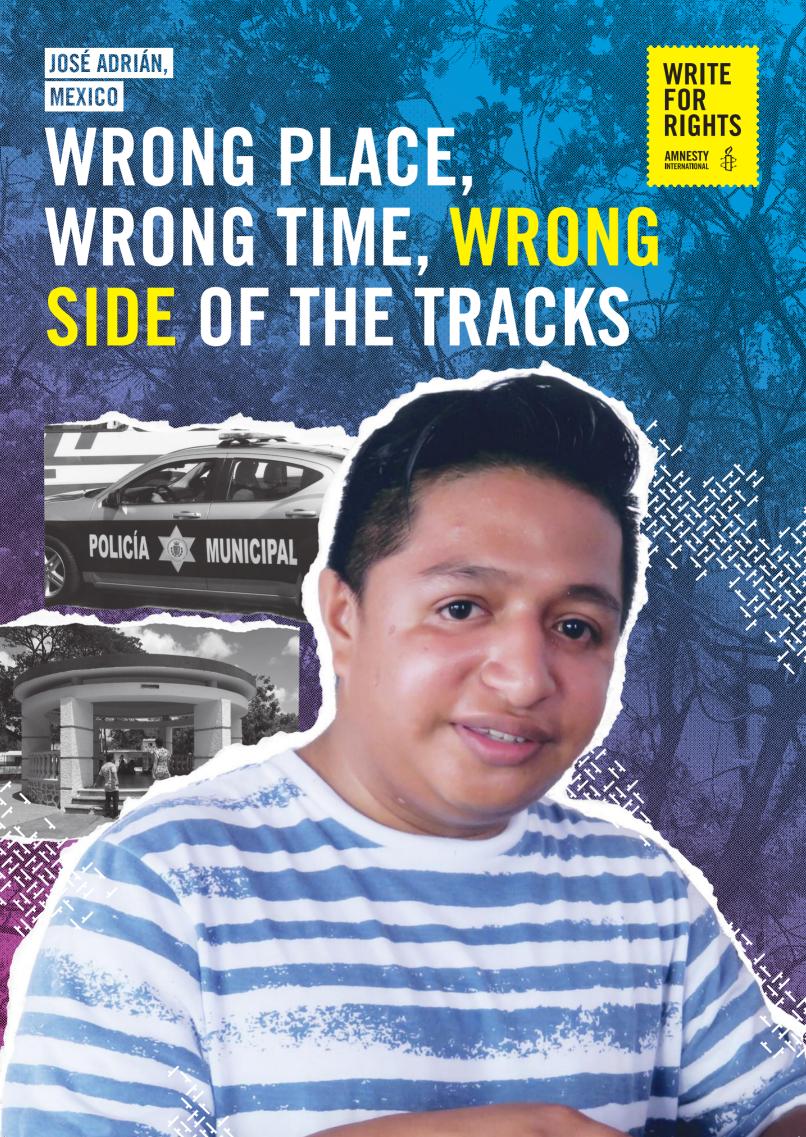
Take a photo or video of yourself taking action like Yasaman did: handing out flowers, or experiencing the sun, wind or rain on your hair. Post these on your social media accounts, tagging them #FreeYasaman with a message to @yasamanaryani95 and Iran's leader @khamenei_ir. You can also send your photos/videos to Iran_team@amnesty.org.



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JOSÉ ADRIÁN

MEXICO

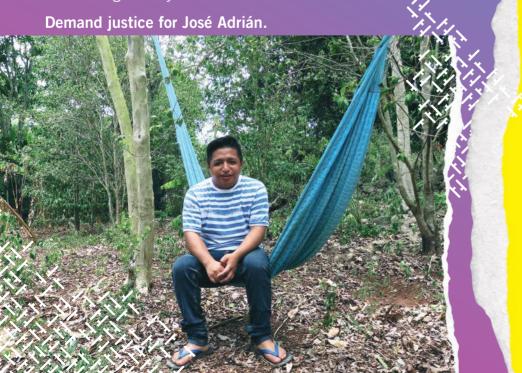
It was late on February 25 2016 when 14-year-old José Adrián left school and headed home. Out of nowhere, police jumped him and threw him against their car. One officer stomped on him, causing an injury to his neck.

José Adrián had stumbled into a street fight between a group of youths just as it was ending. Some of them threw stones and damaged a police car. The police arrested just José Adrián. They didn't explain why and didn't call his parents. Officers shoved José Adrián into their car and drove him to the Chemax police station where they strung him up by handcuffs. "They left me for almost, like, half an hour there," he says. "They hit me on my chest. Then they slapped me across the face." A hearing disability may have prevented him from communicating well with police during his ordeal.

To get their son released, José Adrián's family had to pay a fine and the cost of damage to the patrol car – money they couldn't easily afford as they lived in the impoverished Mayan community of X-Can. Adrián dropped out of school because of what happened.

Early in 2019, José Adrián finally received a hearing aid and he is finally starting high school. He wants to leave this ordeal behind, but the police who assaulted him remain unpunished and the family is still waiting for the government to make amends. "What I want is that they make police better. I don't want what happened to me to happen to other kids," he says.

The arrest of José Adrián followed a familiar pattern in Mexico. Police target the poor and those who experience discrimination - in this case, a young Indigenous boy. Access to justice in his case may help prevent harm to other Indigenous youth.



#W4R19

WRITE TO THE GOVERNOR

Explain your reason for writing about what happened to X-Can resident José Adrián in 2016.

Ask the governor to make sure Adrián is fully compensated for the injustices he has suffered. This must include finding the officers responsible and bringing them to justice.

Lic. Mauricio Vila Dosal
Governor of Yucatán State
c/o Amnesty International
312 Laurier Ave. E.
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1H9
(We will deliver all messages to the
governor on the February 25
anniversary of José Adrián's arrest)

Email:

mauricio.tolosa@yucatan.gob.mx monica.zavala@yucatan.gob.mx **Twitter:** @MauVila @GobYucatan

Salutation: Dear Governor

SHOW ADRIÁN YOU'RE With him

Send a message of solidarity and strength. José Adrián enjoys cooking, horror movies, music by Prince Royce, exploring beaches, and helping his father sell flowers. Email it to mexteam@amnesty.org or send it by mail.

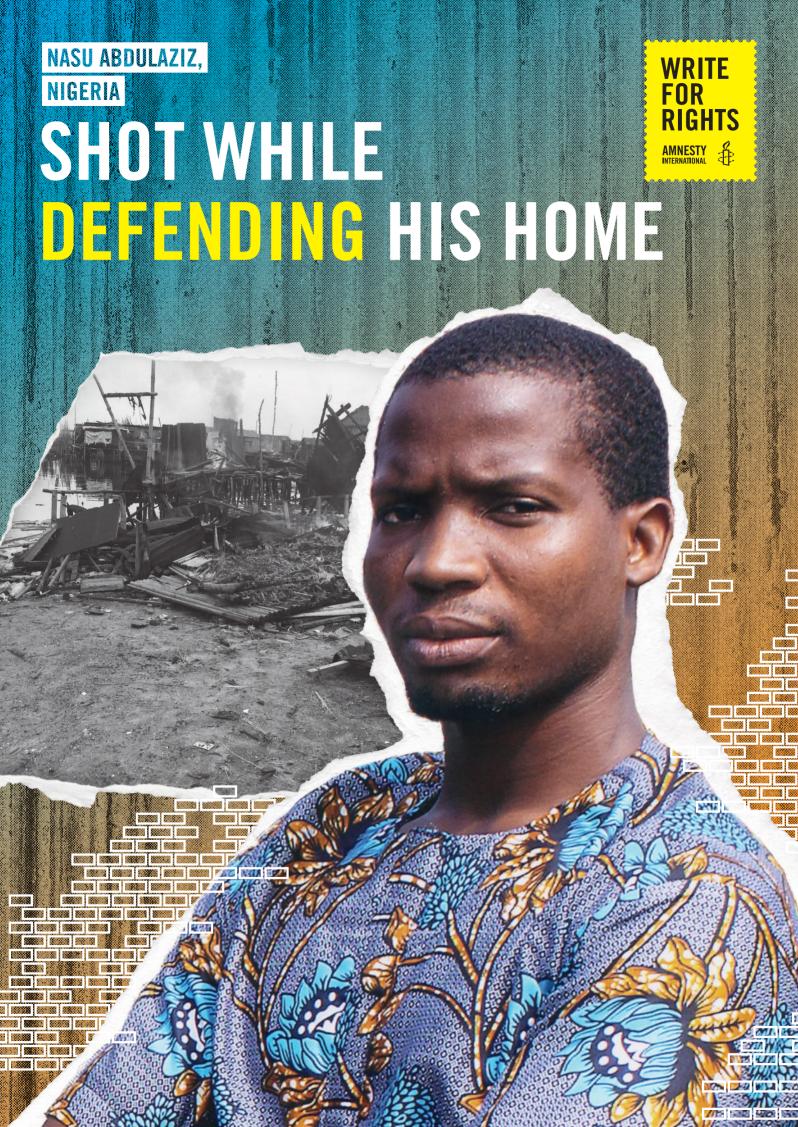
Amnistía Internacional México Dr. José María Vertiz 1196 Letran Valle 03650 Ciudad de México, CDMX, Mexico



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NASU ABDULAZIZ

NIGERIA

Nasu Abdulaziz is a dedicated soccer fan. He also loves cycling – normal activities for a young person in Nigeria. Except that Nasu's circumstances are nowhere near normal. Right now, he's fighting for his right to a home.

When he was 23 and should have been enjoying life, men with guns and in bulldozers descended without warning on his community of Otodo Gbame in Nigeria's megacity, Lagos. Acting on the orders of the government, these men attacked the homes of the century-old community for five months. They crushed and burned down houses, shot families, destroyed livelihoods, and evicted thousands of people.

In April 2017, the night before the final eviction, Nasu was shot in the arm. The next day, the Lagos State Taskforce claimed there had been a fight in the community the night before and used that as an excuse to swarm the community again, shooting at and teargassing them. Panicked residents fled. Some jumped into the nearby lagoon and drowned. Nine people were believed to have been killed. Fifteen others are still missing. "The whole experience to me is like a war where the soldiers are told to kill," says Nasu. "The only thing I can call this is terrorism."

By the end, 30,000 people were homeless. They were forced to live in canoes, under bridges or with friends and family. Nasu lost his home too, but he still has hope. He has joined the Nigerian Slum/Informal Settlement Federation, a mass movement of people like him who won't rest until they secure their right to a home.

Ask Nigeria to protect Nasu's right to a home.



#W4R19 #JusticeforOtodoGbame

WRITE TO THE GOVERNOR OF LAGOS STATE

Ask him to investigate the forced evictions in Otodo Gbame and make sure that everyone who was evicted is resettled and given full compensation.

Remind him that housing is a human right and urge him to end forced evictions in Lagos State.

H.E. Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu

Governor of Lagos State Governor's Office, Ikeja Lagos State, Nigeria

Email: info@lagosstate.gov.ng

Twitter: @followlasg

Salutation: Dear Sir

SHOW NASU YOU'RE WITH HIM

Send him a non-religious message of friendship and hope, so he can keep up the fight for his community's right to a home.

Amnesty International Nigeria

34, Colorado Street off Alvan Ikoku Way Maitama, Abuja FCT Nigeria

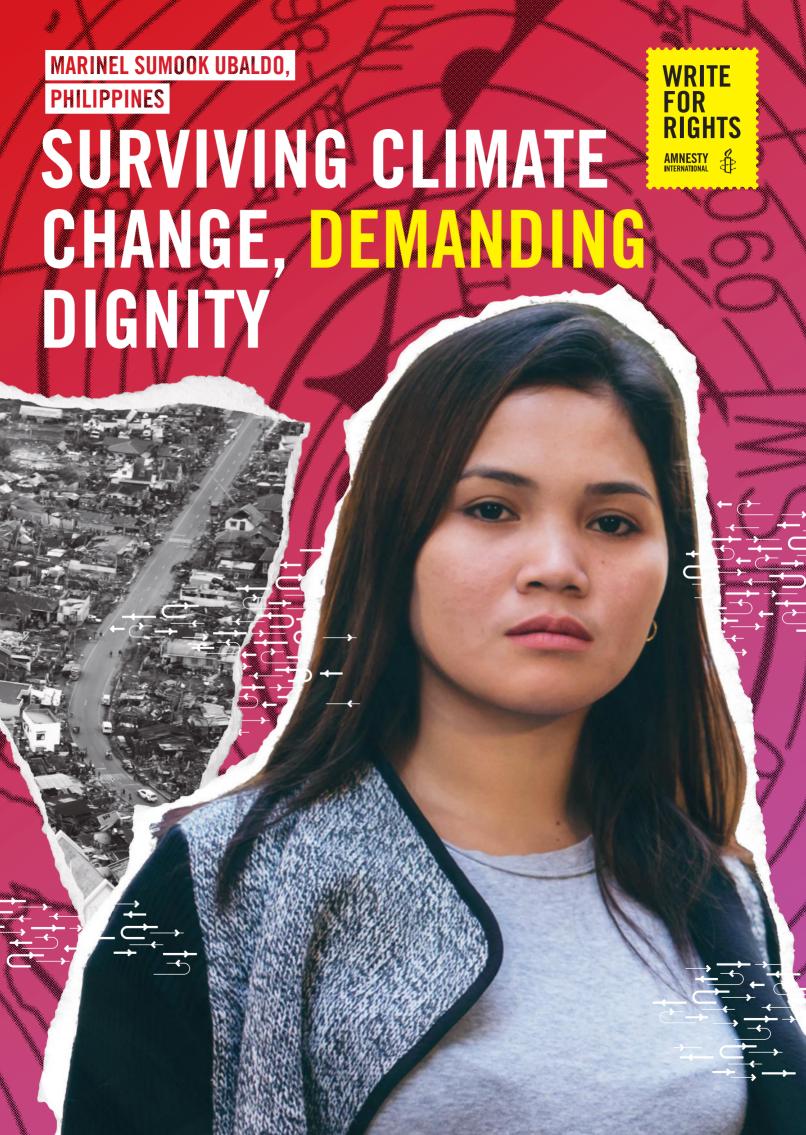


December 2019

Index: AFR 44/0748/2019 English

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MARINEL SUMOOK UBALDO

PHILIPPINES

Marinel Sumook Ubaldo was 16 when her life turned, literally, upside down. In November 2013, Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), one of the deadliest typhoons on record, washed away her home in Matarinao, Eastern Samar province, and all her belongings. It destroyed her village. Over 6,000 people died in the Philippines alone and millions lost their homes.

Marienel resolved to find a way to protect herself and her community from the disastrous effects of climate change. "The sea can be cruel at times," she notes. "Because of our geographic location, we are vulnerable to so many types of climatic disasters."

Fast forward six years. In August 2019, Marinel graduated with a university degree in social work. The well-known youth activist now spends her time campaigning for her community's rights at both local and international levels.

Marinel, her family and thousands of others who lost their homes in the typhoon need enough food, water, housing, electricity and toilets to live with dignity. The government had provided limited material and financial assistance at first, but that dried up in weeks. Many lived in tents for 20 months, then found that their new homes were constructed of substandard materials. Some families were forced to return to their destroyed, and now preacarious, homes.

Marinel remains dedicated to ensuring governments around the world confront climate change and tackle its effects on her community and others like them. "Climate change is not just an issue of adaptation and mitigation," she says, "but also an issue of human rights."

Demand support for climate change survivors.



WRITE TO THE PRESIDENT

Ask him to do all he can to make sure that the residents of Matarinaro are provided with adequate conditions in which to live in dignity.

Encourage him to urge those countries most responsible for causing climate change to provide financial and technical support to developing countries to help protect their people from climate harms.

President Rodrigo Duterte

Malacañang Complex J.P. Laurel Street San Miguel Manila, 1005 Philippines

Email:

pcc@malacanang.gov.ph
Twitter: @pcoogov
Facebook:
www.facebook.com/pcoogov

Salutation: Dear President

SEND MARINEL YOUR MESSAGE OF SUPPORT

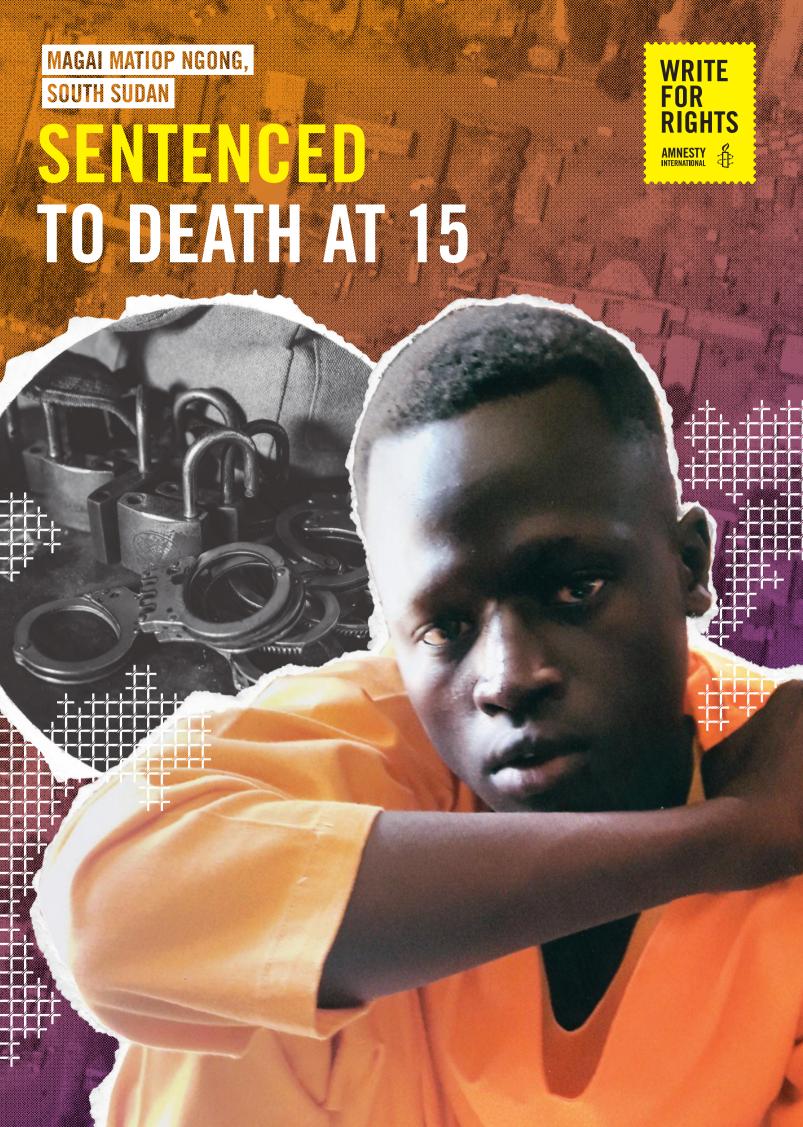
Send a non-religious greeting card, letter, or artwork. Marinel organizes street-art actions for environmentalism, so share any similar experiences you may have

Marinel Ubaldo

c/o Amnesty International
6-C Perseveranda Townhomes (I)
Maningning Street, Sikatuna-Village
Quezon City, 1101
Philippines



December 2019
Index: ASA 35/0751/2019 English
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MAGAI MATIOP NGONG

SOUTH SUDAN

When Magai Matiop Ngong was 15, he loved running and singing. He was in high school and had ambitions to be the president of South Sudan so that he could help people when he grew up. But life as he knew it came to a sudden end in 2017 when he was convicted of murder.

Magai's cousin had argued with a neighbour. When the neighbour got a gun, Magai did too. Magai fired warning shots into the ground, but one of the shots ricocheted and injured Magai's cousin. He died later in the hospital. At his trial, Magai told the judge that he was only 15 and tried to explain that the killing he was accused of was an accident.

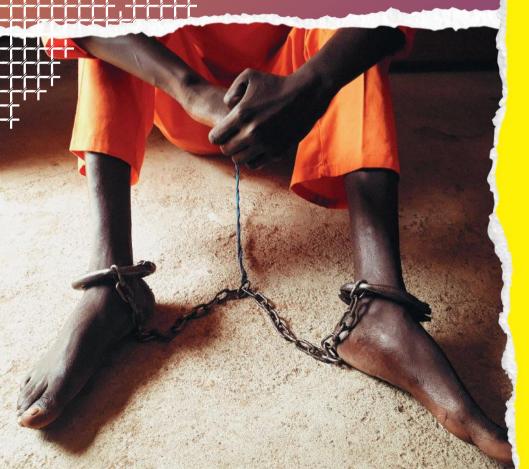
But the judge sentenced him to death by hanging. "The feeling is not good at all," he says, "to be informed that you are going to die, I am not happy for that..."

Magai didn't have a lawyer to help him when he was arrested or even during his first trial. The judge told him he had 15 days to write an appeal against his death sentence but "they had no advocates for me." He only got a lawyer when he moved prisons.

Last year, seven people were hanged in South Sudan: one of them, like Magai, was just a child.

Two years after his sentence, Magai is on death row in Juba Central Prison. He sings gosepl songs in the prison church to keep his spirits up and hasn't lost his hope "to be out and continue school."

Tell South Sudan to cancel Magai's death sentence.



#W4R19 #InSolidaritywithMagai

WRITE TO THE PRESIDENT

Remind him that under South Sudan's Transitional Constitution, international human rights law, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, persons below 18 at the time of the crime may not be sentenced to death.

Urge him to cancel Magai's death sentence.

President of South Sudan Salva Kiir Mayardit

Permanent Mission of South Sudan to the UN 336 East 45th Street, 5th floor New York, NY 10017, USA

Twitter: @RepSouthSudan / @PresSalva

Salutation: Your Excellency

SHOW MAGAI YOU'RE WITH HIM

Send a greeting to Magai. Before mailing it, please take a photo of your message and post it on social media, tagging it #InSolidaritywithMagai. On Twitter, use the same hashtag and tag your tweets @RepSouthSudan and/or

Magai Matiop Ngong

@PresSalva and
@AmnestyEARO.

c/o Amnesty International Regional
Office
Riverside Studios

Riverside Studios
Riverside Lane, off Riverside Drive
P.O Box 1527-00606
Nairobi, Kenya



December 2019
Index: AFR 65/0747/2019 English
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