



“I WANT TO THANK EVERYONE WHO CALLED FOR OUR RELEASE!”



Journalists Wa Lone (left) and Kyaw Soe Oo walk away from prison after their release. Amnesty International supporters had campaigned for their freedom.

Myanmar journalists were jailed for investigating a massacre of Rohingya men and boys

Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo were reunited with their families in May when they were freed from a Myanmar prison following a presidential amnesty.

“I want to thank everyone who helped us in prison, and everyone around the world who called for our release,” said Wa Lone. “I can’t wait to get back to the newsroom!”

Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo were arrested in December 2017. The two reporters had been investigating a massacre of Rohingya men and boys committed by Myanmar’s security forces, for which seven soldiers were later jailed.

For the “crime” of doing their jobs, the journalists were sentenced to seven years in prison. As an Amnesty International supporter,

you added your voice to the global campaign calling for Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo to be freed. You called on the Myanmar authorities to respect freedom of expression, and you demanded that they end their harassment of journalists.

Although the reporters’ release is an important victory for press freedom in Myanmar, the sad reality is that the authorities are still cracking down on journalists and activists. This year, Amnesty researchers have reported a surge in politically motivated arrests—mostly for criticism of the military.

You’re supporting threatened journalists around the world

It’s not just in Myanmar that journalists are under attack. Media workers all over the world are being

threatened, tortured, and jailed.

The International Federation of Journalists reported that 94 media workers died in 2018 as a result of targeted killings, bomb attacks, and crossfire. The highest number of killings were in Afghanistan, Mexico, Yemen, and Syria.

Your support is ensuring that Amnesty International is defending the rights of journalists everywhere. Governments must ensure that journalists are able to work freely without fear of being harassed, attacked, or killed.

THANK YOU FOR CALLING FOR AN END TO ATTACKS ON JOURNALISTS.

SAEED MALEKPOUR IS

FREE!

Thank you for supporting the campaign for his release

Dear human rights supporter,



What an absolute joy it was to receive news of Saeed Malekpour's safe return to Canada from Iran in August.

For more than a decade Saeed had endured unjust imprisonment in Tehran's notorious Evin Prison. His resilient spirit in the face of torture, psychological abuse, and forced confessions was truly remarkable.

Also remarkable was the courage and dedication of Saeed's sister, Maryam Malekpour, who tirelessly led the 11-year campaign for his freedom.

Saeed is a web developer and Canadian permanent resident. He was arrested in Iran in October 2008 while on a visit to his dying father. In late 2010, Saeed was sentenced to death for "spreading corruption on earth" following the alleged misuse of a web program he had created. Saeed had no knowledge of the program being misused.

Ill-treated, tortured and denied medical care until he "confessed", Saeed's televised "confession" was the only evidence used against him. In 2012, his death sentence was reduced to life imprisonment.

Amnesty International supporters threw their support behind Maryam's campaign to free her brother. Amnesty activists took part in public events to raise awareness of Saeed's situation, and they wrote to their MPs and to Canada's government asking them to do everything in their power to secure Saeed's release. In 2012, when Saeed was facing imminent execution, Amnesty



After 11 years in prison in Iran, Saeed Malekpour returned to Canada in August and was reunited with his sister Maryam who led the campaign for his freedom.

mobilized the Urgent Action Network to call on the Iranian authorities not to execute Saeed. Time and again, Amnesty supporters pressed the Iranian authorities to set him free.

Our work is not over now that Saeed is back in Canada. With your support, Amnesty has been continuing to call on the Iranian government to release all prisoners of conscience and to address other cases involving human rights violations against Canadians or individuals with close connections to Canada.

In other good news, Canadian citizen Maryam Mombeini returned to her family in Canada on October 10. She had been prevented from leaving Iran for 18 months, since the troubling death of her husband, environmentalist and Canadian citizen Kavous Seyed-Emami, while he was detained at Evin Prison.

Amnesty International's work on cases like Saeed Malekpour's and Maryam Mombeini's is only possible because of you and your loyal support. Thank you so much for everything you do for human rights.

—Alex Neve, Secretary General

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Please let us know if you would like extra copies, or if you would prefer not to receive the newsletter in future. If you have questions or comments or would like more information on any aspect of our work or how to get more involved, please contact us at:

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Aziz given asylum in Switzerland, thanks Amnesty supporters

Human rights defender Abdul Aziz Muhamat was recently granted asylum in Switzerland after six years in a detention centre on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea.

In 2013, Aziz fled conflict in Sudan. He tried to seek safety in Australia, but the Australian authorities placed him in the Manus Island detention centre, a place notorious for its inhumane conditions with up to 600 men held in stifling heat. When Aziz championed the rights of his fellow asylum seekers, he was arrested and threatened. But he refused to be silenced.

Amnesty supporters backed Aziz's campaign for justice, and Aziz is very grateful for your solidarity. "God bless and I won't ever forget this moment in my life," he said.



Human rights defender Abdul Aziz Muhamat.

Evelyn Hernández's freedom is a victory for human rights

On August 19, a court in El Salvador found Evelyn Hernández innocent and ordered her release.

Three years earlier, Evelyn had suffered a childbirth emergency and lost her pregnancy. But she was accused of homicide after hospital staff reported her to the police. Evelyn was tried and sentenced to 30 years.

No woman should be accused of murder after losing her pregnancy. But such outrages are not uncommon in El Salvador where women can face up to 40 years in prison after experiences similar to Evelyn's.

Amnesty has long highlighted the injustice of Salvadoran women being subjected to this kind of punishment. It's time that El Salvador stopped criminalizing women.



Evelyn Hernández leaves court in August after being found innocent of homicide.

Opposition MP freed in Venezuela

Gilber Caro, an outspoken opposition member of Venezuela's parliament, was freed in June.

Caro was disappeared on April 26, and for two months his whereabouts were unknown. It was alleged that intelligence service officers took him from a restaurant in the capital, Caracas. Caro's lawyers tried to find

him but were given no word on his fate.

Amnesty demanded that the head of Venezuela's intelligence service reveal Caro's whereabouts and release him. With your support, Amnesty was able to keep Caro's profile visible until his eventual release.



Gilber Caro

PAKISTAN: Aasia Bibi starts new life in Canada

Aasia Bibi and her family left Pakistan for Canada in May after their lives had been threatened by violent mobs.

Aasia Bibi had been convicted of blasphemy in 2010 and sentenced to death. Despite being acquitted of all charges by Pakistan's Supreme Court in 2018, the Pakistani Government gave in to the demands of a violent

mob, stopped her from leaving the country, and had the Supreme Court review its ruling.

Many Amnesty supporters worked to defend Aasia Bibi's human rights, demanding that the authorities overturn her death sentence and release her.



Aasia Bibi

YOUR SUPPORT ENSURES AMNESTY'S CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM IS WORKING ON THE FRONTLINES

Your generous support helps to save lives. Without you, Amnesty International's Crisis Response Team would not be able to carry out its critical frontline work. By funding the team's worldwide investigative work, you are ensuring that Amnesty's researchers are exposing human rights violations wherever they happen and holding those responsible for abuses to account. On these pages we feature just a few of the countries that Amnesty's experts have been focused on in 2019.

LIBYA

You spoke out when civilians came under fire in the battle for Tripoli

In August, Amnesty's expert on arms and military operations was in Libya to investigate air and ground strikes that are killing and injuring civilians in the capital, Tripoli. The latest battle for Tripoli began in April and has forced more than 100,000 civilians to flee their homes. Rocket and artillery strikes have been pounding residential areas.

VENEZUELA

You called for an end to the worsening crisis

Hundreds of protestors killed by security forces. Thousands more detained. Damaging US sanctions. A massive exodus of up to four million people. It all adds up to a spiralling human rights crisis. In 2019, Amnesty focused global attention and demanded international action on protecting Venezuelans fleeing the crisis. Amnesty researchers travelled extensively through the country, collecting evidence of crimes against humanity.

BRAZIL

You warned of the grave danger to the Amazon rainforest

Wildfires have been raging across the Amazon rainforest. The cause of the current crisis? It's the Brazilian authorities' disastrous policy of opening up the rainforest for destruction. Earlier this year, Amnesty investigators warned of a looming catastrophe when they reported on the huge risks posed by illegal land invasions and arson attacks near Indigenous territories.

YEMEN

Amnesty's Rasha Mohamed and Rawya Rageh spent 10 days in Yemen in June investigating the human rights impact of the ongoing conflict.



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MYANMAR

Mohammad Rafiq, 17, is a Rohingya refugee who teaches Rohingya children in a camp in Bangladesh. Access to education is a pressing need in the camps.



© Amnesty International



SYRIA

You exposed the true extent of civilian deaths caused by the US-led coalition

For four months in 2017, a US-led coalition rained bombs down on the city of Raqqa. Amnesty's experts have carried out extensive investigations into the US-led coalition's bombing campaign—two years of research, two months on the ground, 2 million+ satellite images analyzed, 400+ interviews. This body of work had real impact: in 2019, the US-led coalition finally admitted to civilian casualties it had previously denied.

MYANMAR

You added your voice to Rohingya refugees' calls for justice

Two years ago, Myanmar's military launched vicious attacks against the Rohingya ethnic minority. One million Rohingya refugees now live in overcrowded camps in Bangladesh. Amnesty is supporting the Rohingya's calls for improved freedom of movement in the camps, better healthcare and sanitation, and education for their children—and pressing for those who committed human rights violations against the Rohingya to be brought to justice.

Syria

Yemen

Myanmar

Hong Kong

South Sudan

SOUTH SUDAN

You made sure the UN renewed the arms embargo

South Sudan's civil war has devastated millions of lives. At the end of May, the United Nations renewed the arms embargo on South Sudan. Your support helped make this happen. Amnesty's Crisis Response team worked tirelessly with Amnesty's East Africa Regional Office and other organizations to push for the arms embargo's renewal.

YEMEN

You helped expose how Yemeni militias get their weapons

An Amnesty investigation revealed how the United Arab Emirates recklessly arms militia groups inside Yemen with armoured vehicles, mortar systems, rifles, pistols, and machine guns from Western countries.

HONG KONG

You called for an end to police brutality against demonstrators

Braving arrest, tear gas, and rubber bullets, protestors in Hong Kong have been marching to claim their rights. In September, following an in-depth investigation into the crackdown, Amnesty's researchers revealed a pattern of brutal beatings and torture taking place in police detention.

LIBYA

Amnesty researcher Brian Castner was in Libya in August collecting evidence of rocket and artillery strikes in the capital, Tripoli.



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SYRIA

Amnesty's Donatella Rovera, Anna Neistat, and Kumi Naidoo at a camp for internally displaced people in Syria. Many people fled here during the US-led coalition's bombing of Raqqa.



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RUSSIA: Oleg Sentsov thanks Amnesty supporters

Film director Oleg Sentsov thanked Amnesty International supporters after he was released on September 7 as part of a prisoner exchange between Ukraine and Russia.

Oleg was arrested in 2014 after he criticized Russia's occupation of Crimea. He was tried by a military court on bogus terrorism charges and sentenced to 20 years in prison. The Russian authorities transported him 3,000 kilometers away from his family to a frostbitten penal colony in the far north of Russia. He spent more than five years behind bars.

Amnesty was active on Oleg's case from the time of his arrest, drawing attention to the absurdity of the accusations against him.

Greta Thunberg awarded Amnesty's top honour

In September, Amnesty International presented the 2019 Ambassador of Conscience Award—the organization's highest honour—to Greta Thunberg and the Fridays for Future climate strike movement.

The awards ceremony took place in Washington DC. Upon receiving the award, Greta said, "We, who together are the movement Fridays for Future, we are fighting for our lives. But not only that, we are also fighting for our future children and grandchildren, for future generations."

She went on to say, "Activism works. So, what I'm telling you to do now, is to act. Because no one is too small to make a difference."



Oleg Sentsov with his daughter Alina after his release.



Greta Thunberg and Kumi Naidoo, Amnesty's global secretary general.

"Without your efforts, I would not have been released!" Freed blogger tells Amnesty supporters



There was good news from Mauritania on July 29 when blogger Mohamed Mkhaitir was freed after five years in prison.

Mohamed was arrested in January 2014 after he published a blog that discussed slavery and discrimination, including discrimination against the blacksmith caste to which Mohamed belongs. For this he was sentenced to death in December 2014.

Amnesty supporters spoke out against the outrageous sentence and demanded that the authorities quash the death penalty and free Mohamed.

After his release, Mohamed immediately went to Senegal for safety reasons, and then on to Europe. He was able to meet with Amnesty staff and he thanked Amnesty supporters for their relentless campaigning.

EGYPT: Human rights defender Hanan Badr el-Din freed



After her release from prison in Egypt on April 25, Hanan Badr el-Din is enjoying freedom for the first time in two years.

Hanan is a medical analysis specialist and a human rights defender. She began demanding answers from the authorities when her husband, Khalid

Ezz el-Din, disappeared at their hands in July 2013. Her experience led her to cofound the Families of the Forcibly Disappeared Association.

But Hanan's work was cut short in May 2017, when the authorities arrested her on false charges. Hanan was one of the cases featured in Amnesty's 2017 Write for Rights campaign.

Write for Rights 2019: Justice for Grassy Narrows

Allan Usener/PraxisPictures.org



Youth demanding justice for Grassy Narrows First Nation.

This year, Amnesty's global Write for Rights letter-writing campaign is highlighting a case right here in Canada—of youth from Asubpeeschoseewagong (Grassy Narrows First Nation) who are fighting for justice in the face of 50 years of mercury poisoning in their community.

The Indigenous people of Grassy Narrows First Nation have fished the waters of the English-Wabigoon River in northwest Ontario for generations, but since mercury was dumped into the river in the 1960s and 1970s, the fish have become dangerously contaminated.

Because government has failed to address the mercury crisis, generations of young people have grown up in Grassy Narrows with serious health concerns and the loss of cultural traditions. Young people in the community are saying enough is enough, it's time for the government to address the mercury crisis once and for all.

GOOD NEWS: Canada joins the UN Arms Trade Treaty

Susanne Uwe/Amnesty International



Amnesty supporters campaigning for an Arms Trade Treaty in 2012.

Canada has finally joined the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), becoming a state party to the treaty on September 17, 2019.

Amnesty International has been working since the early 1990s to establish an international treaty to regulate the arms trade. Since the ATT entered into force in

December 2014, 130 countries have signed.

In December 2018, Amnesty submitted a joint brief and testified before the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade about the importance of Canada joining the ATT. Amnesty also took part in the Government of Canada's consultations to develop regulations that form part of Canada's implementation of the ATT.

Amnesty continues to campaign to better regulate the sale of weapons, most recently by opposing the transfer of Canadian-made Light Armoured Vehicles to Saudi Arabia in light of the war in Yemen.

Amnesty receives extraordinary \$1 million pledge



Alice and Grant Burton

Amnesty International recently received a pledge of \$1 million from long-time supporters Alice and Grant Burton. This is an extraordinary pledge, and the Burtons have challenged Amnesty to match it. This means that all gifts made to the Burton Human Rights Impact Fund will be matched dollar for dollar by Alice and Grant Burton—up to a total of \$1 million.

The fund will support international level work on emerging human rights crises around the world. Recent examples include Myanmar, Syria, Yemen, South Sudan and Venezuela, alongside the mounting crisis in Hong Kong and mass imprisonment of Uyghurs in western China.

In Canada, the fund will support Amnesty's work on issues such as the forced and coerced sterilization of Indigenous women and girls, immigration detention, and racism within the policing and the justice system. To find out more, please go to [amnesty.ca/burtonfund](https://www.amnesty.ca/burtonfund)

**WRITE
FOR
RIGHTS**

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THIS DECEMBER JOIN THE WORLD'S BIGGEST HUMAN RIGHTS EVENT

Hundreds of thousands of Amnesty International supporters will be writing letters, signing petitions, lighting candles and wearing Amnesty's signature yellow on (or around) December 10th to mark International Human Rights Day. Sign up today and see how you can get involved, either on your own or at one of the hundreds of events being planned across Canada.

Writeathon.ca

1-800-AMNESTY



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Amnesty's AGM is in June 2020

Amnesty's 2020 Annual General Meeting will be a small meeting in Ottawa on June 6-7. The focus of the meeting will be on essential business of the organization. There will be no guest speakers, workshops or special events at the 2020 AGM. Members will elect Board Members using an online voting system (please go to [amnesty.ca/events/aggm](https://www.amnesty.ca/events/aggm) for information). To learn more about Amnesty membership and ensure you're eligible to vote, please go to [amnesty.ca/members](https://www.amnesty.ca/members)

Free holiday cards for Amnesty monthly donors

As a way of thanking you for so generously supporting our human rights work, we'd like to offer you some free Amnesty International greeting cards. To order your cards, please fill out the enclosed coupon, phone us at **1-800-AMNESTY** (1-800-266-3789) or email members@amnesty.ca.

Thank you for your loyal support which makes all of Amnesty's work possible!



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