

ACTIVISM GUIDE

Winter 2018



Welcome to your Winter 2018 Activism Guide!

We've made some changes, so be sure to check out all the sections to your new guide: Highlights, Take Action, Important Opportunities and Updates, Key Dates, and Connect with Us.

We are shifting to an online version of the Activism Guide. Visit www.amnesty.ca/activismguide at any time for the latest updates.

Please share this guide with your networks and with any potential Amnesty activists!

HIGHLIGHTS

In **January**, help us celebrate the creation of a human rights ombudsperson.

In **February**, call on the federal government to Have a Heart for First Nations children on February 14th.

In **March**, honour women human rights defenders this International Women's Day.

TAKE ACTION

Help Celebrate the Creation of a Human Rights Ombudsperson



For links: <http://www.amnesty.ca/blog/help-celebrate-creation-human-rights-ombudsperson>

The Canadian government has just announced the creation of a human rights ombudsperson. This will help position Canada as a global leader in business and human rights.

For several years, Amnesty International Canada and the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability have been working hard to convince the Canadian government that a human rights ombudsperson is urgently needed. The creation of *A Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise* will help ensure that our country is finally "Open for Justice."

Now is the time to celebrate!

1. SHARE THE GOOD NEWS

Spread the good news on social media by sharing our Facebook or Twitter posts.

2. SEND A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper applauding the ombudsperson announcement and emphasizing the continued need to ensure the ombudsperson office is both credible and effective.

Letters to the editor are a great way to have your voice heard on key issues. Here's how you can get yours published:

- Typically, letters to the editor respond to an article that recently appeared in the paper or expand on a topic that has been inadequately covered. Make a link between your article and another article recently published in your local paper. Include the headline of the article you are responding to in your letter.

- Letters must be short and to the point - ideally between 100 and 200 words. Review the guidelines of the paper you are submitting to for the exact word limit.
- Submit your letter to your local newspaper. The newspaper will also want your mailing address and phone number (not for publication) to verify your letter.
- Send a copy of your letter to fkoza@amnesty.ca.

Outline for a Letter to the Editor

- **Opening:** A punchy sentence to open your letter and hone in on your subject.
- **Transition to message:** You don't have much space, so transition quickly to your message. Start by stating the problem or issue of concern.
- **Propose a solution:** This is the core of your message.
- **Closing the letter:** Finish up strong, either by referring to the beginning of the letter or with something punchy.
- **Tip:** Don't try to say everything in one letter. There is no room for it and it muddies the message.

Sample Letter

RE: [insert heading of article you are responding to]

Home to over 70 percent of worldwide mining operation, Canada's new human rights ombudsperson will have a rippling effect on communities harmed by Canadian mining across the globe.

For over 10 years, civil society and industry allies have been pressing the federal government to create a transparent and independent accountability office to dig up the truth about harms linked to mining companies headquartered in Canada. Since 2014, over 100,000 Canadians have added their voice to this call for action.

This week, the Minister of International Trade took an important step to make Canada a leader in responsible business and human rights protection. Independent and strong investigative powers are essential to make this office credible and effective in offering remedy to communities negatively impacted by Canadian mining operations.

The Minister's commitment to appoint an ombudsperson with the tools to bring the truth to light will help us live up to the Canada Brand.

Signature, Your address, Your phone number

Have a Heart Day 2018



For links: <http://www.amnesty.ca/blog/have-heart-day-2018>

Have a Heart Day is an annual appeal for all First Nations kinds to have the opportunity to have a healthy and safe childhood. Led by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, Have a Heart Day calls on the federal government to end the widespread and systemic underfunding of basic services that First Nations children and families need and deserve, from safe, quality schools to culturally-appropriate family supports and services.

Individual actions and community events take place on and around February 14th (Valentine's Day).

Last year at least 70 Have a Heart Day events were held across Canada and more than 6500 Valentines cards and messages were sent to Parliamentarians to show that Canadians care about fairness and justice for First Nations children.

Amnesty International is proud that our members have supported this appeal each year through events and individual letter-writing. Here's how you can get involved.

1. TAKE ACTION NOW

In 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruled that the federal government was discriminating against First Nations children by underfunding child and family services within its jurisdiction. Full implementation of the Tribunal ruling is now long overdue.

Sign our ongoing action appeal online.

2. ORGANIZE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Visit the Child and Family Caring Society's website at www.fncaringsociety.com for ideas and resources for organizing your own Have a Heart Day event in your own community.

3. JOIN THE MOVMENT ON TWITTER

Use the hashtag #HaveaHeartDay

4. LEARN MORE

Last summer, Amnesty worked with the Caring Society and many other partners to sum up the key issues in a short submission to the United Nations top anti-racism body.

Read our submission online.

International Women's Day 2018: celebrating feminists in Canada... via Wikipedia?



For links: <https://www.amnesty.ca/blog/international-womens-day-2018-celebrating-feminists-canada-wikipedia>

Over the past year, femme folks around the world have posted online their personal stories of gender-based discrimination and violence, claiming their power by telling their stories in their own words. People have globally united against hatred and fear and in support of gender justice and equality through women's marches. Discussions in feminist and social justice circles about how to create an inclusive, feminist future are now permeating everyday conversations in public, work places, and the corridors of political power.

But not everyone has the privilege to safely share their story online. Not every survivor wants this burden placed upon them. And much work remains to create transformative societal, legislative, and judicial changes that address the multiple and intersecting root causes of gender inequality. How will Amnesty promote transformative change in support of gender equality on International Women's Day? This year on March 8th, International Women's Day, Amnesty's activism priorities are...

1. **Making visible, honouring, and celebrating the contributions of grassroots feminists in Canada;**
2. **Taking action to address gender-based violence in Canada; and**
3. **Acting in solidarity with women human rights defenders around the world who are taking action to end gender-based violence.**

Here's how YOU can get involved!

Celebrating feminists via... Wikipedia?

The contributions of women human rights defenders are so under-recognized that Wikipedia doesn't even include an entry for 'women human rights defender'! We're going to change that by making the contributions of grassroots feminists across Canada visible in Wikipedia.

Are you interested in honouring the contributions of local feminists by creating/editing (with their consent of course) their Wikipedia entry? Would engaging with other activists and other organizations in your community on this project be a great way to build connections with other partners in your community? Are you keen to participate in a webinar and learn how to add/edit Wikipedia entries? Might the Wikipedia project be a great online accompaniment to offline honouring of local feminists that can happen at community events celebrating International Women's Day?

If we've piqued your interest, please contact Jackie at jhansen@amnesty.ca for more information about this innovative project and how to get involved.

Screen a documentary & take action to end gender-based violence in Canada

Rates of gender-based violence in Canada are not going down. All levels of government are involved in taking action to end gender-based violence, but these actions are piecemeal and insufficient. Canada needs to—and must, to meet UN commitments—develop a coordinated, comprehensive, national action plan to end gender-based violence which includes all levels of government.

Host a screening of the powerful new Canadian documentary “[A Better Man](#),” a film which seeks to shift and further the discussion on gender-based violence. Consider organizing a discussion after the film screening involving local frontline organizations working with violence survivors, and accompany the film screening with action calling on Canada to develop a national action plan on gender-based violence (a letter-writing action will be posted to our [webpage](#) in late January). Amnesty has the screening rights to the documentary. To access the film and for more information about how to get involved in this initiative contact Jackie at jhansen@amnesty.ca.

Solidarity with women human rights defenders like Azza Soliman in Egypt

Because women human rights defender Azza Soliman has dared to defend violence survivors in Egypt she is banned from travel, her assets are frozen, and she now faces time in prison. [Take action](#) online calling for all charges for Azza to be dropped. Contact jhansen@amnesty.ca for more information. A letter-writing action and petition will be posted to our [webpage](#) in late January.

Help Indigenous Communities Confront a Toxic Water Crisis in Peru



For links: <http://www.amnesty.ca/blog/help-indigenous-communities-confront-toxic-water-crisis-peru>
The 600 members of the Indigenous community of Cuninico in Peru's Amazon region have a spiritual relationship with the Marañón river. They depend on it for drinking, washing and preparing food. Fish caught in the river is their main source of protein.

Following an oil spill from a pipeline near a tributary of the river, women like Juana Otejón report that they and their children have suffered debilitating health problems including stomach pains, fever, pain urinating, skin problems and numerous miscarriages.

In the Andean region of Espina, Indigenous communities are also facing a terrifying health crisis. Studies reveal alarming levels of lead, cadmium, arsenic and mercury in their bodies. Studies have also shown that their only sources of water have been contaminated with toxic metals.

There is scientific consensus that exposure to these toxic metals is harmful to health and that the impacts become more serious with prolonged exposure.

Yet Peruvian authorities have failed to publicly identify the sources of the contamination and stop the flow of toxins. Neither have they provided adequate health care or access to safe drinking water.

Please stand with Indigenous women and families in Cuninico and Espina to call for action without delay.

1. SIGN AND SHARE THE ONLINE PETITION prepared by AI Peru

Sign the petition online.

2. GATHER SIGNATURES ON OUR PRINT PETITION to the President of Peru

World Water Day is coming up on March 22nd. Join a community event and gather signatures calling for the right to a healthy environment, clean water and health care for Indigenous communities in Peru impacted by water polluted with toxic metals. Feel free to gather signatures before March 22nd. Please send them to our office as soon as possible.

Download the petition online.

3. TWEET your concern and a call for action

Active on Twitter? Join us to call on Peru's President and Minister of Health for action now.

Be sure to use the campaign hashtag #ToxicState. Around March 22, also use the hashtag #WorldWaterDay.

4. LEARN MORE

Meet the courageous Indigenous women of Cuninico and Espinar, who are standing up for their rights and their children.

See their photos and read their stories in our report online.

Site C: Still not, in fact, 'the point of no return'



For links: <http://www.amnesty.ca/blog/site-c-still-not-fact-point-no-return>

"The fundamental issue is First Nations in the region have entrenched constitutional rights. Not just the requirement for consultation and accommodation, which we always hear about when we're talking about resource projects. But they have entrenched constitutional rights to practice hunting and fishing as before, And that's going to be violated by this dam." - John Horgan, May 8, 2014

In announcing his government's decision to allow continued construction of a mega-project he once opposed, BC Premier John Horgan said that construction was already past "the point of no return." That's blatantly false. Here's why:

- Most of the planned flood zone is still undisturbed by Site C. Key attributes that make this valley so important to First Nations and non-Indigenous peoples alike - the calving grounds for moose, the plant medicines and berry patches, the graves and cultural sites, the fertile farmlands and multi-generation family farms - can still be protected.
- The independent review by the BC Utilities Commission considered both the money already spent on the dam and the cost of remediation and concluded that pursuing less destructive alternatives would likely still be less expensive - or in the worst case scenario, only a little more expensive - than completing Site C.
- The violation of First Nations Treaty rights has still never been resolved. The federal and provincial governments have both acknowledged that the environmental assessment of the Site C dam, and the subsequent legal challenges to the approval, never addressed the fundamental legal issue of whether proceeding with the dam is even allowable under the terms of Treaty 8. The West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations have vowed to continue their fight in court. There's a chance that they could get an injunction to stop construction. And a very good chance that they could be awarded compensation much greater than the cost of doing the right thing, stopping the dam immediately.

In other words, we are not yet at the point of no return. The fight to save the Peace River Valley is far from over.

Here are three things you can do to stand up for human rights, reconciliation and the environment.

1. SUPPORT THE FIRST NATIONS LEGAL STRUGGLE.

The "I Have a Stake in the Peace Campaign" is a local, grassroots initiative to support Treaty rights. Money raised will help First Nations cover the formidable costs of fighting the federal and provincial governments in court. Tax receipts are provided for donations made through their website at www.stakeinthepeace.com.

If you are unable to donate, please consider sharing the fundraiser with your networks.

2. FUNDRAISE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

If you're holding an event in your community, consider using it as a chance to fundraise for the First Nations legal struggle. Gather your friends and family and ask them to donate to this important initiative at a crucial time.

3. KEEP UP THE PRESSURE ON THE B.C. GOVERNMENT

If the government of John Horgan doesn't have the courage to stop Site C entirely, it must at least suspend operations until the issue of Treaty rights violations is resolved.

Write, email, fax, or call the Premier using our guide online.

4. SHOW YOUR SOLIDARITY

Solidarity messages, letters to the editor, and supportive tweets and other social media posts are more important than ever. Amnesty is using the hashtag #WithThePeaceRiver.

Take Action for Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories!



For links: <http://www.amnesty.ca/blog/take-action-human-rights-occupied-palestinian-territories>

Israel has occupied the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, for 50 years. Join us in calling on the Canadian government to ban illegal Israeli settlement goods from entering our markets, and to stop companies based in Canada operating in settlements or trading in their goods. Help put an end to the cycle of violations suffered by Palestinians living under Israel's occupation. Learn how you can get involved and look out for upcoming actions online.

1. LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR CAMPAIGN

Read our latest blog online about the campaign to mark 50 years of Israeli occupation of the West Bank.

2. COLLECT PETITION SIGNATURES

Gather signatures in your community on our petition calling on the Canadian government to ban Israeli settlement goods.

Download the petition online.

3. WRITE A LETTER

Write a letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau telling him it's time to stop supporting illegal Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian land.

Find letter instructions online.

4. WATCH A VIDEO

Watch "A boy, a shepherd and bulldozers in the Holy Land," a video about Umm al-Khair, a Palestinian village continuing a peaceful struggle to survive against the odds.

Video available on line.

For more information and to get involved, contact iotp@amnesty.ca.

Tell Colombia to Protect Endangered Peace Community



For links: <https://www.amnesty.ca/blog/tell-colombia-protect-endangered-peace-community>

Time after time, supporters of Amnesty Canada have faithfully raised their voices in countless creative ways to denounce acts of terror aimed at destroying the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó in north-western Colombia. Community leaders have told us all the messages of concern, like those written by activists in Vernon, have helped to save lives.

Now the Peace Community is appealing for support again amidst dangerous new threats from armed paramilitaries, who often operate with the support or acquiescence of state security forces and authorities. On 29 December, five paramilitaries attacked and injured German Graciano Posso, the community's legal representative. Other members of the community courageously managed to disarm and capture two of the assailants (pictured below), suffering injuries in the process, and hand them over to the National Prosecutor's Office. Yet authorities later released the two.

Paramilitaries have also targeted peace community leader Gildardo Tuberquia with death, saying they were going to kidnap and kill him. Such threats must be taken extremely seriously.

Since the peace community was established in 1997, more than 200 of its members have been killed or subjected to enforced disappearance. February 21 marks the anniversary of a terrible massacre, when paramilitary and security forces killed eight members of the Peace Community, including three children.

Our action is urgently needed now to ensure such atrocities are not repeated.

1. WRITE A LETTER TO COLOMBIA'S PRESIDENT

Personal letters from Canada can have a powerful impact because Colombia is mindful of its international reputation and Canada is an important donor to peacebuilding initiatives in Colombia.

- Introduce yourself and explain that you are writing from Canada.
- Express concern about dangerous new threats and attacks by paramilitaries against the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó.
- Call for urgent measures to guarantee the right to life and physical safety of Gildardo Tuberquia, German Graciano Posso and all other members of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó;
- Urge that those who attack the Peace Community are brought to justice and also urge decisive action to dismantle paramilitary groups and their connections to government security forces, in compliance with international human rights obligations.

Send your letter to :

President Juan Manuel Santos
Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No. 7-26
Bogotá, Colombia
Email : contacto@presidencia.gov.co
Twitter: @JuanManSantos

2. MULTIPLY YOUR ACTIVISM

Reach out to others in your community who share an interest in peace and human rights. Provide a sample letter they can use to express their concern, or ask them to sign a letter you have prepared. The more letters, the greater the chance of achieving a positive impact.

3. TWEET YOUR CONCERN & SOLIDARITY

The Peace Community is using Twitter as a means to reach out and gather expressions of concern about threats to their safety. Members of the community draw hope and strength from expressions of international support.

Tweet a message that will be visible to the Peace Community.

Make sure to mention you are in Canada. Use the handle of Colombia's President Santos and the Peace Community (see online). Also include the handle of Canada's Ambassador in Colombia, Marcel Lebleu. If you include the handle of Amnesty Canada's Colombia Campaigner, she will retweet your message to double its impact.

4. SPEAK UP FOR OTHERS AT RISK IN COLOMBIA

Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities in Chocó are also at grave risk due to recent incursions, threats, attacks and assassinations by paramilitaries. Ironically, this has happened since Colombia's president signed a peace agreement to end five decades of armed conflict with FARC rebels.

Colombian authorities must ensure that real peace extends to communities living in areas that others want to take over, whether because of minerals and other natural resources, agricultural potential or geographic location as a transportation route.

Before January 31st, please add your signature to an online action calling for action to protect these communities at risk.

I Welcome Refugees: Take Action



For links: <https://www.amnesty.ca/blog/i-welcome-refugees-take-action>

As we enter the second year of the "I Welcome" campaign for refugees, there is much to be done. There are over 22 million refugees worldwide, of which the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has identified 1.2 million who are urgently in need of resettlement.

We need you to take action for refugees now!

South Sudanese Refugees in Uganda

The fastest growing refugee population in 2017 has been spurred by the crisis in South Sudan. As a result, in August, Uganda passed a milestone. The UNHCR announced that the number of South Sudanese refugees in Uganda has now reached 1 million. Amnesty International continues to call on rich countries to step up and increase support for refugees in Uganda. This support can come by way of increased aid to Uganda and by way of robust refugee resettlement programs which bring the most vulnerable to safety in other countries.

1. GATHER SIGNATURES ON OUR PETITION

Gather signatures in your community for our petition urging Canada to keep its promise to refugees in Uganda.

Download the petition online.

2. TAKE ACTION ON TWITTER

Send tweets to Marie-Claude Bibeau, Canada's Minister of International Development, and Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, urging them to take action.

3. SOLIDARITY POST CARDS AND ACTION

Order our postcard in our online shop, which includes a solidarity and action message.

Safe Third Country Agreement

In July and August refugees continued to irregularly cross the border from the United States into Canada. Many of these asylum seekers are Haitians who believe their permission to remain in the United States will expire in the near future. Others are coming from a number of refugee producing countries including Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea, Honduras and El Salvador. These asylum seekers have chosen to cross irregularly as a result of the Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement. They do not trust the US authorities will respect their rights. Amnesty International is calling on Canada to rescind the Safe Third Country Agreement as we are concerned that US laws, policies and procedures do not respect the Refugee Convention.

1. TAKE ACTION NOW

Sign and share our online action calling on Canada to rescind the Agreement.

2. GATHER PETITION SIGNATURES

Gather signatures in your community for our petition calling on Canada to rescind the Agreement. Download the petition online.

Syrian Refugees

The crisis and armed conflict in Syria continues to be marked by war crimes, crimes against humanity and widespread gross human rights abuses by all sides.

1. ORGANIZE A FILM SCREENING

Organize a screening of *Not Who We Are*, a documentary chronicling the stories of five refugee women from Syria who have sought refuge in Lebanon. Request the film from edumitru@amnesty.ca.

2. LEARN MORE

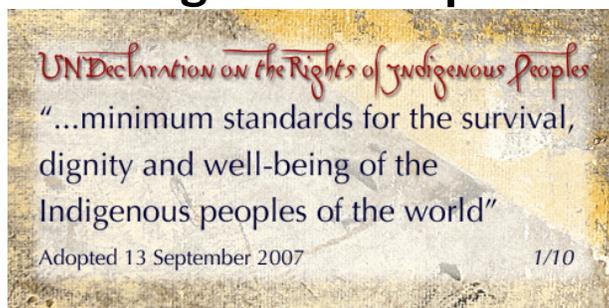
Visit our website on the Syrian refugee crisis to learn more and access resources.

Refugee Champions

Canada is home to millions of Refugee Champions. Refugee Champions include refugees who have made a new home in Canada as well as all those who welcome refugees to Canada. Help us expand the message of 'I Welcome' by acknowledging Champions who uphold and respect refugee rights. Do you know a refugee Champion? You can add your profile, or that of a friend, to our Refugee Champions site by telling us who you are and why you or your friend(s) are refugee champions!

Visit <http://aito.ca/iwelcome/> to tell us about a Refugee Champion.

10th anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



For links: <http://www.amnesty.ca/blog/10th-anniversary-un-declaration-rights-indigenous-peoples-0>

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission called the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* "the framework" for reconciliation of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Implementation of the *Declaration* is too important to be left to chance or political whim. That's why it's so important that Canada's commitment to fully implement the *Declaration* be enshrined in national legislation.

A private members bill now before Parliament would do just that. Bill C-262 would establish an overall framework for government to work with Indigenous peoples to bring Canada laws and government programmes and priorities into line with the Declaration. Bill C-262 would also require regular public reporting on the progress made.

Last November, Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould announced that her government would support Bill C-262. It's important that we hold the government to this promise.

1. TAKE ACTION ONLINE

Sign and promote out online action calling for implementation of the *UN Declaration*.

2. WRITE TO YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Honouring the rights of Indigenous peoples is something every Member of Parliament should support, regardless of party.

Find our letter-writing action online.

3. TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS VITAL TOOL FOR RECONCILIATION

Along with partners across Canada and around the world, Amnesty has produced a wealth of material on understanding the UN Declaration. You can find all the resources you need online.

4. PROMOTE LEARNING AND UNDERSTANDING IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY

Reach out to Indigenous peoples' organizations and other Indigenous experts in your community to develop public forums, teach-ins, book clubs and other events to promote deeper understanding of the UN Declaration and its significance. Contact Amnesty campaigner [Craig Benjamin](#) at cbenjamin@amnesty.ca for ideas and assistance.

Act Now for Rohingya Refugees



For links: <http://www.amnesty.ca/blog/act-now-rohingya-refugees>

Over 600,000 Rohingya refugees have been chased from their homes and villages by military forces since August 25th. Their villages have been burned to the ground, women and children were shot at as they fled their homes. And even as they fled, encountered internationally banned land mines, planted by the Myanmar Army on well-trodden paths leading into Bangladesh.

The outpouring of compassion and concern from Amnesty International supporters in Canada to the crisis in Myanmar has been truly amazing. More than 250,000 messages have been signed from Amnesty International members around world, calling on the Myanmar military to immediately end its campaign of violence and ethnic cleansing.

Here's how you can get more involved.

1. TAKE ACTION NOW

Sign and share our online action calling on Myanmar to end the violence.

2. GATHER PETITION SIGNATURES

Gather signatures on our print petition calling on Myanmar to stop the ethnic cleansing. Bring the petition to events in your community and encourage others to do the same. Download the petition online.

3. SHARE THIS FACE

Active on social media? Help us raise awareness about the crisis by sharing this face, the head of the army committing ethnic cleansing.



4. EXPERIENCE THE CRISIS VIRTUALLY

Watch and share *I am Rohingya* and *Forced to Flee*, two virtual reality documentaries from Contrast VR and AJ+ in partnership with Amnesty International.

5. FOLLOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Active on Twitter? Be sure to follow [@TiranaHassan](https://twitter.com/TiranaHassan) for the latest updates.

I WELCOME: Stand Up for Refugees in Mexico Facing Life-threatening Deportations



For links: <http://www.amnesty.ca/blog/i-welcome-stand-refugees-mexico-facing-life-threatening-deportations>

Mexico is on the front lines of a massive refugee crisis, a crisis effectively hidden by our mass media's single-minded focus on the plight of refugees seeking safe haven in Europe.

Huge numbers of people are fleeing across the southern border from Guatemala into Mexico because they fear for their lives amidst skyrocketing violence in Guatemala, and neighbouring El Salvador and Honduras, countries with some of the highest murder rates on the planet.

Mexico has laws and systems to protect refugees in Mexico. Yet Mexican authorities are constantly failing to comply with their legal obligations. Instead, they are sending endangered people back to life-threatening situations.

COMING SOON

On January 23rd, Amnesty will launch an important new action within our I WELCOME campaign with a report called *Overlooked, Under-Protected* about the experiences of asylum seekers from Central America in Mexico. Their stories come alive via videos and a photo exhibit. Our goal is to break the silence about a grave refugee crisis in our hemisphere, creating awareness and pressure for the protection of those whose lives are at risk.

Action from Canada is vital, especially given the close relationship and potential for influence between our country and Mexico.

CHECK BACK

Visit www.amnesty.ca/activismguide after January 23rd to learn how you can take action to protect asylum-seekers in Mexico facing a hostile environment of walls and deportation back to possible death.

LEARN MORE

[Read our report Home, Sweet Home](#) about the war-like violence in Central America that is forcing hundreds of thousands to flee for their lives. El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras have become virtual war zones where lives seem to be expendable and millions live in constant terror at what gang members or public security forces can do to them or their loved ones. These millions are now the protagonists in one of the world's least visible refugee crises.

[Read our report No Safe Place](#) about massive failures on the part of Mexican authorities to protect gay men and trans women refugees fleeing rocketing levels of discrimination and gender-based violence in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Terrorized at home, and abused while trying to seek sanctuary abroad, LGBTI people are now some of the most vulnerable refugees in the Americas.

[Read Canadian journalist Mark Townsend's investigative story in The Guardian](#) about rampant sexual violence and killings in El Salvador that drive young women to flee the country in search of safety - and the even more dangerous situation they face, if deported back to El Salvador.

Shell Oil: Complicit in Murder?



For links: <http://www.amnesty.ca/blog/shell-oil-complicit-murder>

Amnesty International is calling on the Governments of Nigeria, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands to launch investigations into the role of Shell Oil regarding the horrific crimes committed in Ogoniland by the Nigerian military during the 1990s. In 1995, nine men from Ogoniland were executed. The executions of the Ogoni Nine, after an unfair trial, were the culmination of a much broader crackdown on the Ogoni people by the Nigerian military government. Amnesty's latest report focuses on widespread human rights violations including unlawful killings, torture, rape and the destruction of homes and property, carried out by the military in the years leading up to the executions in 1995.

Amnesty International has reviewed thousands of pages of internal company documents and witness statements in order to reach this conclusion. The evidence shows that Shell repeatedly encouraged the Nigerian military to deal with community protests, even when they knew it would lead to massive human rights violations.

The ultimate responsibility for the human rights violations documented in the new Amnesty report, and the executions of the Ogoni Nine, lies with the Nigerian government. However, Amnesty's research shows that Shell knew that the security forces regularly committed grave human rights violations in Ogoniland, knew that asking for or encouraging the security forces to enter Ogoniland would likely

result in violations - yet still repeatedly solicited and encouraged the intervention of the armed forces in Ogoniland.

Moreover, the evidence provides numerous examples of times when Shell's requests were quickly followed by action by the security forces. An individual or company can be held criminally responsible for a crime if they encourage, enable, exacerbate or facilitate it, even if they were not direct actors. For example, knowledge of the risks that corporate conduct could contribute to a crime, or a close connection to the perpetrators, could lead to criminal liability.

Shell has denied the allegations by Amnesty. Given the evidence, an investigation into these allegations is required. In 1995, when Ken Saro-Wiwa was one of nine men sentenced to death, before his execution he said that one day Shell would face its day in court. We must make that happen.

Although some of the victims and their families filed civil claims against Shell, and Shell has made some payments to families, the evidence against the company has never been heard in court. Shell has paid only with the agreement that they would not accept any liability, describing the payment as a "humanitarian gesture".

In June 2017, the widows of four of the men charged Shell Oil with complicity in their deaths. Amnesty members around the world have been speaking out in support of Esther Kiobel, one of the four women seeking justice from Shell Oil.

We need you to join thousands of others and take action in support of Esther Kiobel.

1. TAKE ACTION NOW

Sign and share our online action telling Shell that you support Esther.

2. TAKE ACTION ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Send a message to @Shell on Twitter saying that you support Esther.

3. LEARN MORE

Read the online press release from Amnesty International regarding the complicity of Shell Oil in murder, rape and torture

Important Opportunities and Updates

Extraction! Using Graphic Novels to Talk about Human Rights



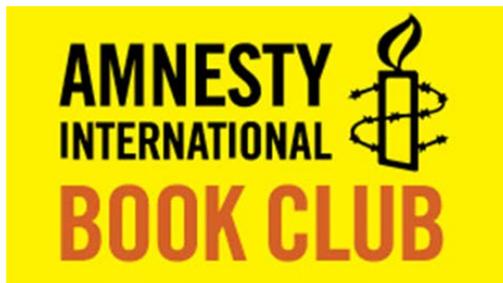
You probably already know that Canadian mining companies explore the world looking for gold, silver and other precious metals. But did you know that Canadian companies also regularly export big servings of human rights abuses alongside their mining projects?

To help Amnesty activists talk about the links between overseas mining, human rights, and corporate accountability in Canada, we've teamed up with [Ad Astra Comix](#). Together, we bring you **Extraction!** *Extraction!* is a graphic novel about uranium, oil, aluminium and gold mining and its devastating impact on people and the environment in Canada, India and Guatemala.

The project also aims to help young activists understand how Canadian foreign and trade policies influence the ways Canadian companies behave overseas and what legal and policy changes are needed to ensure Canada meets its human rights obligations and Canadian companies respect human rights in practice. Art inspires activism which inspires art - the Graphic Novel Project will be an entry point to these larger conversations about corporate accountability and access to justice.

Interested in being part of this project? Everyone who signs up to the Extraction! Project will receive a copy of the graphic novel and a campaign kit. The kit will contain information you need to work on the project throughout the school year including an activity guide and workshops, background information, Q&A, and actions you can take. Order your kit today and get access to materials and support from Amnesty's Corporate Accountability Team and the National Youth & Student Program. Reach us at youth@amnesty.ca for more information or to order your kit!

Join Our Book Club!



If you're a reader, a book lover, and take an interest in human rights, then Amnesty International has a book club for you! Launched in 2014, the Amnesty International Book Club engages readers, libraries and book clubs in reading beyond the book.

What does that mean? Our book club not only features excellent literature, but we produce great discussion guides which provide background information and an action readers can take to protect human rights. Awareness plus action makes this a different kind of book club.

Did we mention that it's all free? The Book Club has more than 6,500 members from coast to coast to coast, and ages range from people in their teens to some in their nineties. Everyone is welcome to join!

Here's how you can get involved:

1. JOIN THE BOOK CLUB

Sign up at www.amnestybookclub.ca, or by calling us toll-free at 1-800-266-3789.

It is completely free and everybody is welcome to join!

The beauty of this virtual community is that you have it all at your fingertips -- you can discuss the books online on the Goodreads discussion group, read the guide to delve deeper into the books, learn more about current human rights issues, and take an action if you choose to, all from the comfort of your home. You can also choose to use the attractive discussion guides in your own book club if you already belong to one!

2. ORGANIZE A LOCAL BOOK CLUB

You could start holding regular book club night, or have one or two a year to invite new people to come out and find out more about Amnesty International, using our book selections and discussion guides to facilitate the discussion.

Six times a year, a Canadian author selects a book by another Canadian author for Amnesty book club members to read. The free discussion guides (available on-line) contain an essay by the guest reader, explaining why they chose this particular book, discussion questions from the guest reader and/or author, background on Amnesty International's work related to the issues in the book, and a current action. In the past, we've also done some podcasts with the guest readers and selected book authors.

3. SPREAD THE WORD

The Amnesty International Book Club is a great way for local groups and members to engage their communities in human rights. . It's also a great way to promote Amnesty International's work through

your local library and independent bookstores. We have free bookmarks they can distribute, and some have started book clubs with our reading list.

What are we reading?

The reading list for 2018 includes: *Brother* by David Chariandy, *Brown Girl in the Ring* by Nalo Hopkins, *Seven Fallen Feathers* by Tanya Talaga, *Scarborough* by Catherine Hernandez, *The Break* by Katherena Vermette, and a Readers' Choice book at the end the year chosen by the book club's own readers through on-line voting.

Our bookshelf of previous selections includes *The Illegal* and *The Book of Negroes* by Lawrence Hill, *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, *Indian Horse* and *Medicine Walk* by Richard Wagamese, *The Inconvenient Indian* by Thomas King, *Laughing All the Way to the Mosque* by Zarqa Nawaz, *Funny Boy* by Shyam Selvadurai and many more! You can choose any of the bookshelf books and discussion guides for your meeting, instead of the current book, if you prefer.

The book club is a great way to engage with Amnesty's work and likeminded people for enriching and educational discussions.

To learn more or join the book club, visit: www.AmnestyBookClub.ca or call us toll-free at 1-800-266-3789 and leave a message for the book club. We'd love to hear from you!

Key Dates

Save the Date!

January 23rd: [Welcome: Mexico report release](#)

February 14th: [Have a Heart Day](#)

March 8th: [International Women`s Day](#)

March 22nd: [World Water Day](#)

Connect with Us

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