



“WHAT AN HONOUR  
IT IS TO JOIN YOU  
IN THIS VIBRANT  
MOVEMENT!”

Ketty Nivyabandi is the first woman, Black person, African, refugee, exiled human rights defender and poet to step into the role of Secretary General.

## Ketty Nivyabandi is Amnesty’s new Secretary General

- Human rights defender and poet succeeds Alex Neve
- Ketty led women’s protests for democratic change in Burundi

On October 5, Ketty Nivyabandi became the new Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada’s English-speaking Branch.

Ketty is a Burundian human rights defender and poet, and a refugee who has lived in Canada since 2015. She succeeds Alex Neve, who stepped down after more than twenty years in the role.

“What an honour it is to join you in this vibrant movement!” Ketty said. “I am

thrilled to continue to pursue rights for all in Canada and around the globe—particularly for those whose dignity continues to be so brutally violated through state violence, discrimination, patriarchy, and systemic racism.”

Ketty has been a passionate defender of human rights throughout her life, driven by a commitment to grassroots movements and the power of people working for change. Prior to seeking asylum in Canada, Ketty faced police violence as a leading organizer of women’s peaceful protests for democratic change in Burundi.

She has supported global women activist movements to shape public policy in many countries including

Syria, Yemen, Myanmar, Cameroon, and South Sudan. Ketty has led research and advocacy on human rights atrocities against the Rohingya and the threats faced by women human rights defenders in the Middle East. And as a global advocacy leader on human rights abuses in Burundi, Ketty has supported numerous local activists to reach safety including by leading successful digital campaigns for the release of detainees.

In a special message to supporters, Ketty said: **“Our work would not be possible without your dedication, your energy and the generous support of all our donors. I am grateful to you all and hopeful about what we will achieve together.”**



Alex Neve outside Amnesty's national office in Ottawa. Alex stepped down as Amnesty's Secretary General in October after 20 years.

## Thank you for everything. Onward we go.

### Dear human rights supporter,

In October, I moved on from the honour of 20 humbling years as Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada.

These have been two decades of triumph and sorrow, of exhilarating moments of justice and agonizing waves of injustice. And my heart is full of reflection and certainly of appreciation.

I am so thankful for the precious gift of learning over these 20 years, from hundreds of mentors and teachers; and of the essential lesson that we all must rise to our own responsibility to both change ourselves and effect change around us.

My respect runs so very deep for the courage of human rights defenders—particularly women and young people—at the frontlines of struggle across Canada and around the world.

I am in awe of the power of the collective—of our joined-up power—and all that is possible when we come together in solidarity.

I am lifted up by all that has been achieved. Prisoners of conscience have been freed, refugees protected, new treaties agreed, and cruel laws overturned. We've made steady moves towards abolishing the death penalty. Struggles for equality that have come far.

Yet I mourn all that was lost and am chastened by all that remains. Atrocities that have devastated so many countries and peoples. Racism that remains entrenched. Violence against women that still runs deep. The shameful failure to advance true reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. And the mounting global climate crisis.

But above all I am filled with gratitude. I cannot begin to express how deep lies my appreciation and admiration for the incredible people who make up the Amnesty International movement, in Canada and everywhere. To you, one of Amnesty's loyal and generous donors, thank you. Without you, none of this would have been possible.

These are not easy times for human rights. But I look around our movement and I am filled with such hope and possibility. And I know that the brilliant and inspiring Ketty Nivyabandi, our new Secretary General, will take our human rights work to new heights.

Thank you, dear friends, for everything. Onward we go.

With deepest gratitude and hope,

—Alex Neve, Former Secretary General  
Amnesty International Canada

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Narges Mohammadi shortly after her release.

## IRAN

### Human rights defender Narges Mohammadi freed

On October 7, human rights defender Narges Mohammadi was released from prison in Iran.

Narges was arrested in May 2015 and taken to Tehran’s notorious Evin prison. She was facing a 16-year prison sentence after a court sentenced her for her work with the anti-death penalty campaign Legam. Narges was repeatedly hospitalized while in prison. She suffered from a blood clot in her lungs and a neurological disorder that resulted in seizures and temporary partial paralysis.

Following a huge amount of support from Amnesty supporters and others, Narges is now reunited with her husband and receiving the health care she needs.

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Kelly Aguilar fled violence in Honduras.

## USA

### Transgender asylum seeker Kelly Aguilar released with your help

Kelly Aguilar is a 24-year-old asylum seeker who fled Honduras when she was just 12 because of violence against her based on her gender identity.

In August 2017, Kelly travelled to the US, where immigration authorities detained her. Amnesty activists called for Kelly to be freed and in July she was released.

Kelly expressed deep appreciation to all who took action on her behalf: “I’m completely grateful to all the people who have helped me since day one, since day zero that I’ve been fighting for my liberty. I’m infinitely grateful because without your support this wouldn’t have happened!”

## NEW ZEALAND

### Behrouz Boochani given refugee status

© Jason Garnian/Amnesty International



Behrouz Boochani at the detention centre on Manus Island.

In July, Behrouz Boochani received the good news that he had been granted refugee status in New Zealand.

Behrouz is a Kurdish journalist from Iran who fled persecution and tried to find safety in Australia. But he was held for six agonizing years in Australia’s offshore detention centre on Manus Island (Papua New

Guinea). Behrouz published a book about his experiences there.

Amnesty supporters have campaigned for years alongside the refugees detained on Manus Island. The Australian government has sent thousands of asylum seekers there. Amnesty’s research has concluded that the conditions on Manus amount to torture under international law.

## CHINA

### Wang Quanzhang reunited with family

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Human rights lawyer Wang Quanzhang was freed in April.

In April, Chinese human rights lawyer Wang Quanzhang was released and reunited with his family in Beijing.

Wang Quanzhang was the last lawyer awaiting a verdict in connection with the Chinese government’s mass crackdown in 2015, which targeted nearly 250

human rights lawyers and activists.

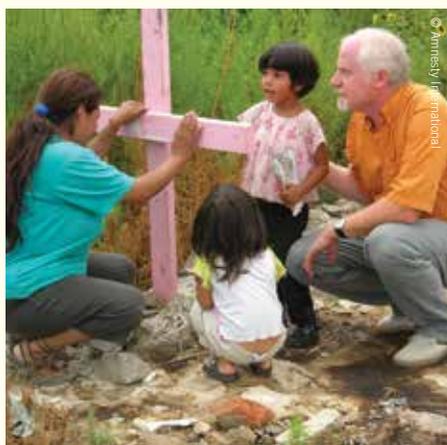
His wife, who tirelessly campaigned for his release, thanked Amnesty supporters: “Your work and help played a big part in bringing him home. In the past five years, we couldn’t have kept fighting without your continuous support. We are very thankful for having all of you by our side in this journey.”

# ALEX NEVE: LOOKING BACK ON 20 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO HUMAN RIGHTS

Alex Neve stepped down as Amnesty's Secretary General in October after 20 years in the role. Over those two decades, Alex worked with Amnesty staff and supporters across Canada and with allies around the world towards one essential goal: universal human rights protection.



**JANUARY 2005:** With Maher Arar, addressing the national media. The Canadian government had just announced it would establish an independent inquiry into Maher's case. While returning home to Ottawa from a family vacation in September 2002, a routine stopover in New York was the start of a year-long ordeal for Maher. Although a Canadian citizen, he was deported from the US to Syria via Jordan during the so-called 'War on Terror' and severely tortured. The Canadian inquiry found that Arar was completely innocent.



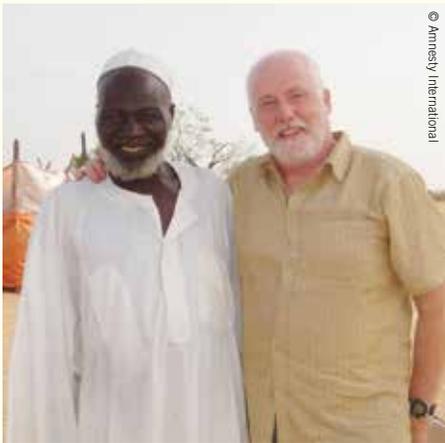
**AUGUST 2005:** With Juana Rodriguez, whose daughter Berenice was murdered in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. For two years, Amnesty researchers documented a decade-long tragedy of hundreds of young women and girls who have been murdered or gone missing in Juárez in the face of police indifference. Campaigning by families of the victims, local women's organizations, and Amnesty supporters helped focus international attention on the crisis.



**JUNE 2008:** At a demonstration in Toronto with Rebiya Kadeer, a Uyghur human rights activist who spent six years in a Chinese jail as a prisoner of conscience, and who was later president of the World Uyghur Congress. Amnesty continues in 2020 to campaign for an end to the persecution of the Uyghur people by the Chinese authorities, who have detained up to one million people—mostly Muslim ethnic minorities—in "re-education" camps.



**OCTOBER 2008:** At a vigil in Ottawa for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. In 2004, Bev Jacobs, a lawyer and member of the Mohawk Nation, was the lead researcher and author of Amnesty's groundbreaking Stolen Sisters report, which documented discrimination and violence against Indigenous women in Canada. It took 15 more years of campaigning before a National Inquiry released its final report of findings and recommendations.



© Amnesty International

**MAY 2010:** In Chad for the fourth time in four years, Alex had a surprise reunion with Abakar Yusuf, an old friend of Amnesty's. At their first meeting in 2006, Abakar shared his personal story of loss, how his wife had been murdered by militia. Four years later, Alex was able to tell Abakar how his voice had played a role in pressing the United Nations to establish a peacekeeping mission to protect refugees in eastern Chad.



© Peter Muller/Amnesty International

**APRIL 2012:** Typing up notes after a day's research at the border of Sudan and South Sudan. Although no two research assignments are the same, the work often includes recording testimony from eyewitnesses, working with local human rights defenders, meeting with government representatives and opposition figures. And afterwards: report writing, interviews with Canadian and international media, meetings with Canadian ministers and MPs, and perhaps visits to the United Nations to lobby members of the Security Council.



© Susanna Uff/Amnesty International

**OCTOBER 2012:** With human rights defenders (and husband and wife) Naser al-Raas and Zainab Ahmed. Naser survived torture in a Bahrain prison in 2011. After returning to Canada, Naser dedicated himself to activism on behalf of others—despite living with severe health conditions. Naser died in Toronto in 2016 while awaiting a heart and lungs transplant. “Naser touched hearts and opened minds wherever and whenever he was present,” Alex remembers.

## HOW TO MAKE A GIFT HONOURING ALEX'S 20 YEARS...

You can make a special donation to honour Alex Neve's leadership for human rights and help Amnesty fund new areas of work. One hundred percent of your gift will go to human rights work—30% directed to urgent international projects and 70% to work done here in Canada.

To make a donation, please use the enclosed coupon and envelope, or visit [amnesty.ca/alex](http://amnesty.ca/alex)



© Paul Thompson/Amnesty International

**MAY 2015:** With Honduran human rights defender Angel Colón in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Amnesty supporters helped Angel win his freedom after they made visible in Canada and around the world the torture and imprisonment he suffered in a Mexican jail for crimes he did not commit. Alex had first met Angel the previous year when he was part of an Amnesty delegation visiting Angel in prison in Mexico.

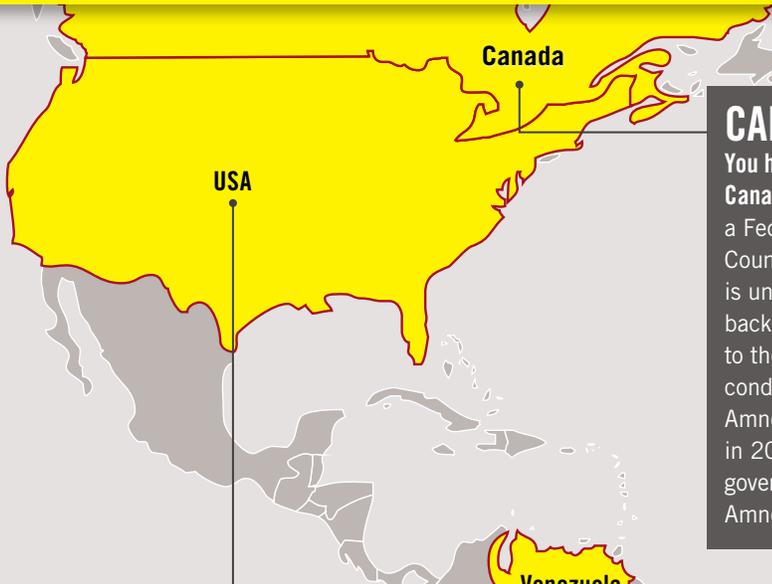


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**JANUARY 2019:** At the US/Mexico border during a time when Donald Trump's presidency had brought about an assault on the rights of refugees and migrants. The global refugee crisis has been one of the defining events of our times. Throughout Alex's 20 years as Amnesty's Secretary General—and earlier when he practised as a refugee lawyer—Alex worked to protect those fleeing persecution and violence.

# YOU SHINE THE LIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD

Your generous support helps to save lives. Without you, Amnesty's researchers, campaigners, and lawyers would not be able to carry out their critical work. By funding Amnesty's work worldwide, you are ensuring that Amnesty teams 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 recent months.



## CANADA

You helped win a 15-year struggle to overturn the **Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement**. In July, a Federal Court judge ruled that the Safe Third Country Agreement between Canada and the US is unconstitutional. This means sending refugees back to the US is unlawful. Refugees returned to the US are often detained in deplorable conditions, a violation of their human rights. Amnesty first challenged the agreement in court in 2005. Since the judge's July decision, the government has decided to appeal, which means Amnesty will be in court a while longer.

## USA

Amnesty researchers investigated **police violence against protestors**. Amnesty documented how the police committed widespread human rights violations in May and June against demonstrators, medics, journalists and legal observers who had gathered at protests against the unlawful killings of Black people by police. Amnesty's report is the most comprehensive human rights analysis to date of police violence against protesters.

## Venezuela

## VENEZUELA

Your support helped free people who had been unjustly jailed in **Venezuela**. At the end of August, the Venezuelan government "pardoned" 110 individuals, including several for whom Amnesty supporters had campaigned: union leader and prisoner of conscience Rubén González, political activist Nicmer Evans, lawmakers Gilber Caro and Renzo Prieto, and Maury Carrero.

## Nigeria

## CANADA

In July, a Federal Court judge ruled that the **Safe Third Country Agreement** (a treaty concerning refugee claimants) between Canada and the US is unconstitutional.



## USA

On May 31, police in Iowa pepper sprayed, arrested and detained journalist **Andrea Sahouri** while she was simply doing her job—reporting on a demonstration.



## BELARUS

You ensured Amnesty was one of the few international organizations inside Belarus monitoring protests around the August 9 presidential elections. In the aftermath of the elections, Amnesty's experts investigated police brutality, torture, detention of political opponents and activists, state-sponsored misogyny targeting women candidates, and the silencing of journalists.

Belarus

## CHINA

You helped expose how the Chinese state is targeting activists in Canada. In May, Amnesty revealed that Chinese state actors inside Canada are using cyberbullying, death threats, and racist insults against activists. Incidents are even taking place on Canadian university campuses and schools. Amnesty criticized Canadian authorities for failing to respond effectively to the Chinese state's intimidation.

China

India

## NIGERIA

Your support put Amnesty researchers to work in north-east Nigeria where children are being traumatized by the conflict between Boko Haram and security forces. Boko Haram has attacked schools and abducted children as soldiers or "wives". Children who escape Boko Haram's brutality face being put in adult prisons by the military. Instead of being protected by the authorities, these children are subjected to beatings, torture, and sexual abuse.

## SYRIA

You raised the alarm about a humanitarian crisis in north-west Syria. An Amnesty report documented unlawful attacks and war crimes by Russian and Syrian forces against internally displaced peoples. The report exposed how Syrian and Russian forces targeted medical facilities and schools. Following the report, Amnesty was successful in calling on the UN Security Council to continue allowing cross-border aid into north-west Syria.

## INDIA

You supported Amnesty India when it came under such severe attack from the Indian authorities that it had to shut down in the country. The staff of Amnesty India showed dignity in the face of a smear campaign, raids by investigative agencies, malicious media leaks, and intimidation. The attack on Amnesty is part of the Indian government's drive to silence critical voices.

## NIGERIA

B.I. was 12 years old when he was detained by the Nigerian military and held for five years. He described to Amnesty researchers how he was brutally treated in jail.

© Amnesty International

## INDIA

Amnesty India has been forced to shut down following a campaign of harassment and reprisals by India's government.

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Stop the crackdown  
on Human rights





# “AMNESTY’S RESPONSE TO THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC HAS ONLY STRENGTHENED MY HAPPINESS THAT AMNESTY IS IN MY WILL.”

—Nancy Kingsbury

My belief in Amnesty International’s work is even stronger today than it was three decades ago when I first joined.

Amnesty has made me look at the pandemic from different angles, especially how it affects people so differently. The pandemic has been seized by human rights abusers as a pretext for human rights violations and has put both the most vulnerable and the most courageous at great risk.

That Amnesty can respond to the human rights aspects of the pandemic in this way has only strengthened my happiness that Amnesty is in my will.

I have faith that in the future Amnesty will continue to protect human rights with the same level of persistence. The pandemic doesn’t mean that we can forget about human rights. Amnesty ensures that we don’t—today and well into the future.

During these challenging times, the moment may arise when you begin to reflect on the kind of world you would like to leave behind for future generations. Once you have provided

for your loved ones, if you are inspired to make protecting human rights a part of your legacy to the world, please contact us for more information on how to leave a gift in your will.

Please do not hesitate to contact Hala Al-Madi for more information at [halmadi@amnesty.ca](mailto:halmadi@amnesty.ca), 613-744-7667, ext 223, or visit [amnesty.ca/legacy](https://www.amnesty.ca/legacy).

**THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING YOU DO TO SUPPORT AMNESTY’S HUMAN RIGHTS WORK!**

**WRITE FOR RIGHTS**

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL 



## YOU’RE INVITED TO A GLOBAL CELEBRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

On December 10, 2020—International Human Rights Day—Amnesty International supporters in Canada and around the world will be taking part in Write for Rights, the world’s largest letter-writing event.

COVID-19 has impacted all of our lives, but it won’t stop us from taking action. Your voice and your letters are needed now more than ever to take action on 10 critical global cases.

**Join us. It’s easy to take part!**

Whether you want to organize an event with your social bubble, join a virtual letter-writing party, or write on your own, we’re here to help.

**Register now for Write for Rights 2020**

Go to [writeathon.ca](https://writeathon.ca) to sign up, email us at [writeathon@amnesty.ca](mailto:writeathon@amnesty.ca), or phone us at 1-800-266-3789 to register or to find out more about how to get involved.