



# THANK YOU FOR PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS

Dear fellow human rights supporter,

In August 2019, Saeed Malekpour arrived safely back in Canada from Iran where he had been wrongly imprisoned for 11 years. At last, Saeed was reunited with his sister Maryam who worked so hard to win his release. Amnesty International supporters had campaigned with Maryam, and she thanked "every single person who supported us throughout this time".

Some human rights victories are swiftly won; but others—like Saeed's—take years. Saeed's case is a reminder of how vital it is to be persistent and to never give up. Thankfully, the perseverance of Amnesty supporters is one of our movement's greatest strengths.

Last year brought other examples of Amnesty supporters' tenacity paying off. In September, Canada finally signed the Arms Trade Treaty—an international instrument we had been campaigning for since the early 1990s. And in November, Amnesty was in federal court to challenge the Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA), an agreement between Canada and the US concerning refugees, which Amnesty first challenged in court in 2005. (In July 2020, a Federal appeal court judge agreed that the STCA is unconstitutional.)

The pages of this Annual Review feature these stories and many more. However, the publication only touches on the highlights of the work you generously supported in 2019. For this reason, I encourage you to visit our website **amnesty.ca** for more information on all the human rights work that you're making possible in Canada and around the world.

Lana Verran, Chair

# In memory of Gary Ockenden

In November of 2019, long-time Amnesty member and Board Vice-President Gary Ockenden passed away at his home in Nelson, BC. Gary supported Amnesty for more than 30 years and made countless contributions to the organization. Anyone who had the opportunity to work with Gary will have experienced the depth



of his kindness and compassion and how much he cared for his family and the causes he supported. His presence is sorely missed by our movement and the other communities he served.

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#### ANNUAL REVIEW 2019:

**Editor:** David Griffiths; **Layout:** Joss Maclennan Design, Unifor/CFU; Printed by union labour at Thistle Printing. Published August 2020.

**Cover photo:** Abdul Aziz Muhamat (see June on page 4 for Aziz's story).

Photo credit: Jason Garman/Amnesty International

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Amnesty International's work in investigating and campaigning against human rights abuses is made possible by you and other generous Amnesty donors. This month-by-month review touches on a few of the year's highlights—some of the prisoner releases, and Amnesty campaigns and reports that could not have happened without Amnesty International supporters like you.

# **JANUARY**

 You spoke out to protect the safety of Rahaf Mohammed who arrived in Canada after being granted asylum from family violence and discrimination in Saudi Arabia. For a week in January, Rahaf was held at Bangkok Airport fearing imminent deportation to Saudi Arabia.

# **FEBRUARY**

 When Jordanian journalist Tayseer Salman al-Najjar was freed in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), his wife had a special message for Amnesty supporters: "You have been like a family to Tayseer and me. Thank you for your continuous support!" Amnesty had long worked on Tayseer's case after he was arrested in 2015 for criticizing the UAE on Facebook.

# **MARCH**

 You called on the authorities in Iran to release human rights lawyer and women's rights defender Nasrin Sotoudeh. Nasrin was sentenced to 33 years in prison and 148 lashes because of her work defending women's rights and protesting against Iran's forced hijab laws.



An Amnesty supporter calls for Nasrin Sotoudeh

to be freed from jail in Iran.

# 2019 THE YEAR IN HUMAN RIGHTS

# An Indigenous man patrols the Amazon rainforest in Brazil. In 2019, Amnesty reported on illegal land seizures in Indigenous territories.

# **APRIL**

- O You warned of the grave danger to the Amazon rainforest in **Brazil**. Wildfires raged across the rainforest in 2019. The crisis was caused by the Brazilian authorities' policy of opening up the rainforest for destruction. Amnesty investigators had warned of a looming catastrophe when they reported on illegal land invasions and arson attacks near Indigenous territories.
- O You exposed the extent of civilian deaths in **Syria** caused by the US-led coalition. For four months in 2017, the coalition rained bombs down on the city of Raqqa. Amnesty's experts carried out extensive investigations into the bombing campaign. This body of work had real impact: in 2019, the coalition finally admitted to the casualties it had previously denied.

# MAY

Or You focused international attention on **South Sudan**'s civil war, which has devastated millions of lives. At the end of May, the United Nations renewed the arms embargo on South Sudan. 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.

# **JUNE**

O You backed Abdul Aziz Muhamat's campaign for justice. In 2013, Aziz fled conflict in Sudan and tried to seek safety in **Australia**, but he was put in a detention centre on Manus Island, a place notorious for its inhumane conditions. When Aziz championed the rights of his fellow asylum seekers, he was threatened. In June, he was granted asylum in Switzerland.



Abdul Aziz Muhamat was detained for six years by the Australian authorities in terrible conditions.

You ensured that the conflict in Yemen was a priority for Amnesty. You helped expose how Yemeni militias get their weapons. Following Amnesty's work, Belgium cancelled arms export licences for Saudi Arabia, and the UK Court of Appeal issued a landmark judgement against exports of military equipment to Saudi Arabia. The United States Senate voted to block \$8 billion worth of arms sales to the Saudi and United Arab Emirates-led coalition.



Amnesty's Rasha Mohamed was in Yemen to investigate the human rights impact of the ongoing conflict.

# **JULY**

- Following months of protests in **Sudan**, a power-sharing deal was agreed between the military leaders and the opposition party. This victory was owed to the extraordinary determination and resilience of ordinary people who stood up for their rights. For decades, the authorities committed horrific crimes against the people of Sudan.
- After you backed an Amnesty International campaign, **Google** confirmed it had terminated its secretive Project Dragonfly search engine program for China. The aim of Project Dragonfly was to develop a search engine that would help the Chinese government's repressive surveillance and censorship of the internet.



Amnesty supporters protested against Project Dragonfly, Google's search engine for the Chinese market.

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# **AUGUST**

You supported Maryam Malekpour in her tireless campaign to free her brother Saeed from jail in **Iran**. After 11 years of unjust imprisonment in Tehran's notorious Evin Prison, Saeed returned to Canada in August. Saeed was arrested in October 2008 while on a visit to his dying father. He faced torture, psychological abuse, and forced confessions.



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

# **SEPTEMBER**

- Amnesty supporters around the world joined the youth-led **Climate Strike** protests. The climate emergency is a human rights crisis. While we largely understand climate change through the impacts it is having on our natural world, it is the devastation that it is causing and will continue to cause for humanity that makes it an urgent human rights issue.
- You helped free Oleg Sentsov from jail in **Russia**. Oleg was arrested in 2014 after he criticized Russia's occupation of Crimea. He was tried on bogus terrorism charges, sentenced to 20 years, then transported 3,000 kilometers to a frostbitten penal colony in the far north. Amnesty was active on Oleg's case from the time of his arrest.



Oleg Sentsov with his daughter Alina after his release in September.



# **OCTOBER**

Amnesty supporters backed an historic case in a Dutch court brought by Esther Kiobel and three others—Victoria Bera, Blessing Eawo, and Charity Levula—accusing **Shell** of being complicit in the unlawful detention and execution of their husbands who had protested the pollution from Shell's pipelines in the Niger Delta. After an unfair trial, their husbands were hanged in 1995.



Esther Kiobel's case against Shell accuses the oil company of being complicit in the detention and execution of her husband.

# **NOVEMBER**

You welcomed the release of Sadat Illiya Dan Malam in **Niger**, reunited with his family after 19 months in jail. Human rights defender Sadat was arrested in April 2018 after criticizing a new finance law for its devastating effects on the country's poorest people. Amnesty supporters called for Niger's authorities to stop harassing human rights activists.



In Niger, Sadat Illiya Dan Malam was reunited with his family after 19 months in jail.

# **DECEMBER**

You focused global attention on the cases of ten young activists campaigning for human rights. All were featured in Write for Rights 2019, Amnesty's letter-writing event held each year on December 10, International Human Rights Day. 2019 was the most successful campaign yet. Amnesty supporters took 6,566,565 actions. See pages 12 and 13 for more on the cases.

Throughout 2019, you made a vital and life-saving contribution to human rights. You helped people at risk of torture. You helped unlock jail cell doors. You helped reunite families.

# **FOCUS ON CANADA**



# **YOU SUPPORTED** A DYNAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS **PROGRAM IN CANADA**

# Your victory: Canada joins the **UN Arms Trade Treaty**

In September, Canada finally joined the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), becoming a state party to the treaty. 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. Amnesty continues to campaign to better regulate the sale of weapons.

# You challenged the **Safe Third Country Agreement**

The Safe Third Country Agreement is a legal agreement between Canada and the United States, under which refugee claimants must request refugee protection in the first country they arrive in. The agreement is based on the idea that the United States is safe for refugee claimants. Amnesty International went to court in 2019 to argue that the United States is not safe for many refugees and Canada should suspend the Safe Third Country Agreement.



Activists across Canada marked International Women's Day on March 8, 2019, by acting in solidarity with Indigenous women who have survived forced and coerced sterilizations



Amnesty was in court in November to challenge the Safe Third Country Agreement between Canada and the US. Amnesty supporters were amongst those rallying outside the Federal Court building in Toronto.

Amnesty International



In Toronto, in May, Amnesty's Business and Human Rights and Indigenous Rights Group was at the Pedestrian Sundays event in Kensington Market to promote Amnesty's campaign actions for earth, land and water defenders in Latin America.

## You stood in solidarity with Indigenous peoples

In June, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls released its final report of findings and recommendations. The Inquiry was preceded by many years of activism calling for government action to end the violence. Amnesty International welcomed the report and called for a comprehensive response to the human rights crisis.

# You called on Canada to stop sterilizing Indigenous women without their consent

Amnesty activists marked International Women's Day on March 8 by taking to social media to shine a light on a form of torture impacting Indigenous women in Canada, and to demonstrate solidarity with torture survivors. Indigenous women have reported having a tubal ligation—a permanent form of birth control—without providing their free, full, and informed consent for the surgery.

#### You spoke out against digital surveillance

When Sidewalk Labs, Google's sister company, announced plans to build a sensor-laden smart city on Toronto's waterfront, you demanded that human rights come first. An Amnesty report exposed how the surveillance-based business model of Google and Facebook is incompatible with the right to privacy and threatens freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of thought, and the right to equality and non-discrimination. In May 2020, Sidewalk Labs announced the cancellation of the Toronto waterfront project.

# You pressed Canada to end Saudi arms exports

You continued to call for the Canadian government to end arms transfers to Saudi Arabia. In 2019, despite announcing a moratorium on new arms export permits to Saudi Arabia, Canada exported more than \$2.8 billion worth of weapons to the kingdom.



Amnesty members at the 2019 AGM in Toronto called for justice for the people of Grassy Narrows First Nation in northern Ontario. In the 1960s, a pulp and paper mill dumped tons of mercury into the rivers upon which the First Nation depend.

# HOW YOU SHINE THE LIGHT ON HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AROUND THE WORLD

Your support means Amnesty International can conduct crucial research missions and undertake investigations of human rights abuses. In a typical year, about 200 research missions are undertaken. Missions are the basis of many of Amnesty's comprehensive human rights reports—reports that are accurate, impartial, respected and trusted. None of this work would be possible without Amnesty's generous donors. Here we feature just a few of the countries that Amnesty International researchers reported 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 were killing and injuring civilians in the capital, Tripoli. The latest battle for Tripoli began in April and forced more than 100,000 civilians to flee their homes. Rocket and artillery strikes pounded residential areas.

Libya

# **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.



# **CAMEROON**

Your helped expose human rights violations
In the western part of country,
Cameroon's armed forces have committed
extrajudicial executions and burned
homes. The violence forced hundreds
of thousands from their homes and,
according to the UN, left more than a
million people in need of humanitarian
assistance. After Amnesty reported on
the military's human rights violations,
the US government cut military aid to
Cameroon's government.

Cameroon



Amnesty researcher Brian Castner was in Libya in August 2019 collecting evidence of rocket and artillery strikes in the capital, Tripoli.



# Russia Whas be bamme

# RUSSIA

You called on the authorities to end their crackdown on human rights defenders

Amnesty reported on the grim reality for activists inside Russia. Every day poses new threats—whether it's severe beatings by 'unknown' assailants, prosecution for crimes that have not been committed, financial starvation through bank account freezes and huge fines, or state media targeting close relatives.

# CHINA

You called on China to close its secret camps
It's estimated that up to one million
people or more—mostly Muslim ethnic
minorities—are being held in "re-education"
camps in northwest China. The Chinese
government is trying to wipe out religious
beliefs and cultural identity in order to
enforce political loyalty to the State and
the Communist Party.

China

Myanmar

# DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

You called for an end to the killings in eastern DRC

In 2019, dozens of local and foreign armed groups as well as the Congolese security forces continued to carry out serious human rights abuses. Armed conflict caused more than 2,000 civilian deaths and displaced 1 million people.

# **MYANMAR**

You added your voice to Rohingya refugees' calls for justice

In 2017, 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.

the Chinese ent clamped the freedoms I to the Forest Hong Kong e terms of the in 1997.

DRC



HOW AMNESTY REPORTS ON "CLOSED" COUNTRIES

Some countries deny Amnesty International from entering. In these "closed" countries—such as China and North Korea—Amnesty research teams use sources of information outside the country, including refugees, diplomats, human rights defenders and media reports.

# FOCUS ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION





# Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, Myanmar

Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo were reunited with their families in May when they were freed from prison following a presidential amnesty. They were arrested in December 2017 after investigating a massacre of Rohingya men and boys committed by Myanmar's security forces. "I want to thank everyone around the world who called for our release!" said Wa Lone.

# THANK YOU FOR PROTECTING

# FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

# YOU SUPPORTED THOSE WHO SPEAK OUT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

In August 2019, the Liu Xiaobo Memorial was unveiled in front of Amnesty International's Ottawa office. The memorial, by Canadian artist Ruth Abernethy, is a bronze replica of the "empty chair" that honoured the absent Nobel Peace Prize winner at the 2010 ceremony in Oslo, Norway.

Liu Xiaobo died in custody in China in 2017. For decades he was persecuted by the Chinese authorities for his peaceful human rights work.

The plinth of the memorial in Ottawa is inscribed with Liu Xiaobo's words, "Freedom of expression is the foundation of human rights".

Defending freedom of expression has always been a core part of Amnesty International's work and is vital in holding the powerful to account. These pages feature a few of the many courageous people who spoke out for justice and who you supported in 2019.



### Hajar Raissouni, Morocco

Hajar Raissouni was freed from prison in October with her fiancé. In a politically motivated attack on Hajar for her journalistic work, she and her fiancé were convicted on trumped-up charges of abortion and sex outside

of marriage. Amnesty supporters demanded that the Moroccan authorities free them both.



# Shawkan, Egypt

Prisoner of conscience and award-winning photojournalist Mahmoud Abou Zeid—also known as Shawkan—was freed in March after spending more than five years in jail on bogus charges. Amnesty International supporters had long called for Shawkan's release.



# Maria Ressa, Philippines

Journalist Maria Ressa has exposed thousands of murders committed during President Duterte's "war on drugs".

Trying to scare her into silence, the authorities put her on trial in 2019. She was convicted and faces up to six years in prison. Amnesty supporters are now calling for her conviction to be quashed.



## Li Wenliang, China

In December 2019, doctors in Wuhan sounded the alarm about mysterious cases of pneumonia (now named COVID-19). Local authorities punished the doctors for "spreading rumours". One of the doctors, Li Wenliang, died in February of COVID-19. The Chinese authorities' censorship severely hindered the early fight against the pandemic.

# Women human rights defenders, Poland

In October, a court in Poland overturned a guilty verdict against 14 women human rights defenders. They were prosecuted for displaying a "Stop Fascism" banner in



front of far-right extremists.
Restrictions on free speech are making it harder to challenge the spread of racism and hatred in Poland.

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# FOCUS ON GLOBAL YOUTH ACTIVISTS





# Yasaman Aryani, Iran

On March 8, 2019—International Women's Day—Yasaman Aryani peacefully protested an Iranian law that forces women to wear a headscarf. With her mother, Yasaman walked through a women-only train carriage handing out flowers. She spoke of her hopes for a future when women would be free to choose what to wear. 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. On July 31, 2019, Yasaman was sentenced to 16 years in prison. Amnesty supporters are campaigning for her release.

# THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING

# **GLOBAL YOUTH ACTIVISTS**

# YOUNG PEOPLE ARE A LEADING FORCE FOR CHANGE ALL OVER THE WORLD

Around the world, an inspiring group of young leaders is at the very forefront of the human rights struggle. They're pressing for change and justice on a wide range of critical issues including migration and refugee rights, climate change and the environment, women's rights, freedom of expression, and the right to protest.

These pages profile just a few of the young people who Amnesty International worked with or campaigned for in 2019. Each of them was featured in Amnesty's Write for Rights global letter-writing event in December 2019. During Write for Rights, Amnesty supporters on every continent wrote millions of letters in solidarity with these young activists.



# Marinel Sumook Ubaldo, Philippines

Marinel Sumook Ubaldo was 16 in 2013 when one of the most powerful typhoons in history— Typhoon Yolanda—destroyed her village. Over 6,000 people died and millions lost their homes. Many people affected by the typhoon still need food, water,

housing, electricity, and toilets to live with dignity. Since Typhoon Yolanda, Marinel has dedicated her life to being a climate justice activist.



# Ibrahim Ezz El-Din, Egypt

Ibrahim Ezz El-Din is a human rights researcher. When Ibrahim was walking home on June 11, 2019, four security officers arrested him. Ever since, Ibrahim's family has been trying to find out what happened to him. 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 in Egypt.



# Nasu Abdulaziz, Nigeria

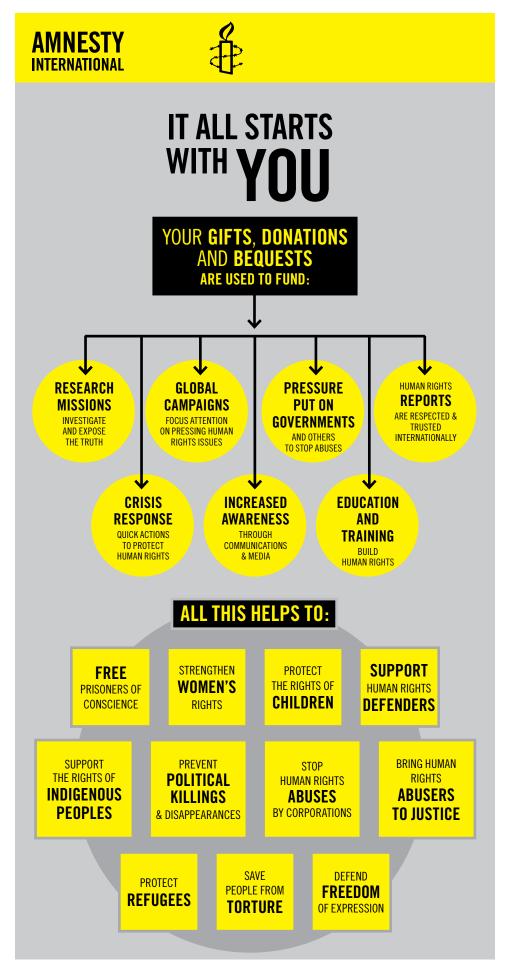
Nasu Abdulaziz was 23 when armed men in bulldozers descended on his community of Otodo Gbame in Lagos. The men destroyed houses, and shot and evicted families. They made 30,000 people homeless. Nasu lost his home

too, but he still has hope. He has joined the Nigerian Slum/Informal Settlement Federation, a movement of people who won't rest until they secure their right to a home.



# Sarah Mardini and Seán Binder, Greece

In Greece, a person can go to jail for saving lives. It happened to Sarah Mardini, 24, and Seán Binder, 25, when they volunteered as rescue workers. Their job was to spot boats in distress on the Mediterranean and help bring refugees to safety. Sarah and Seán ended up being charged with spying, people smuggling, and belonging to a criminal organization. If found guilty, Sarah and Seán could go to prison for 25 years. Governments must 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, they often have no option but to make dangerous journeys to safety.



#### **Statement of Financial Position**

As at December 31, 2019

ASSETS	2019 \$	2018 \$	
Current assets	3,369,918	2,943,559	
Long-term Investments	452,996	314,600	
Capital assets	1,368,217	1,408,144	
	5,191,131	4,666,303	
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities	1,563,800	1,873,484	
Obligations under capital lease	_	34,171	
	1,563,800	1,907,655	
NET ASSETS	3,627,331	2,758,648	
Net assets are comprised of:			
General fund	1,334,046	1,393,968	
Internally restricted funds	686,447	815,195	
Externally restricted funds	1,606,838	549,485	
	3,627,331	2,758,648	

Please contact the Ottawa Office at 613-744-7667 or email members@amnesty.ca to receive the complete audited statements.

# **Amnesty International Canadian Section (English Speaking)**

(Incorporated under the laws of Canada)

#### **Statement of Operations**

As at December 31, 2019

Revenue	General fund 2019 \$	Internally restricted funds 2019	Total general and internally restricted funds 2019 \$	Externally restricted funds 2019	Total 2019 \$	Total 2018 \$
Fundraising revenue	14,160,489	_	14,160,489	1,082,641	15,243,130	14,488,001
Less fundraising expenses	(4,879,553)	_	(4,879,553)	_	(4,879,553)	(5,087,886)
	9,280,936	_	9,280,936	1,082,641	10,363,577	9,400,115
Groups / networks	42,418	_	42,418	_	42,418	27,308
Event revenue	63,066	_	63,066	_	63,066	_
Investment revenue	7,256	_	7,256	10,390	17,646	26,246
Miscellaneous	15,885	_	15,885	_	15,885	26,817
	9,409,561	_	9,409,561	1,093,031	10,502,592	9,480,486
Expenses						
Action strategies	2,412,490	_	2,412,490	35,678	2,448,168	2,572,243
Grassroots activism	2,471,236	_	2,471,236	_	2,471,236	2,176,336
Communications and marketing	2,770,675	_	2,770,675	_	2,770,675	2,752,432
Information technology and systems	507,231	_	507,231	_	507,231	540,895
Organization	1,426,259	10,340	1,436,599	_	1,436,599	1,307,747
	9,587,891	10,340	9,598,231	35,678	9,633,909	9,349,653
Net revenue (expense) for the year	(178,330)	(10,340)	(188,670)	1,057,353	868,683	130,833

2019

# **BEQUESTS KEEP THE CANDLE BRIGHT**

Amnesty International gratefully acknowledges the gifts received during the past year from the following estates. We honour the memory of these dedicated Amnesty supporters. Their final gifts serve as a lasting legacy of their commitment to protecting human rights worldwide.

- Vincenzo Albanese
   Rev Leslie Ball
   Herbert H Beck
   Laura Belacca
   Jacqueline Cardinal Chenalloy
   M Irene Dudley
- Radim Faltynek Edith Margaret Fowke Karel Groniger Ranjit Singh Hall James R Heyworth E Lorraine Hill
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   Hannah Tiemann
   Janet Tollefson
   Anna Vakar
   Deborah Wallin
   Nancy Walsh



# **GRASSY NARROWS YOUTH**

In December 2019, Amnesty International's global Write for Rights letter-writing campaign highlighted a case in Canada— of youth from Asubpeeschoseewagong (Grassy Narrows First Nation). The Indigenous people of Grassy Narrows First Nation have fished 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 contaminated. Because government has failed to address the mercury crisis, generations of young people have grown up 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.



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