**WRITE FOR RIGHTS 2022**

**ALL 10 CASES (PLAIN TEXT)**

**BANGLADESH: Shahnewaz Chowdhury**

A big cricket fan, Shahnewaz has been playing since childhood. He also has a passion for writing and uses the written word to speak out about the struggles faced by people in his region of Banshkhali, a low-lying coastal area in the south-east of Bangladesh, vulnerable to the impact of climate change.

A new coal-fired power plant in Shahnewaz’s village was supposed to be a turning point in the region’s development. But Shahnewaz was scared about the environmental destruction it would bring.

On 26 May 2021, the area was swept up by a storm. Heavy rainfall and strong winds pounded the village. Homes were destroyed. Worried about the impact of environmentally damaging projects like the new power plant, which he believed contributed to an increase in tidal surges, Shahnewaz took to Facebook to raise his concerns. Encouraging young people to speak out, Shahnewaz wrote: “the youth of Banshkhali must resist injustice and support development through fearless writing.”

The following day, the power plant company filed a case against Shahnewaz, accusing him of posting false information. On 28 May 2021, he was arrested by the police for his Facebook post under Bangladesh’s oppressive Digital Security Act. He was detained in inhumane conditions for 80 days, without trial. Shahnewaz was granted bail on 16 August 2021, but if he’s convicted, he faces many years in prison.

**Tell Bangladesh to drop the charges today**

**WRITE TO THE BANGLADESHI AUTHORITIES**

Tell them to immediately and unconditionally drop the charges against Shahnewaz Chowdhury.

Minister of Justice

Law and Justice Division

Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs

Building No – 04

Bangladesh Secretariat

Dhaka – 1000

Bangladesh

Email: minister@minlaw.gov.bd

Salutation: Honourable Minister

His Excellency Dr Khalilur RAHMAN

High CommissionerHigh Commission for the People's Republic of Bangladesh

350 Sparks Street, Suite 1100

Ottawa ON K1R 7S8

Email: mission.ottawa@mofa.gov.bd

Salutation: Your Excellency

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Honourable Minister,

I call on you to immediately and unconditionally drop all charges against Shahnewaz Chowdhury, who is charged under Bangladesh’s Digital Security Act (DSA) and if convicted faces up to a decade in prison just for expressing his views on Facebook. The DSA is being weaponized by the government and powerful non-state actors to stifle dissent, and the least powerful are disproportionately targeted. I call on you to repeal or amend the DSA and other domestic laws in line with international human rights standards on the right to freedom of expression.

Yours sincerely,

**SHOW SHAHNEWAZ HE’S NOT ALONE**

Write him a message of friendship and support. Take a photo of it and post it on your social media channels, tagging Shahnewaz. Or send cards and letters by post to the address below.

**Address:**

Shahnewaz Chowdhury

C/O Rashid Ahmed Chowdhury

East Baraghona

Post office: West Baraghona

Police station: Banshkhali

Chittagong

Bangladesh

Twitter: @Shahnewaz9

**CAMEROON: Dorgelesse Nguessan**

Dorgelesse has always dreamt of owning a thriving beauty institute. Two years ago, the single mother and hairdresser was just starting to expand her hairdressing business to include manicures.

On 22 September 2020, Dorgelesse’s dream was shattered when she was arrested during a protest in Douala, Cameroon. It was her first ever protest. She had never been politically active before, but her concerns about the state of Cameroon’s economy led her to join the demonstrations.

When the peaceful protest began, security forces fired rubber bullets, tear gas and water cannons to disperse protesters. As Dorgelesse turned into an alleyway, police followed her and fellow protesters and blocked them in. They arrested her and took her to a police station, where she was held in a cell with 22 other people in terrible conditions.

On 29 September 2020, Dorgelesse was transferred to Douala Central Prison, where she still remains. She was charged with “insurrection, assembly, meetings and public demonstrations” and tried by a military court. She was sentenced to five years in prison on 7 December 2021.

Dorgelesse is the breadwinner of her family. Her 18-year-old son has sickle cell anaemia, and the family are struggling to pay for his medication. Dorgelesse is desperate to be reunited with them.

**Tell Cameroon to free Dorgelesse today**

**WRITE TO THE CAMEROONIAN AUTHORITIES**

Tell them to release Dorgelesse from prison immediately and unconditionally, as she has been detained solely for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression and assembly.

President of the Republic of Cameroon

Palais Présidentiel

Yaoundé

Cameroon

Email: cellcom@prc.cm

Twitter: @PR\_Paul\_BIYA

Facebook: @PaulBiya.PageOfficielle

Instagram: @presidentpaulbiya

Salutation: Dear President

Mr. Philippe Aime Landry FOUDA TSILLA OTTO

First Counsellor & Chargé d'affaires, a.i.

High Commission for the Republic of Cameroon

170 Clemow Avenue

Ottawa ON K1S2B4

Email: office@hc-cameroon.ca

Salutation: Dear First Counsellor

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Your Excellency,

I am writing to demand the immediate and unconditional release of Dorgelesse Nguessan, who is detained solely for the peaceful exercise of her rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Dorgelesse was arrested in Douala, while attending her first ever protest. She had never been politically active, but her concerns about the state of Cameroon’s economy led her to join the demonstrations. Dorgelesse was found guilty of “insurrection, assembly, meetings and public demonstrations” and after an unfair trial by a military court she was sentenced to five years in prison. She must be freed and returned to her family, who rely on her as the main wage-earner.

Yours sincerely,

**SHOW DORGELESSE YOU’RE WITH HER**

Send Dorgelesse your message of solidarity and hope. Take a photo of it, and post it to your social media, tagging Dorgelesse on Facebook and using the hashtag #freedorgelesse. Her family will convey messages to her. You can also send your handwritten message by post to the address below.

**Address:**

c/o Central Africa Team

Amnesty International

West and Central Africa Regional Office

Pointe E, Rue 34

Immeuble Malaado Plazza, 6ème Etage

B.P. 47582 Liberté

Dakar, Senegal

**CUBA: Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara**

Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara is a self taught Black Cuban artist. He loves to paint, dance, and wear bright pink suits. His home in San Isidro, one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Havana, is a haven for the community – an open house for people to meet and connect.

Frustrated by Decree 349, a law seeking to silence critical artists, Luis Manuel became a leader of the San Isidro Movement: a diverse group of artists, journalists and activists defending the right to freedom of expression whose members have been intimidated, surveilled and detained.

On 2 May 2021, state security officials took Luis Manuel from his home, where he had been on hunger strike protesting against the confiscation of his artworks by the authorities. He was taken to a hospital and denied access to the outside world. Upon his release a month later, security officials continued to watch his every move.

On 11 July 2021, Luis Manuel posted a video online, saying he would be taking part in one of the largest demonstrations Cuba had seen in decades. Luis Manuel was arrested before the protest took place and taken to Guanajay maximum security prison, where he remains. In June 2022, he was sentenced to five years in prison, after a trial behind closed doors. In prison, Luis Manuel’s health is declining and he’s not getting proper medical care.

**Tell Cuba to immediately free Luis Manuel**

**WRITE TO THE CUBAN AUTHORITIES**

Tell the president to immediately and unconditionally release Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara as he has been detained solely for peacefully exercising his rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Please send letters to the President of Cuba ℅ the embassy in Canada:

His Excellency Hector IGARZA CABRERA

Ambassador for the Republic of Cuba

388 Main Street

Ottawa ON K1S1E3

Email: despacho@presidencia.gob.cu

Twitter: @DiazCanelB

Facebook: @PresidenciaDeCuba

Salutation: Dear President

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Dear President,

I call on you to immediately and unconditionally release prisoner of conscience Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara. All charges against him must be dropped, as he has been detained solely for peacefully exercising his rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Luis Manuel’s trial was unfair and took place behind closed doors without access for independent human rights monitors or journalists. While being held in a maximum-security prison, Luis Manuel’s health has reportedly deteriorated. Pending his release, please ensure that he is not ill-treated in detention, and has access to adequate healthcare and regular contact with his family and lawyers.

Yours sincerely,

**SHOW LUIS MANUEL YOU’RE WITH HIM**

Send your messages and artwork of friendship and hope, so Luis Manuel knows you are standing with him.

**Address:**

Amnesty International

Americas Regional Office

Luz Saviñón 51

Colonia Del Valle Norte

Alcaldía Benito Juárez

C.P. 03103

Mexico City

Mexico

**FRANCE: Zineb Redouane**

Zineb Redouane, an 80-year-old woman who lived in Marseille, France, found joy in music and flowers. On the evening of 1 December 2018, Zineb was preparing dinner and chatting to her daughter on the phone in her fourth floor apartment. In the streets below, people were protesting about poor living conditions in Marseille, after two residential buildings collapsed, killing eight people. Police officers were using tear gas to disperse the protesters.

Realizing that tear gas was entering through her open window, Zineb went to the window to close it. She noticed police officers in the street below. What happened next was truly awful. One of the police officers pointed a tear gas grenade launcher in Zineb’s direction and fired. She was hit in the face by an MP7 tear gas grenade.

Zineb was taken to hospital with severe facial wounds and bleeding. She was suffocating because of the fractures in her jawbone and the collapse of the roof of her mouth. She needed surgery urgently, but it couldn’t be completed because she went into cardiac arrest under the anaesthetic. Zineb went into cardiac arrest several more times and died.

Zineb was killed by the reckless use of a tear gas grenade. Nearly four years later, an investigation into her death is still ongoing, and no one has been charged or suspended over the killing. Zineb’s family are still waiting for justice.

**Demand justice for Zineb now**

**WRITE TO THE FRENCH AUTHORITIES**

Demand full accountability from all those involved in the killing of Zineb Redouane, including the officer who is suspected to have fired the grenade and his chain of command.

Juges d’instruction

Tribunal judiciaire de Lyon

67 rue Servient

69003 Lyon

France

Twitter: @TJLyon

Salutation: Dear Investigating Judges

His Excellency Michel MIRAILLET

Ambassador for France

42 Sussex Drive

Ottawa ON K1M 2C9

Email: politique@ambafrance-ca.org

Salutation: Your Excellency

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Dear Investigating Judges,

I am writing to demand full accountability for the killing of Zineb Redouane, who died due to an alleged unlawful use of tear gas grenades during a protest. The responsibility of the officer who fired the grenade and his chain of command should be fully ascertained. Please duly consider all the existing evidence and, if the evidence warrants it, ensure that all suspects are tried in proceedings that respect their right to a fair trial.

Yours sincerely,

**SHOW ZINEB’S FAMILY YOU’RE WITH THEM**

Send them messages of solidarity and hope to help them keep strong in their battle for justice. Draw pictures of cats and roses, Zineb’s favourite things, to accompany your message. You could even put dried rose petals in the envelope.

**Address**:

Amnesty International France

10 Jours pour signer 2022

76 boulevard de la Villette

75019 Paris

France

**HONG KONG: Chow Hang-tung**

A brilliant student from a top university, Chow could have pursued all sorts of high-flying careers. Instead, she has dedicated her life to fearlessly protecting people’s rights as a human rights lawyer and activist.

Chow was the vice-chairperson of the Hong Kong Alliance, which organized the world’s biggest candlelight vigil commemorating victims of the Tiananmen crackdown. In 1989, hundreds – possibly thousands – of people were killed in the streets around Tiananmen Square, Beijing, as troops opened fire, killing protesters peacefully calling for economic and social reforms.

The Chinese government wants people to forget, but Chow has made it her mission to remember the victims.

In 2020 and 2021, Hong Kong authorities banned the vigil, citing public health reasons in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic.

On 4 June 2021, Chow encouraged people on social media to commemorate the crackdown by lighting candles. She was arrested on that day for “advertising or publicizing unauthorized assembly”.

Chow is now serving 22 months in jail for peacefully remembering the victims of a horrific crackdown. She is also facing further imprisonment for allegedly endangering national security through her entirely peaceful actions. In the face of all this, Chow’s bravery shines through. “To say I’m not afraid would be a lie, but I’m not so afraid I dare do nothing”, she says.

**Ask Hong Kong to free Chow today**

**WRITE TO THE HONG KONG AUTHORITIES**

Tell them to immediately release Chow Hang-tung and drop all charges, as she has been detained solely for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression.

Secretary for Justice

Department of Justice

G/F, Main Wing, Justice Place

18 Lower Albert Road

Central

Hong Kong

Email: sjo@doj.gov.hk Salutation:

Dear Secretary for Justice

His Excellency Peiwu CONG

Ambassador for the People's Republic of China

515 St. Patrick Street

Ottawa ON K1N 5H3

Email: chineseembassy.ca@gmail.com

Salutation: Your Excellency

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Dear Secretary,

I call on you to immediately and unconditionally release human rights lawyer Chow Hang-tung and drop all charges against her, as she has been charged solely for peacefully exercising her rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Chow is serving 22 months in jail for peacefully remembering the victims of the Tiananmen Square crackdown in 1989. She is also facing further wrongful imprisonment for allegedly endangering national security through her entirely peaceful actions.

Yours sincerely,

**HELP KEEP CHOW’S SPIRIT STRONG**

Send her your message of solidarity and hope. Draw pictures of cats and alpacas (Chow is a huge fan) to accompany your message, take a photo, and post it to your social media, tagging Chow. You can tag Chow on Facebook here: facebook. com/tonyeechowpages/ Then, mail your message to the address further below. Don’t forget to follow her!

**Address:**

PO Box No.75

Ma On Shan Post Office

New Territories, Hong Kong

(Please do not write her name or yours on the envelope)

**IRAN: Vahid Afkari**

Vahid Afkari comes from a close knit family. He enjoyed reading, singing, and dancing at home with his brothers Habib and Navid.

In 2016, 2017 and 2018 Vahid, Navid and Habib peacefully joined protests in their home town of Shiraz about inequality and political repression. On 17 September 2018, Vahid and Navid were arrested at their home for protesting. Habib was arrested three months later.

The Iranian authorities held the three brothers in solitary confinement, tortured them, and forced them to “confess” to crimes they repeatedly said they did not commit. In a huge miscarriage of justice, the brothers were convicted on politically motivated charges stemming from their peaceful participation in protests. Vahid and Navid were also convicted after a baseless accusation involving the murder of a security official. The authorities unjustly sentenced Navid to death, and Habib and Vahid to decades in prison and 74 lashes each.

The three brothers were moved to solitary confinement cells in September 2020. On 12 September 2020, Navid was executed in secret, without any warning to him, his family, or his lawyers. Navid’s execution ignited outrage in Iran and throughout the world and led to escalated campaigning for Habib and Vahid. Habib was released from prison in March 2022, after spending 550 days in solitary confinement.

The authorities have been cruelly holding Vahid in solitary confinement since September 2020 and totally isolating him from other prisoners, to punish him for not bending to the authorities’ demands to publicly make statements against people in Iran and around the world who have sought justice for his family.

**Tell Iran to free Vahid Afkari**

**WRITE TO THE IRANIAN AUTHORITIES**

Tell them to release Vahid Afkari as he is arbitrarily detained, quash his unjust convictions and sentences, and pending his release, end his solitary confinement and provide him with adequate healthcare.

Head of Judiciary

c/o Embassy of Iran to the European Union

Avenue Franklin Roosevelt No. 15

1050 Brussels

Belgium

Instagram: [instagram.com/ejeii\_org/](http://instagram.com/ejeii_org/)

Twitter: Target Iran’s Supreme Leader on @khamenei\_ir

Salutation: Dear Sir

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Dear Sir,

I urge you to release Vahid Afkari immediately as he is being arbitrarily detained for his peaceful participation in protests, quash his unjust convictions and sentences and drop all charges relating to the peaceful exercise of his human rights. Vahid Afkari is being held in solitary confinement in Adelabad prison in Fars province and the large body of evidence proving his innocence is being ignored by the authorities. Pending his release, he must be held in conditions meeting international standards for the treatment of prisoners, with access to adequate healthcare – outside prison if necessary – and to his family.

Yours sincerely,

**SHOW VAHID AFKARI THAT HE IS NOT ALONE**

Send your messages of support to Vahid on social media, tagging Vahid’s brother Saeed in your post.

Instagram: [instagram.com/saeed\_afkariii/](http://instagram.com/saeed_afkariii/)

Twitter: @afkari\_saeed

**MOROCCO/WESTERN SAHARA: Nasser Zefzafi**

Nasser Zefzafi was living a peaceful life with his family in the Rif region of northern Morocco, an area struggling with poor healthcare, education and employment opportunities. Its population has been marginalized by successive governments in Morocco.

Triggered by the death of a fishmonger who was crushed by a rubbish truck as he tried to recover fish confiscated by the authorities, in October 2016 peaceful protests began in Nasser’s town. Millions of people marched peacefully to express their sadness and frustration. They had had enough. They were demanding change. The Hirak El-Rif movement was born, and Nasser, a firm believer in justice and equality, became a prominent figure in the movement.

In the months that followed, Moroccan security forces arrested hundreds of protesters. On 29 May 2017, Nasser was arrested for interrupting a sermon at a mosque and accusing the Imam (Islamic prayer leader) of acting as a mouthpiece for the authorities. Whilst in custody, police officers subjected Nasser to torture and other ill-treatment. On 27 June 2018, Nasser was sentenced to 20 years in prison, just for speaking out. He has been detained in prolonged solitary confinement since his arrest.

Forced to live in terrible conditions in prison, Nasser’s health has deteriorated significantly. He’s suffering from health conditions including respiratory and eyesight problems and nerve pain. The prison authorities have denied him the medical care he needs.

**Tell the Moroccan authorities to free Nasser today**

**WRITE TO THE MOROCCAN AUTHORITIES**

Tell them to release Nasser Zefzafi immediately and unconditionally and quash his conviction.

Head of Moroccan Government

Palais Royal – Touarga

Rabat 10070

Morocco

Fax: +212 537771010

Salutation: Your Excellency

Her Excellency Souriya OTMANI

Ambassador for the Kingdom of Morocco

38 Range Road

Ottawa ON K1N 8J4

Email: sifamaot@bellnet.ca

Salutation: Your Excellency

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Your Excellency,

I call on you to immediately and unconditionally release Nasser Zefzafi and quash his unfair conviction, as he is imprisoned for exercising his right to protest. Nasser is being held in terrible conditions, causing his health to deteriorate significantly. He is suffering from health conditions including respiratory and eyesight problems and nerve pain. The prison authorities have denied him the medical care he needs. Pending his release, please ensure that Nasser is protected from torture and other illtreatment and that he has access to adequate healthcare in prison.

Yours sincerely,

**SHOW NASSER YOU’RE WITH HIM**

Send him your messages of friendship and hope to help lift his spirits in prison.

**Address:**

Nasser Zefzafi

Amnesty International Maroc

281, Avenue Mohamed V, Apt 23

Rabat 10000

Morocco

**PARAGUAY: Yren Rotela and Mariana Sepúlveda**

Yren and Mariana want to live their lives freely and do things they love, like playing volleyball, dancing and going to the theatre. However, as trans women, Yren and Mariana are busy defending themselves against discrimination. They’ve been bullied, physically attacked and prevented from speaking out about the issues they face in their daily lives.

Trans people in Paraguay cannot legally change their names or obtain identity documents that match their gender identity, among other discriminatory practices. This means trans students cannot get school certificates in their chosen names, which makes finding a job difficult. This inequality has motivated Yren and Mariana to become activists, to demand change.

But protesting isn’t easy for trans people in Paraguay. Paraguay is a very conservative country which treats trans people and the wider LGBTI community unfairly. It tries to make them invisible. Because of this, protests by trans groups are often banned, and in some cases demonstrations have been attacked.

Yren and Mariana have been fighting for years to change their legal names. If they could get documentation that matches who they are, it would mean the state had started to recognize their existence as trans women. As Yren says: “I came into the world to show who I am, not to be told who I am.”

**Tell Paraguay to legally recognize the identity of trans people so they can exercise their rights**

**WRITE TO THE PARAGUAYAN AUTHORITIES**

Tell them to legally recognize the identities of transgender people so that they can exercise their right to freedom of expression, association and protest under their self-perceived identities.

President of the Supreme Court of Justice

Palacio de Justicia del Paraguay

Mariano Roque Alonso y Testanova

Asunción

C.P. N°001001

Paraguay

Email: secretariageneralcsj@pj.gov.py

Twitter: @PoderJudicialPY

Facebook: @PoderJudicialPY

Fax: +595 21 439 4000

Salutation: Dear Mr President

His Excellency Raul Antonio MONTIEL GASTO

Ambassador for the Republic of Paraguay

130 Albert Street, Suite 418

Ottawa ON K1P 1B1

Email: embaparcanada@mre.gov.py

Salutation: Your Excellency

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Your Excellency,

I call on you to guarantee all means to legally recognize the identities of Yren Rotela and Mariana Sepúlveda, two transgender women. Denying them the right to legally change their names and obtain identity documents matching their gender identity is discriminatory. It impacts their ability to gain equal education, employment, housing, healthcare, and further exposes them to violence, harassment and stigma. In Paraguay, trans activists are silenced and their protests are often banned or attacked. I call on you to guarantee legal frameworks to end this discriminatory practice. Without legal gender recognition, a transgender person’s ability to live in dignity, equality and security, and with the rights and protections afforded to other members of society, is severely compromised.

Yours sincerely,

**SHOW YREN AND MARIANA YOU’RE WITH THEM**

Send your messages of friendship and hope to Yren and Mariana to continue in their fight.

**Address:**

Amnesty International Paraguay

Hassler 5229

entre Cruz del Defensor y Cruz del Chaco

Asunción

Paraguay

**RUSSIA: Aleksandra Skochilenko**

Aleksandra (or Sasha for short) fills her life with music and art. In better times, she loved playing the piano, guitar, mandolin and flute, and hosted jams for anyone who wanted to play together.

Troubled by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, Aleksandra took action on 31 March 2022. She replaced price tags in a local supermarket in Saint Petersburg with little paper labels containing information about the invasion.

In the early morning of 11 April 2022, police arrested Aleksandra and charged her with “public dissemination of knowingly false information about the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation” – a new article of the criminal code hastily introduced by the Russian government in March 2022 to try and stop Russian people criticizing the invasion of Ukraine. Dozens of people have already been detained under this new offence.

Aleksandra has been held in detention ever since, in terrible conditions. She has coeliac disease and has been forced to go hungry most of the time because the detention centre has not given her the gluten-free food she needs. Aleksandra has also been harassed by detention centre employees and her cellmates. If she is convicted, Aleksandra faces up to 10 years in prison.

**Tell Russia to free Aleksandra now**

**WRITE TO THE RUSSIAN AUTHORITIES**

Tell them to immediately release Aleksandra Skochilenko and drop all charges, as she has been detained solely for expressing her opposition to the war.

The Prosecutor of Saint Petersburg

2/9 Pochtamtskaya Street

Saint Petersburg

190000

Russian Federation

Fax: +7 812 318 26 11

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor

His Excellency Oleg STEPANOV

Ambassador for the Russian Federation

285 Charlotte Street

Ottawa ON K1N 8L5

Email: info@rusembassy.ca

Salutation: Your Excellency

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Dear Prosecutor,

I call on you to ensure the release of Aleksandra Skochilenko, who is being detained for criticizing Russia’s war against Ukraine. Everyone has a right to freely express their opinions, including Aleksandra. All charges against her must be dropped and she should immediately and unconditionally be released from prison. I also call on you to ensure that, pending her release, Aleksandra is held in conditions that comply with international standards, and she has access to adequate healthcare as well as the food she needs in relation to her medical condition. Aleksandra must also be protected from harassment by detention centre employees and her cellmates.

Yours sincerely,

**HELP KEEP ALEKSANDRA’S SPIRIT STRONG**

Send her your message of solidarity and hope. Draw pictures of cats (Aleksandra has two called Lucy and Maude!) to accompany your message, take a photo, and post it to your social media, tagging Aleksandra when you do. Then, mail your message to the address below. Please avoid using the Ukrainian flag or its colours (yellow and blue) or Ukrainian symbols. Focus your message and image on Aleksandra, not on Ukraine or the war.

**Address:**

Aleksandra Skochilenko

Write for Rights

Amnesty International

1 Easton Street

London WC1X 0DW

United Kingdom

Instagram: @skochilenko

Facebook: [facebook.com/sasha.skochilenko](http://facebook.com/sasha.skochilenko)

**ZIMBABWE: Joanah Mamombe, Netsai Marova and Cecillia Chimbiri**

Joanah, Netsai and Cecillia are three women with a lot of things in common: they love playing board games, watching Netflix and are passionate about politics. Sadly, they now share horrific memories of a terrible and degrading attack.

On 13 May 2020, after leading an anti-government protest, Joanah, Netsai and Cecillia were arbitrarily arrested in Harare, taken to a police station and forced into an unmarked car. With hoods over their heads, they were driven out of the city. Scared for their lives, the women were thrown into a pit, beaten, sexually assaulted and forced to eat human excrement. They were found two days later, miles from Harare. Their clothes torn, covered in cuts and bruises, they were taken to hospital.

While still hospitalized, Joanah, Netsai and Cecillia were charged with criminal offences relating to the protest. Prison guards and police officers were at the hospital to prevent them from talking to journalists. After stating that they recognized some of their attackers, the women were re-arrested on 10 June 2020 and charged with faking their ordeal. They were detained until 26 June 2020, when they were given bail.

Joanah, Netsai and Cecillia’s trial began in January 2022 and continues. To date, no one has been held accountable for their terrible trauma.

**Demand justice for Joanah, Netsai and Cecillia**

**WRITE TO THE ZIMBABWEAN AUTHORITIES**

Tell them to immediately and unconditionally drop all charges against Joanah, Netsai and Cecillia and end the harassment they face for peacefully exercising their right to protest.

President of the Republic of Zimbabwe

Office of the President

Munhumutapa Building

Samora Machel Avenue

P. Bag 7700

Causeway

Harare

Zimbabwe

Email: Info@opc.gov.zw

Twitter: @edmnangagwa

Facebook: Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa Salutation: Your Excellency

Her Excellency Ruth Masodzi CHIKWIRA

Ambassador for the Republic of Zimbabwe

332 Somerset Street West

Ottawa ON K2P 0J9

Email: zimottawa@zimfa.gov.zw

Salutation: Your Excellency

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Your Excellency,

I call on you to immediately and unconditionally drop all charges against Joanah Mamombe, Netsai Marova and Cecillia Chimbiri, charged solely for the peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Joanah, Netsai and Cecillia were arbitrarily arrested following a protest in Harare, taken to a police station, and forcibly driven out of the city to a place where they were beaten and sexually assaulted. While still hospitalized, they were charged with offences related to the protest and later charged with faking their ordeal. To date, no one has been held accountable. Joanah, Netsai and Cecillia have suffered continuous harassment since their arrest and must be protected.

Yours sincerely,

**SHOW JOANAH, NETSAI & CECILLIA THAT YOU BELIEVE IN THEM**

Send them your message of solidarity and hope. Draw pictures of butterflies and flowers to accompany your message, take a photo, and post it to your social media, tagging them when you do. Then, mail your message to the address further below. Don’t forget to follow them!

**Address for Cecillia and Joanah:**

c/o Lucia Masuka Executive Director

Amnesty International Zimbabwe

54 Midlothian Avenue, Eastlea, Harare, Zimbabwe

**Address for Netsai:** Amnesty Norge

v/ Richard/SFL, PO Box 702 Sentrum, N-0106, Oslo, Norway

Twitter: Joanah: @JoanaMamombe,

             Netsai: @MarovaNetsai

             Cecillia: @ceechimbiri2