

ACT 30/24/98

UPDATE ON UDHR APPEALS CASES

TO: Campaign Coordinators
From: UDHR Campaign Team
Issue Date: 24 September 1998, last update 26 October

Dear Friends,

Here is our most recent update of UDHR appeals cases. Please contact Ulrike Zimmermann if you require more information. We will update you with any additional changes as and when they occur.

Thank you very much for all the work you have done so far.

UDHR Campaign Appeals cases of Human Rights Defenders

Since their publication in October 1997 there have been developments and/or changes to some of the UDHR appeals cases. Sections have been informed via the CC fax and the UDHR discussion list.

Here is a summary of all changes:

Sevil Dalkiliç/ Turkey

The caption of the second photo should read:

"Copies of the UDHR being circulated at a human rights rally in Istanbul."

Please note that for the time being Amnesty International is not classifying her as a prisoner of conscience pending further investigation of the case.

The text under the headline "What you can do" has changed in the following way:

Lawyer Sevil Dalkiliç was tortured and sentenced to 30 years in prison after an unfair trial. She has been denied the rights that the world has said should never be violated. Ask that she be granted a fair trial and that her allegations of torture be thoroughly and impartially investigated. Call for those responsible to be brought to justice. Write to: (rest same as in old text version).

Irene Fernandez/Malaysia

Please note that Anwar Ibrahim has been sacked and is no longer Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister. Appeals should now be sent to Dr Mahathir, the Prime Minister and also to the Attorney General (see addresses below).

PRIME MINISTER

Dato' Seri Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad
Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs
Jalan Dato' Onn
50502 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia
Fax: +60 3 238 3784 or 298 4172

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Datuk Mohtar Abdullah
Attorney General's Chambers
Jabatan Peguam Negara Malaysia
Tingkat 20, Bangunan Bank Rakyat
Jalan Tangsi
50512 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia Fax: +60 3 293 2021 or +603 298 4989

Pedro Montenegro and Marcelo Nascimento/ Brazil

A spelling mistake occurred and in the appeals case it should read **Grupo Gay De Alagoas** throughout.

Dushi and Ahmed/ Australia

On the page entitled "Know your rights" Article 14 is to be inserted: "Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution" If you are forced to flee your home because of human rights abuses, you have the right to seek safety in another country. This means that border police or other authorities may not refuse you entry, or return to your own country, without proper consideration being given to your request for asylum.

Leticia Moctezuma Vargas/ Mexico

For translations and reprints, please note the following change:

Minister of Interior Francisco Labastida Ochoa. Telephones, faxes and addresses are still the same.

Elsa Alvarado and Mario Calderon/Colombia

Please note the following change in President's name (the address remains the same):

Señor Presidente Andrés Pastrana Arango
Presidente de la República,
Palacio Nariño,
Carrera 8 No. 7-26
Santafè de Bogotá,
Colombia

Shaikh al-Jamri/Bahrain

There are further concerns about his state of health in detention (see further information in UA 26/96 on 12 February 1998 [MDE 11/02/98] and [MDE 11/05/98] of 1 May 1998.) Appeals on his behalf should express concern about reports that he has been ill-treated, as well as calling for his release.

Dr. Beko Ransome-Kuti-- RELEASED!

On 15 June 1998, Dr. Beko Ransome-Kuti, was released from prison along with nine other prisoners of conscience. The sub-regional team suggests that you welcome his release and call for the release of all remaining prisoners of conscience in Nigeria, including Shehu Sani who is also mentioned in the appeal case. Please address letters to the new head of state:

General Abdulsalam Abubakar
Chairman, Provisional Ruling Council
State House, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria

Telegrams: General Abubakar, Abuja, Nigeria
 Faxes: c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
 (please forward) + 234 9 523 0394/0210
 Salutation: Dear General.

In addition, congratulatory messages to Dr. Ransome-Kuti can be sent to the address given below. While we support letters being sent to Dr. Ransome-Kuti, we strongly urge that the scale is kept limited in comparison to the number of letters going to General Abubakar.

Free Beko Kuti Campaign Committee
 8 Maria Street
 Anthony Village
 Lagos, Nigeria

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Aktham Nu'aysa-- RELEASED

On 30 May, 1998, Aktham Nu'aysa and Riad al-Turk, as well as 28 political prisoners were released from a Syrian prison.

Following the release of Aktham Nu'aysa, there have been a lot of requests for his address to send messages and support. Due to security reasons, a direct mailing address may not be available for some time. His brother is happy to receive mail on his behalf and will pass on the messages to Aktham Nu'aysa when possible. We will let you know of any changes that will allow us to contact Aktham directly in the future.

Here is the address:
 Ghaiath Naisse
 P.O. Box 11
 61301 L'aigle
 Cedex
 FRANCE

Aktham Nu'aysa is suffering from serious eye problems and is in need of specialist medical care. He is currently in the process of re-establishing himself as a lawyer.

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Dita Indah Sari

Please note that the Indonesian Attorney General Agung Singgih S.H. has been replaced by Maj. Gen. Muhammad Ghalib. The address remains the same.

Maj. Gen. Muhammad Ghalib
 Jaksa Agung
 Jl. Sultan Hasanuddin No.1
 Kebayoran Baru
 Jakarta Selatan
 Tel: +62 21 773 557
 Indonesia

Tel/fax: +62 21 720 8557

Coen Husein Pontoh, co-featuring in the appeals case leaflet of Dita Indah Sari, was released on 28 July 1998 along with another poc from Kalisosok Prison, Mochamad Sholeh, who was also imprisoned for his activities within the PRD.

Dita Indah Sari remains in jail. Sections working on her case should continue appeals for her immediate and unconditional release.

If you have questions you can contact Signe Poulsen (spoulsen@amnesty.org)

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Aleksandr Nikitin

Aleksandr Nikitin's trial begins at 10.30 am on Tuesday, 20 October, at the St. Petersburg City Court (St. Petersburg is +4 hours ahead of GMT). Amnesty International intends to send a trial observer to monitor the proceedings.

Recommended actions

1. Please write to both the St. Petersburg authorities and the federal authorities, reiterating Amnesty's position. You could aim to write once a fortnight up until the trial starts, and indeed during the trial. It is hard to say how long the trial will last.

What to write

- reiterate that if Aleksandr Nikitin is convicted, AI will consider him to be a prisoner of conscience, held only because he exercised his right to freedom of expression. Urge that all charges against him be dropped;

-urge that the allegations of intimidation and harassment against Aleksandr Nikitin, his family and his lawyer are fully and impartially investigated, and that anyone found responsible be brought to justice.

Please write to

1. Director of the Federal Security Service for St Petersburg and the Leningrad Region, Viktor Cherkasov.

Rossiyskaya Federatsiya

191194 g. St-Peterburg

Liteyny prospekt, 4/6

Glavnoe Upravlenie Federalnoy Sluzhbi

Bezopasnosti g. Sankt Peterburg i

Leningradskoy oblasti

Predsedatelyu

Colonel CHERKASOVU V.

FAX: 00 7812 272 38 96

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2. The Procurator of St Petersburg, Vladimir Ivanovich EREMENKO

Rossiyskaya Federatsiya

190000 g. St-Peterburg

ul. Yakubovicha, 4

Gorodskaya prokuratura

Prokuroru

EREMENKU V.I

FAX: 00 7812 312 9786

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3. Director General of the Russian Federal Security Service, Vladimir PUTIN (_____) Address number 3h on your list of Useful Addresses for the Russian Federation.

4. Procurator General of the Russian Federation, Yury Skuratov. Address number 4a.

5. Russian Federation Minister of Internal Affairs, Sergey Stepashin. Address number 3d.

Copies to:

1. President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin. Address number 1.

2. Russian Federation Minister of Foreign Affairs, Igor IVANOV (_____) Address number 3n.

3. Chairman of the Presidential Human Rights Commission, Vladimir Kartashkin.
Address number 2e.

Please do not send any more letters to Aleksandr Nikitin himself, but thank you to all those who contributed to the one and a half thousand letters he has received recently.

2. Please alert any journalists with whom you have already had contact regarding Nikitin's case, and let them know that the trial date has been set for 20 October.

3. You might like to organize a publicity event on the date of the trial, collecting signatures asking simply for the charges against Aleksandr Nikitin to be dropped.

Please continue to send any replies you receive to the IS. We will keep you in touch with further developments, and any additional actions that would be appropriate.

"Old news"/Background information only:

On 30 June 1998 it was reported by ITAR-TASS that the case has finally been referred to the St. Petersburg city court, after the St. Petersburg Procurator confirmed the charges brought by the Federal Security Service (FSB) against Nikitin. Nikitin is still charged with treason and exposing state secrets. According to a press article in the newspaper "Segodnya" dated 30 July 1998, the Procurator General of the Russian Federation accepted as proof of treason and exposing state secrets the fact that Nikitin had "collected and broadcast information, amounting to state secrets" while working as a consultant for Bellona.

However, no date has yet been set for the hearing. It is unlikely the case will be heard earlier than October 1998, and some of Nikitin's supporters suspect the case will be returned for an eighth time for investigation.

In addition, the FSB (Federal Security Service, successor to the KGB) have reportedly resorted to old-style tactics in their efforts to intimidate Nikitin, by harassing him and his family, following them and attacking Nikitin's lawyer.

Sections are encouraged to intensify campaigning activity in September and October, by both writing to the authorities, and following up any media contacts you might have made during the course of this case.

To the authorities:

-Reiterate that Aleksandr Nikitin is considered by AI to be a prisoner of conscience, who was held only because he exercised his right to freedom of expression. Urge that all charges against him be dropped;

-Urge that the allegations of intimidation and harassment against Aleksandr Nikitin, his family and his lawyer are fully and impartially investigated, and that anyone found responsible be brought to justice.

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Asma Jahingir

Please note that Asma Jahingir has been appointed UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. In addition, Asma Jahingir has received an honorary doctorate from the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland.

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Nadezhda Chaykova

Responses to letters written regarding Nadezhda Chaykova have been received from both the Russian Federation administration and the Chechen administration, outlining the steps being taken by both sides to find the perpetrators of the murder.

Some groups have received a response from Mr. Zakaev, the Minister of Culture, Information and Communication in Chechnya. Mr. Zakaev explains the delay for the instigation of a criminal investigation into Ms. Chaykova's murder as being due to the destruction of official archives during the armed conflict. However, an investigation has now been opened by the Chechen administration and on 18 May 1998 it was passed to the Procurator General of Achka-Martanovskiy region in Chechnya. Since then, there have not been any further developments in the case.

Other AI members received a reply from the General Procurator of the Russian Federation, which states that the Russian Federation administrations previous criminal investigation opened in March 1996 failed to find the perpetrators of the crime, and that currently steps are being taken to reopen the investigation.

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Myanmar UDHR appeal cases

U Pa Pa Lay and U Lu Zaw, and Daw San San Nwe should not be used in any greeting cards campaigns. Apart from the fact that political prisoners in Myanmar are not allowed to receive mail, it is not safe to try to send cards to the prisoners or to members of their families in Myanmar. Reliable sources inform us that such attention may cause them serious problems and worsen their already difficult situation. There are no other appropriate addresses to whom cards could be sent. We are sorry that it is not possible to support the prisoners and their families in this way, but as always our utmost consideration is for their safety and protection.

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Nestor Rodriguez Lobaina (Cuba) - RELEASED after finishing his sentence

On 11 October 1998 Nestor Rodriguez Lobaina's prison sentence finished and he was released. The President of the Cuban Youth Movement for Democracy had been sentenced to 18 months imprisonment for "disrespect" and "resisting authority" after he had criticised a government-backed youth festival in Havana as a "festival of youth without hope".

Sections and groups should stop working on his behalf.

N. R. Lobaina is the third person featuring in the UDHR campaign to be released. The other two were Aktham Nu'aysa and Dr Beko Ransome-Kuti, who were released early.

Letters of support for his bravery in sticking to his beliefs and for suffering imprisonment as a consequence can be sent to:

Nestor Rodríguez Lobaina
Martí #434, Apartamento S
Segundo piso
Baracoa
Guantánamo
CUBA

If you have any questions on Nestor Rodriguez Lobaina please contact Penny Allsop at the IS (pallsop@amnesty.org)

Any further information of the UDHR appeals cases will be made available as soon as we receive it. Please contact Ulrike Zimmermann (uzimmerm@amnesty.org) if you have any further questions.

